



# FIT TOGETHER

THUNDER BAY RECREATION & FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

JANUARY 2017

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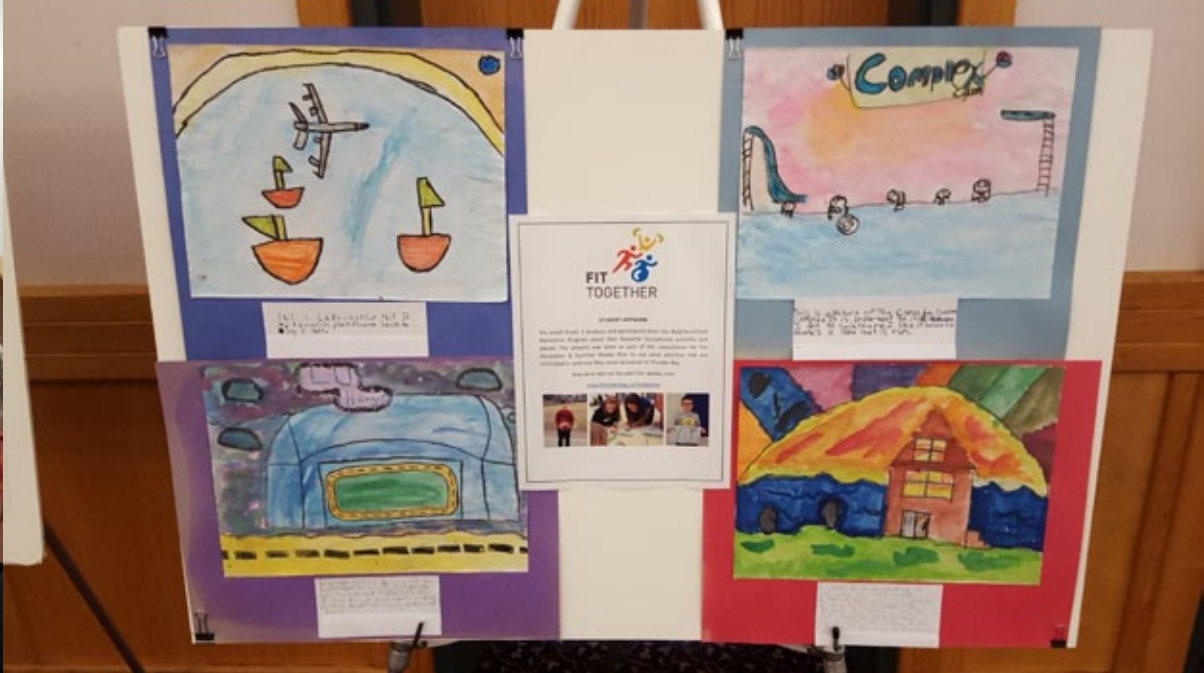
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# PART 1: LAYING THE GROUND WORK





16 combined public, stakeholder and staff engagement initiatives.

>> Almost 2,000

participants/responses over the Master Plan development process.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose and scope

The Fit Together Master Plan is a municipal guidance document that outlines a series of short, medium to longer priorities for investment in facilities, services and programs owned and/or delivered/operated by the City of Thunder Bay over a 15-year timeframe.

Some recommendations are longer term pursuits related to infrastructure and will require capital investment and planning. Other recommendations are shorter-term opportunities to address and progressively enhance the resident/user experience associated with programming and access to recreation, sport and leisure. Recommendations also speak operational strategies which serve to enhance municipal procedures, policies, services and partnerships for the effective delivery for recreation in the City of Thunder Bay.

This Master Plan should be placed in the broader context of all obligations of the City of Thunder Bay as a provider of services, facilities and infrastructure. Changes in the wider municipal environment in terms of fiscal priorities can be expected to impact the priorities contained in this Master Plan.

The following comprises the scope of analysis of this Master Plan.

### ADDRESSING FACILITY NEEDS

- Arenas & Stadia Buildings
- Community Centres & Older Adult Facilities
- Pools & Beachfronts
- Baggage Building Arts Centre
- Prince Arthur's Landing

### INDOOR PROGRAMS & EVENTS

- Aquatics and Wellness
- Children, Youth & Older Adults
- Events
- Community Centre programming

### OUTDOOR PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

- Parks, Playgrounds & Trails
- Sport Fields and Courts
- Skate Parks
- Splash Pads
- Ice rinks

### EVALUATING SERVICES + POLICIES

- Policies and Protocols
- Accessibility
- Information
- Community Partnerships
- Facility Use Agreements
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Financial Assistance

## 2 The Context of Planning

Recreation facilities in Thunder Bay provide a critical service to individual residents and families enabling them to reach their full potential, and therefore must not be undervalued. These facilities play an important role in supporting social vibrancy, crime prevention, physical well-being and environmental sustainability.

This Plan also recognizes that the City of Thunder Bay, within the context of the broader Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area and District, functions as the main service node for the region. This has implications for the City's recreation sector – specifically, the provision of facilities, services, programs and opportunities within the municipal sphere. Localized investment in recreation is therefore recognized to have broader regional impacts.

### 2.1 Changing Demographics – The City-wide Forecast

The City of Thunder Bay is changing and continued trend of population decline is expected over the lifetime of this Plan.

**The City is expected to experience a slower rate of population decline than the broader District.**

Over the last census period, the city experienced a -1% decline in population (from 109,016 residents in 2006 to 108,359 residents in 2011). The Thunder Bay CMA also experienced a similar rate of decline while population decline in the broader District area was marginally higher over this same period (-2%).

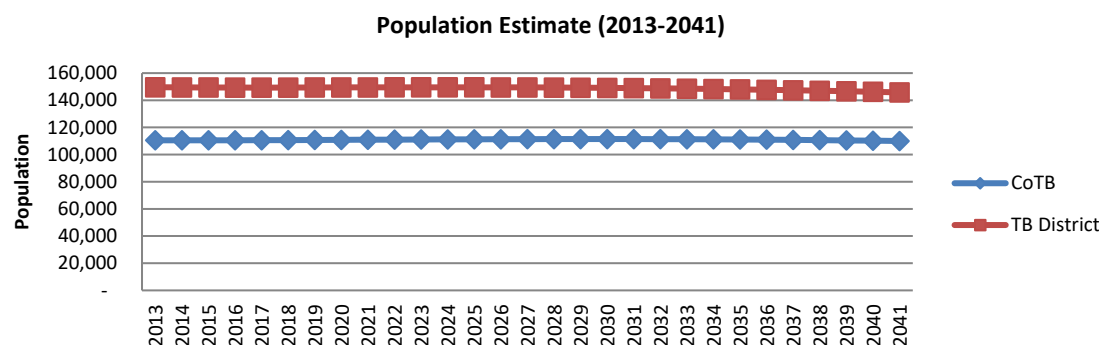




### 3 Thunder Bay Recreation & Facilities Master Plan

2013 Ministry of Finance population projections estimate a -.2% decline in the District population over the 15-year period of this plan. Overall the District population is forecast to decline by -2.4% from 149,340 residents in 2016 to 145,822 residents by 2041.

**Exhibit 1: Long-term Population forecast for the City of Thunder Bay (2013-2041)**



Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on Ministry of Finance Ontario Population Projections (July 2013 figures)

In keeping with historic trends, the City of Thunder Bay is expected to experience a slower rate of decline compared to the District. The City of Thunder Bay's 2016 population is estimated at 110,514 residents<sup>1</sup> and is expected to increase marginally (by 1%) to 111,436 in 2030, subsequently declining to 110,007 by 2041.

2011 National Household Survey data indicates that Indigenous residents comprise around 8% of the Thunder Bay's population. This figure is understood to be an underestimate

considering some persons of Indigenous heritage may not self-report this as part of census activities. The City's Aboriginal Liaison Office identifies that Indigenous peoples may comprise as much as 30% of the population in Thunder Bay.

Additionally, post-secondary students also bolster the population count year to year and, while this cohort is largely considered to be transient/temporary, can be expected to take advantage of recreational opportunities in the City.

**The City's Population is expected to experience significant aging over the life of this Plan. Short-term growth is projected for children under the age of 10 years.**

At the level of age cohorts, Thunder Bay's older adult population is expected to experience significant growth over the period of this Master Plan. Marginal growth is expected City-wide for children under the age of 10 years over the short-term planning period. This Master Plan must be responsive to current and future

<sup>1</sup> Sierra Planning and Management projection. The projection is based on the City of Thunder Bay's 2006-2011 Census population by age cohort as a percentage of Thunder Bay District's 2006-2011 Census population. Ministry of Finance Ontario Population Projections (July 2013 figures) were applied

to the calculated age cohort proportions to calculate City of Thunder Bay's 2016-2041 projected population.

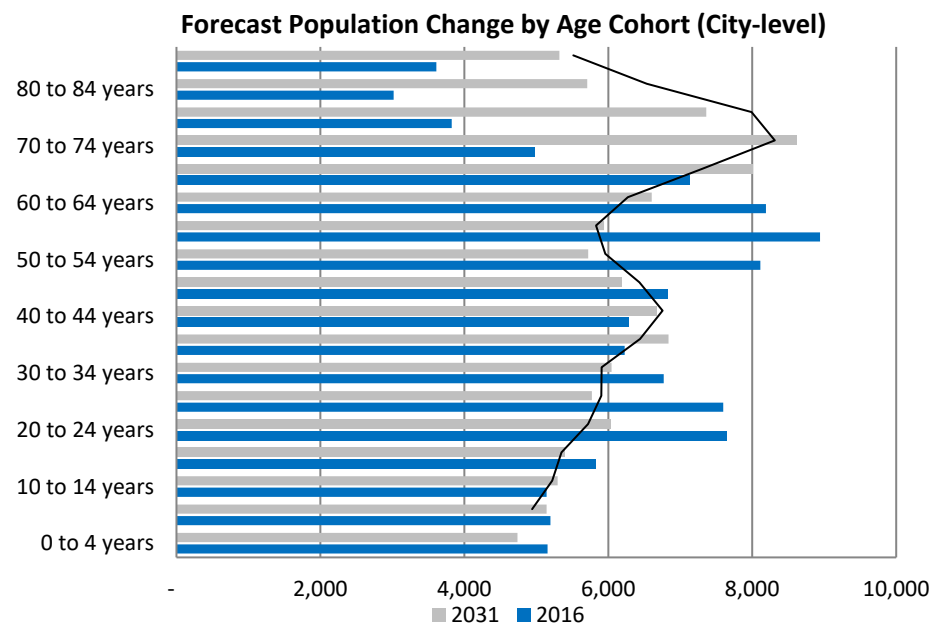
## 4 Thunder Bay Recreation & Facilities Master Plan

community needs and recognizes that investment in recreation should form part of a broader strategy to retain young families in the City of Thunder Bay.

**Exhibit 2: Population change at the level of individual age cohorts over the next 15 years**

	2016	2021	5 Yr. Change	2031	15Yr Change
Children (0-9)	10,354	10,429	1%	9,883	-5%
Youth (10-19)	10,979	10,519	-4%	10,697	-3%
Young Adults (20-29)	15,248	13,838	-9%	11,807	-23%
Adults (30-64)	51,360	49,379	-4%	44,011	-14%
Older Adults (65+)	22,573	26,761	19%	35,015	55%

A decline in the youth and young adult population is forecast and can be expected to be impacted by out-migration related to opportunities for higher education (college and university) in other parts of the Province and Canada.



Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on Ministry of Finance Ontario Population Projections (July 2013 figures)

## 2.2 Understanding Thunder Bay's Neighbourhoods

Dissemination areas as determined by Statistics Canada serve as the basis for the following assessment of neighbourhood change. Population and household projections are based on Community Analyst data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Planning Department and illustrate those shifts in the demographic base for individual neighbourhoods that can be expected over a 10-year period.

Over the next 4 years and within the short-term timeframe of this Master Plan, a number of Thunder Bay's older neighbourhoods within and surrounding the downtown are expected to experience a marginal decline in population (as indicated by the areas in purple). These areas are projected to continue to experience decline over the medium to longer-term (from 2021-2025).

The areas in purple below correspond with designated urban residential zones in the City's current Official Plan (Schedule C, updated as of March 2002). A few areas within the core are expected to experience growth - particularly neighbourhoods in and around the Canada Games Complex and Lakehead University as well as rural residential parts of Thunder Bay surrounding the core.

**Over a 10-year period, some urban residential areas are expected to experience no change in the under 5 population while other(s) are expected experience a marginal decline**

At the level of individual age cohorts, the trend of change is more dynamic. The exhibits below indicate that many of those historic urban residential areas are expected to have a marginal decline in the under 5 age group over the next decade. Growth in the under 5 population can be expected in non-urban parts of the city and again around the CGC/University area.

The 2015 Early Development Instrument (EDI) report for Thunder Bay – Atikokan (CMA) offers a further intel on developmental trends and patterns affecting child populations in neighbourhoods in Thunder Bay.

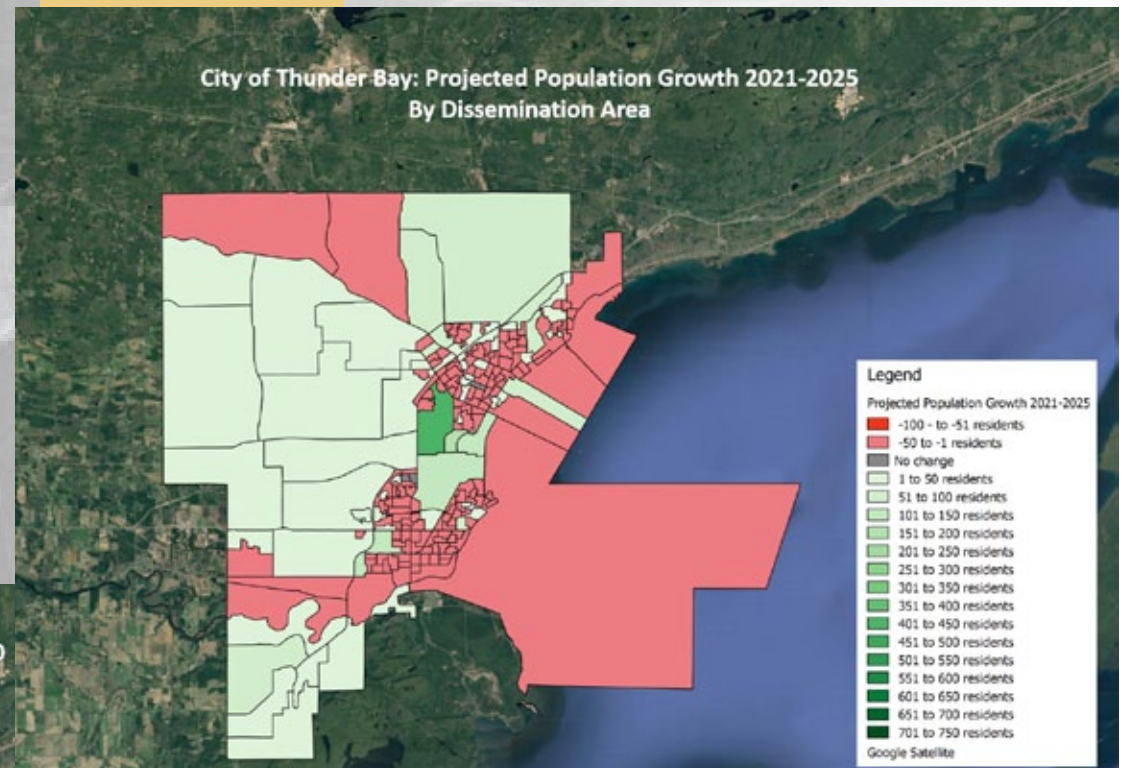
EDI measures early child development in five key domains: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills and general knowledge. The EDI indicates that 23.8% of Kindergarten children in the city of Thunder Bay are vulnerable in the domain of physical health and well-being, and 35.7% are vulnerable on at least one domain. Recent EDI mapping indicates there are a few communities in the City in which higher concentrations of the resident child population show vulnerabilities on one or more scales. Specifically, communities surrounding the Sir Winston Churchill Pool and the area of the Canada Games Complex exhibit anywhere from 50% to 70% vulnerability on one or more scales. As it relates to this Master Plan, infrastructure investment and renewal which support access to recreation and programs for children and youth in these locations will form part of the public support system for early childhood development.

The dispersal of early childhood development challenges also speaks to the importance of the hub and spoke model for the delivery of community programs

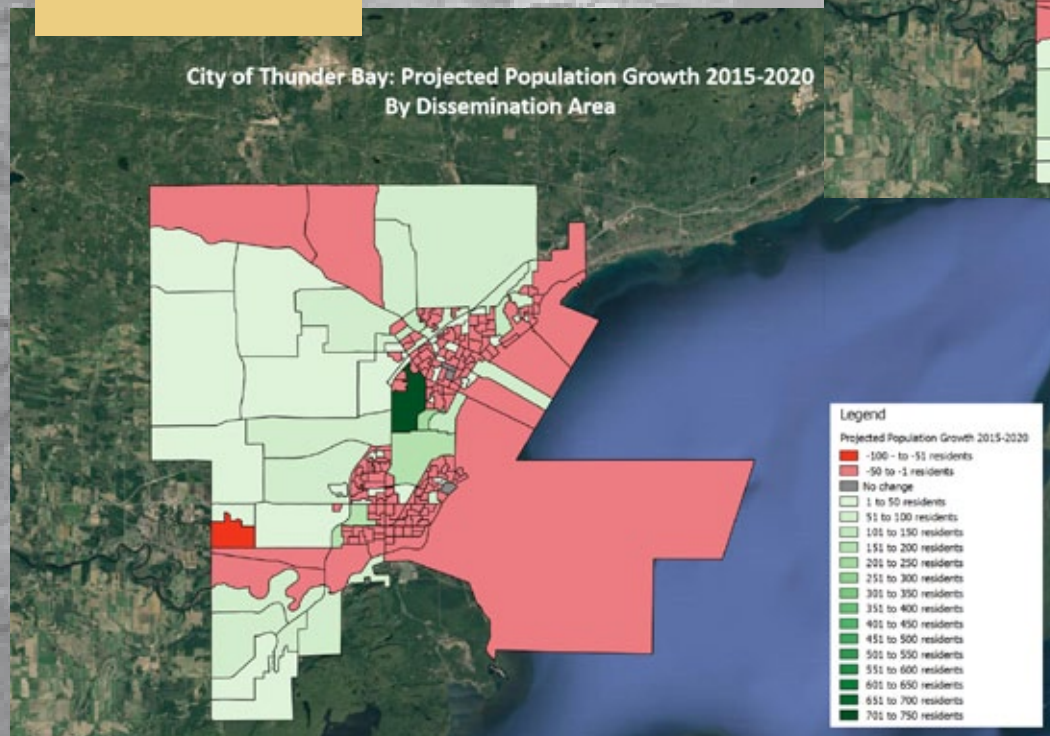


# TOTAL POPULATION CHANGE IN NEIGHBOURHOODS

## LONGER-TERM



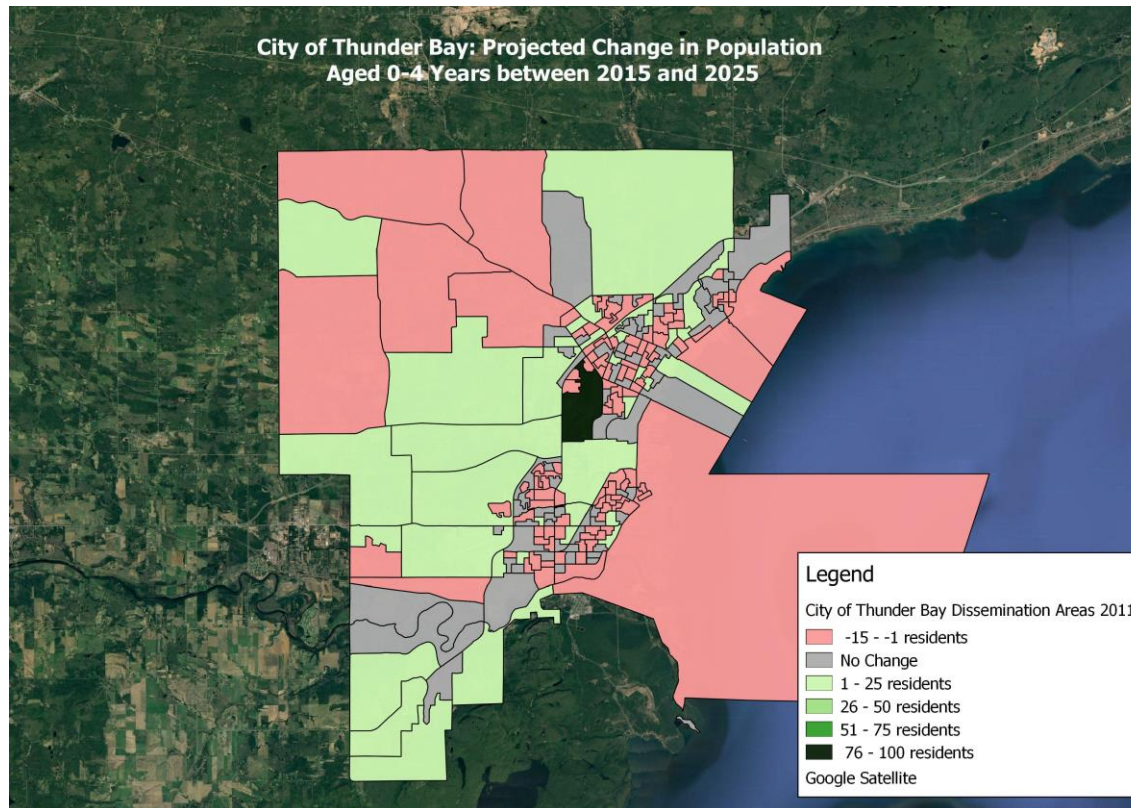
## SHORTER-TERM



Source: Mapping based on Community Analyst Program Data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Planning Department

through central and neighbourhood-based recreation and community centres as a means of facilitating responsiveness to the needs of vulnerable children who if not assisted are likely to transition to be vulnerable youth. This Master Plan acknowledges that the distribution of recreational facilities is well-positioned to serve children in vulnerable neighbourhoods.

**Exhibit 3: Forecast 10-year change in under 5-year-old population in the City of Thunder Bay**



Source: Mapping based on Community Analyst Program Data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Planning Department



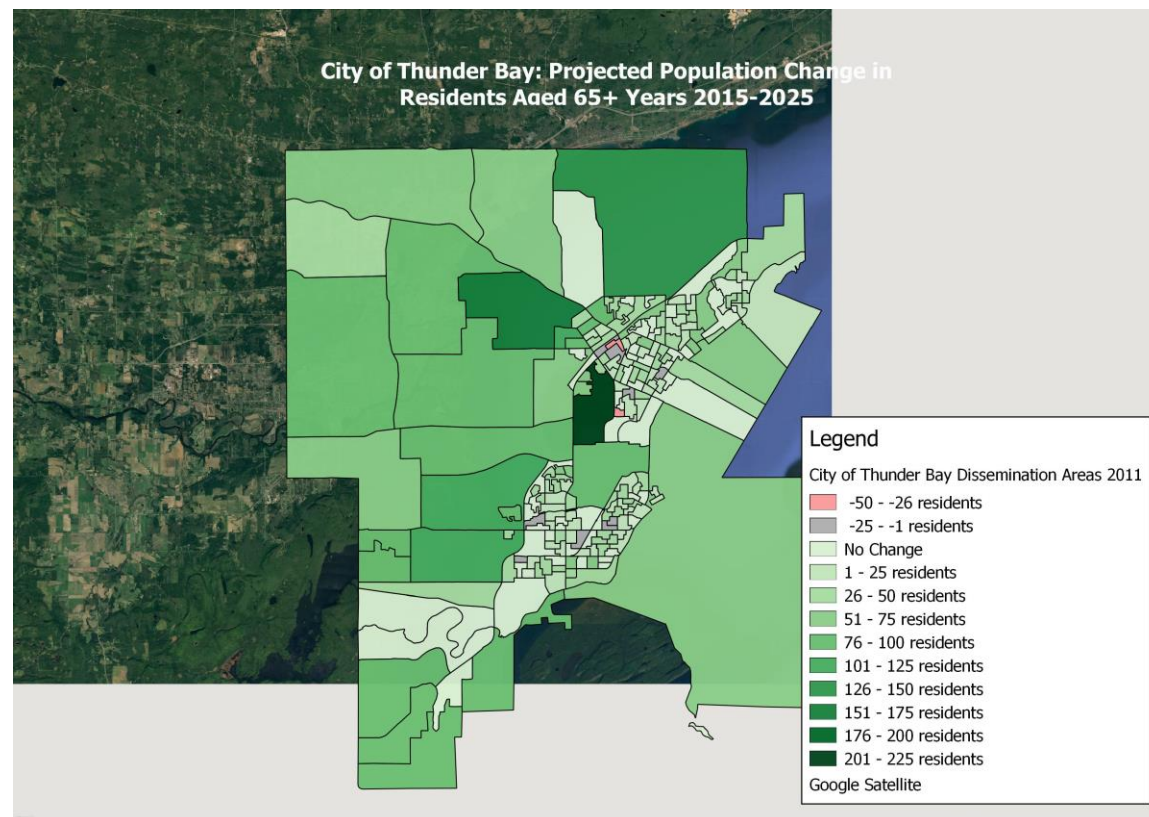
Photos: Thunder Bay in the past

**The older adult population is expected to have a greater spread of growth across the City with very few urban residential areas planned to experience a decline in this cohort**

The trend with the senior population is almost the opposite to the under 5 age cohort (as illustrated in Exhibit 3) in that most all neighbourhoods across the City are expected to see growth in the older adult population with some areas remaining relatively stable. Growth in the City's older adult population is expected to be more significant in McIntyre Ward just outside the urban residential area of the City, Current River Ward and the CGC/Lakehead University area.



Exhibit 4: Forecast 10-year change in 65+ year old population in the City of Thunder Bay



Source: Mapping based on Community Analyst Program Data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Planning Department

## A Plan to address change

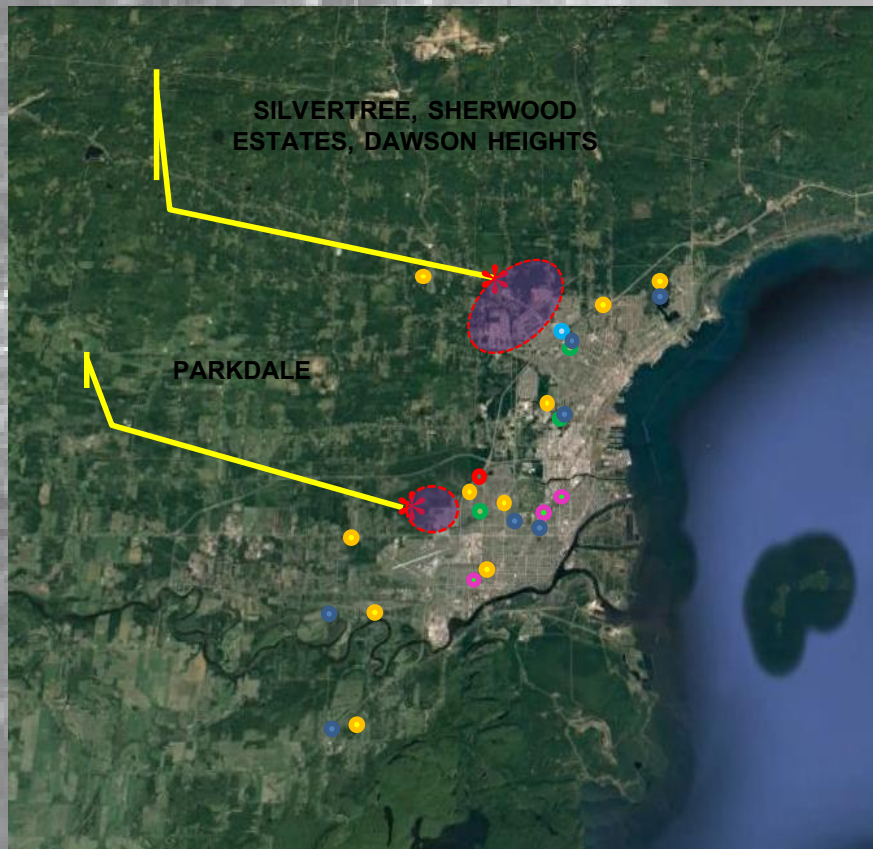
Projections illustrate the following:

- Short-term planning for recreation should seek to leverage marginal population growth forecast over the next 5 years and help to stem future anticipated decline by enhancing quality of life opportunities for residents through investment in facilities, programs and services.
- A hollowing of the urban residential area. The ability to animate spaces and the creation of recreation zones of attraction will work to re-establish the urban area as a place to live, work, play and invest.
- The need to plan for a growing older adult demographic while recognizing it is just as important to champion opportunities for the younger population. This necessitates providing experiences for younger families.

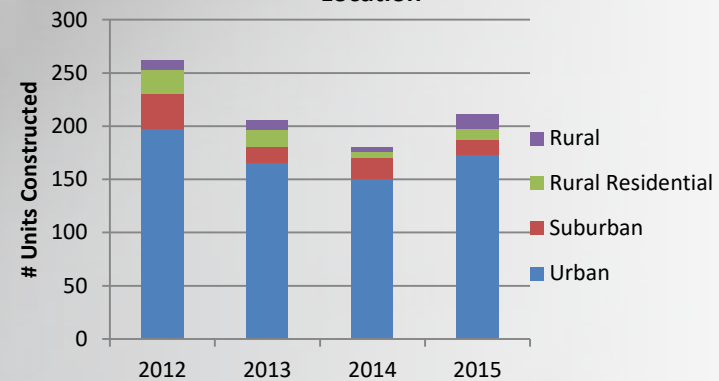


# PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

## NEIGHBOURHOOD GROWTH



**Residential Units Constructed 2012-2015 by Location**



Source: City of Thunder Bay – Residential Lot/Unit Inventory and Monitoring Reports 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015

Mapping is illustrative of zonal locations only and not to scale

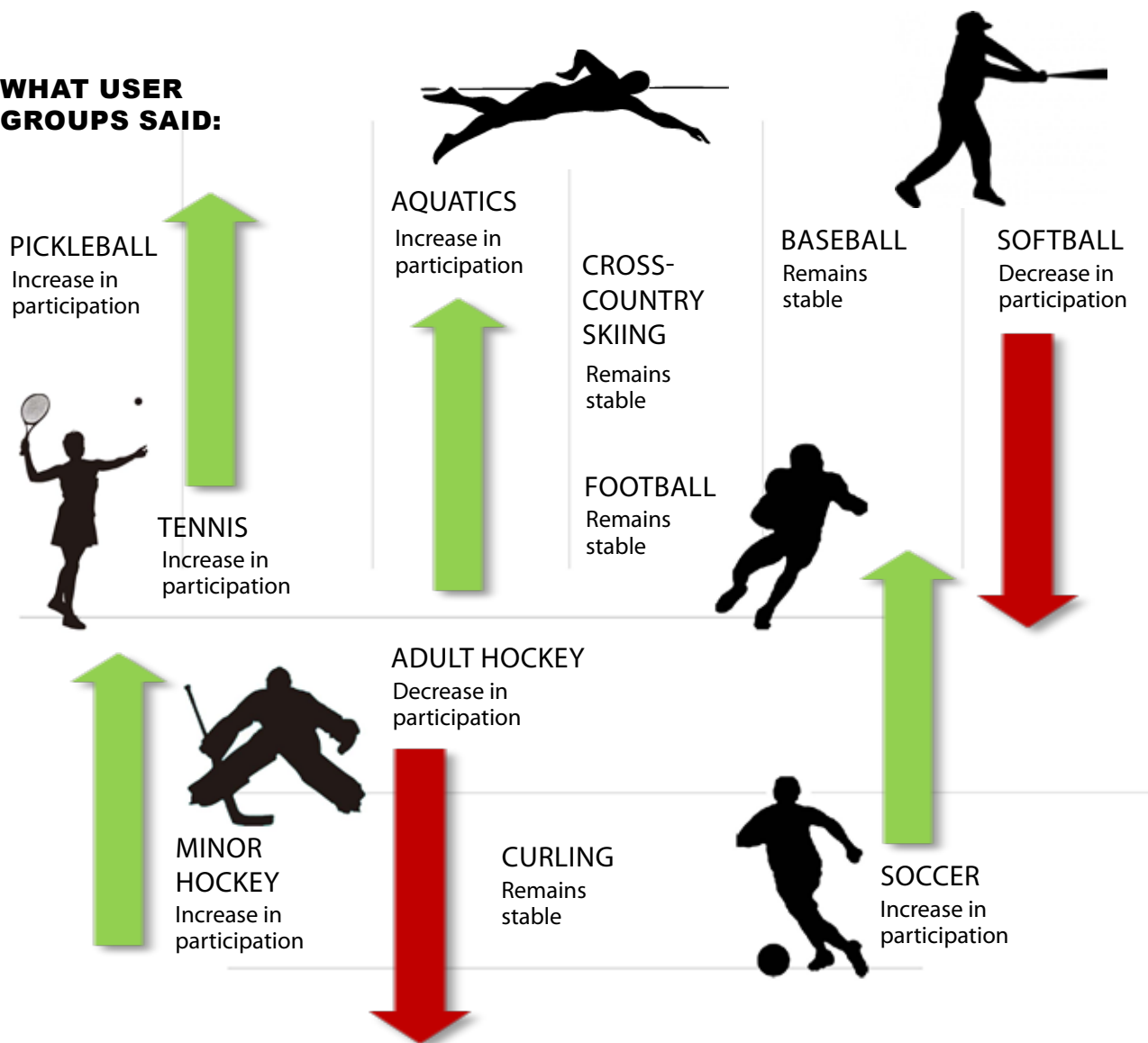
### LEGEND

- Arenas & Stadia
- Community Centres
- Dedicated Older Adult Centre
- Dedicated Youth Centre
- Indoor Pools
- Outdoor Pools
- Area of Growth

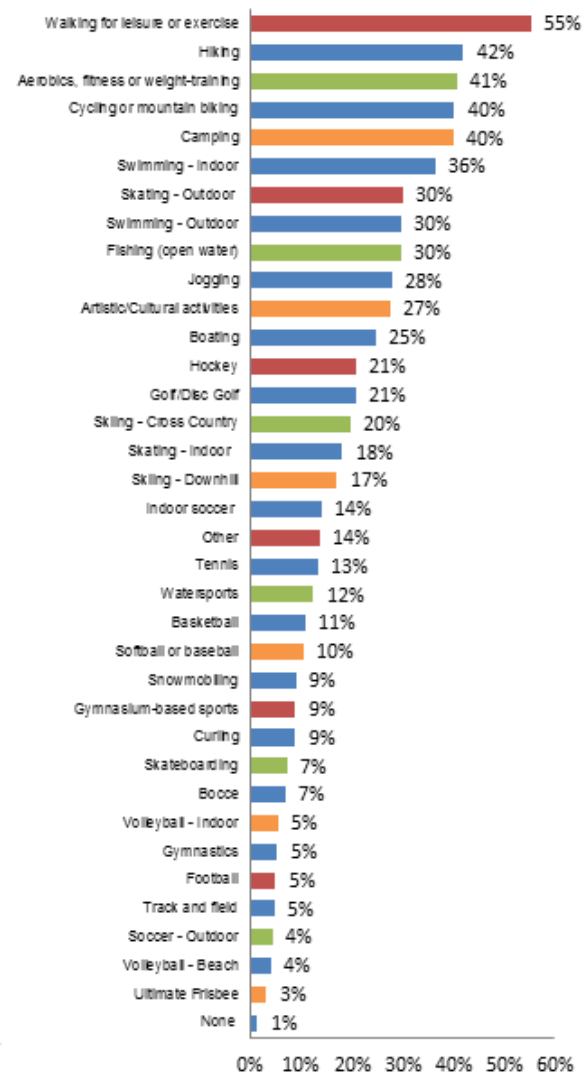
## 2.3 Local Demand for Activities: Trends in Participation

In addition to demographic trends, this Master Plan recognizes that recreation demand and consequently demand for programs, activities and facilities have shifted in the City of Thunder Bay over the last few decades.

### WHAT USER GROUPS SAID:



### WHAT THE PUBLIC SAID:



Participation trends among survey respondents mirror national and provincial trends in that accessible and/or informal recreational activities ranked high in popularity. Swimming, hockey and soccer are popular forms of organized and unorganized sport.

### 3 The Value of Investment in Recreation

#### The Value Proposition of Investment

Recreation is a core service of the City of Thunder Bay. As a municipal corporation, the City has a portfolio of responsibility for a number of recreational assets (parks, arenas, sports fields, playgrounds and trails) spanning across 328.24 square kilometer land area. Through its Community Services Department, the Municipality spends approximately \$17 million in operating dollars on buildings and programs only. Combined, to include parks and open spaces – the City spends roughly \$32 million dollars per annum on operations – this amounts to \$292 per capita in annual investment.

The City of Thunder Bay has a long history of providing affordable and accessible recreation opportunities. Private providers and community partners serve to complement this mandate but do not bear the same geographic scope of influence or capacity for change and investment in the sector as the municipal corporation has been proven to effect. The mandate of the Community Services Department reflects the role of providing access to recreation to all residents irrespective of age, ability and gender and income. This remains an expectation of the residents of Thunder Bay.

#### Investment for residents

This Master Plan recognizes a number of significant shifts in the population and social context of Thunder Bay – all of which have economic implications. The value proposition for investment in recreation lies in the creative ability of the sector to foster civic participation as well as resident health and well-being through the delivery of programs and investment in facilities. Linked to this are opportunities to sustain community pride, stem population decline and revitalize communities and neighbourhoods through new investment. Enhancing quality of life in the City through investment in recreation will be important for resident retention and positioning the City as a place to live, work and invest.

**The value proposition for investment in recreation lies in the creative ability of the sector to foster civic participation as well as resident health and well-being through the delivery of programs and investment in facilities.**





POLICY FRAMEWORK  
FOR THE RECREATION &  
FACILITIES MASTER PLAN



## Regional and Economic Implications

In addition to the above, this Master Plan recognizes the City of Thunder Bay is a regional service centre. Travel to the city by non-residents for services, commerce and educational needs means investment in recreation has regional implications. In particular, the municipality is an educational service area for Indigenous youth from reserve areas that board within the city with host families during the school year. The Municipality has an important role to play in servicing this population in part through the provision of safe and accessible recreational opportunities.

It is a priority of the City's sport tourism policy to position Thunder Bay as a leading sport host community. The ability to successfully host major sporting events will out of necessity require a plan for investment in infrastructure which recognizes the service function and potential of individual buildings.

Outdoor and sporting activities continue to be a significant market for the Thunder Bay District area as well as the city. Traditional recreation and sport alone brought in almost \$3 million on tourism receipts (that is, ticket sales) to the Thunder Bay District in 2012<sup>2</sup>. This figure is exclusive of other 'spin-off' expenses on other leisure activities, food and beverage, accommodations and retail. Protecting and enhancing the local recreation and sport tourism offer can be expected to increase visitor spending in the city.

It is a principle of this Master Plan that investment in facilities, programs and services be made efficiently and where appropriate partnerships should be leveraged to implement priorities.

## 3.1 The Approach to Planning

This Master Plan recognizes the value proposition of investment in recreation for the communities and citizens of Thunder Bay. The city is expected to experience negative growth as well as aging over the planning period. As such, a number of recommendations within the Master Plan are based on factors other than population-related needs for recreation facilities and services, specifically the following influences have been considered:

- The current age and functional conditions of major recreation assets as well as the likely future budgetary impacts resulting from maintaining these facilities in the current state;

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport 2012 Regional Tourism Profile data

- The relative utilization of facilities assessed against trends in demand for recreation as determined through community engagement activities and as identified by local user groups;
- Community demand for change and investment related to the quality of services, programs and facilities provided by the Municipality.

All of the above has impacted the nature and timing of individual actions recommended in this Plan. This Master Plan is situated within the broader context of planning for the city including strategic priorities and policies for age-friendly and healthy communities, the enhancement of services to youth and the Indigenous population, crime prevention and community safety as well as smart growth.

Many of the recommendations contained in this document are expected to extend well beyond the 15-year time horizon – particularly those major capital expenditure items for which the timing can only be estimated based on the combined aims and objectives of this Master Plan in isolation from broader municipal priorities over the period.

A number of the recommendations regarding services represent actions that, once initiated, are expected to remain in place over the full life of the Master Plan and beyond. This includes procedural activities, user fee related policies, and municipal organizational support surrounding the provision of both recreation facilities, programs and services.

This Plan is expected to be delivered in an accountable manner with annual monitoring for success in resourcing and implementing these recommendations. Section 10 of this document outlines key strategies to accomplish this.

Although a number of actions contained in this Master Plan can be implemented as stand-alone items, the major facility changes recommended represent contingent actions. This includes linked actions to repurpose facilities as well as invest in new infrastructure, and the gradual development of programs and other services which are made possible by the investment in new facilities. Several key recommendations of this Master Plan involve further analysis and

strategy creation, such as concept development and feasibility assessments related to the provision of major new infrastructure as well as the necessary repurposing of existing assets.

### **3.2 Reviewing the Assets: Supply, Standards and Targets**

The City of Thunder Bay's Community Services Department owns 484,000 gross square feet spaces across the built recreation assets under the departmental portfolio. The asset portfolio comprises:

- 7 arenas within a combined total of 8 ice pads;
- 1 curling rink;
- 3 indoor pools and 3 outdoor pools;
- 1 baseball stadium;
- 1 track and field stadium;
- 9 Community Centres as well as 39 meeting spaces across the range of municipal facilities;
- 1 dedicated Older Adult (55+) Centre and 1 dedicated Youth Centre;
- The Baggage Building at Prince Arthur's Landing; and

- Storage and concession facilities at Sandy Beach and Boulevard Lake.

Added to this review are a range of outdoor, park-based assets which have planning implications for major infrastructure. These include the services of ball diamonds, soccer

fields, water play features and other outdoor recreation assets associated with key buildings and sites operated by the Community Services Department.

**Exhibit 5: Population-based standards for facilities relevant to asset planning for the Community Services Department**

	Ownership				City Population Standard					Target/Comparable Standard
Facility Type	Municipal	Private	Other Public	Total	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	
Indoor										
Ice Pads	8	0	1	9	12,040	12,279	12,325	12,368	12,379	1 per 15,000-20,000 population
Curling Rinks	1	1	0	2	54,180	55,257	55,463	55,658	55,707	No target/comparable standard
Indoor Pools	3	0	1	4	27,090	27,629	27,731	27,829	27,853	1 per 40,000 to 50,000 population
Community Centres	10	8	1	19	5,703	5,817	5,838	5,859	5,864	1 per 20,000 to 50,000 population*
Tennis Club House	1	0	0	1	108,359	110,514	110,925	111,315	111,414	No target/comparable standard
Dedicated Older Adults Centre(s)	1	0	0	1	108,359	110,514	110,925	111,315	111,414	Supply dependent on community need
Dedicated Youth Centre(s)	1	0	0	1	108,359	110,514	110,925	111,315	111,414	Supply dependent on community need
Meeting Spaces/Multi-Purpose Rooms	39	12	10	61	1,776	1,812	1,818	1,825	1,826	No target/comparable standard
Indoor Artificial Turf	0	1	1	2	54,180	55,257	55,463	55,658	55,707	No target/comparable standard
Gymnasia	1	0	51	52	2,084	2,125	2,133	2,141	2,143	1 per 20,000 - 50,000 population**
Outdoor										
Outdoor Pools	3	0	0	3	36,120	36,838	36,975	37,105	37,138	No target/comparable standard
Artificial Turf	1	0	0	1	108,359	110,514	110,925	111,315	111,414	No target/comparable standard
Soccer Fields (senior, natural , useable)	16	0	5	21	5160	5263	5282	5301	5305	1 per 3,000 residents***
Ball Diamonds	46	0	1	47	2306	2351	2360	2368	2371	1 per 2,500 residents
Play Fountains/Spray pads	2	-	-	2	5,418	5,177	5,214	5,164	4,941	1 per 2,500-5,000 residents (age 0-9 years old)
Splash Pads/Wading Pools	1	-	-	1	10,835	10,354	10,429	10,328	9,883	1 per 2,500-5,000 residents (age 0-9 years old)

\* Considering the municipal supply of community centres only, the standard is 1 per 11,000 population

\*\* The school supply of gymnasia significantly improves the standard. Recognizing that the public is not the priority user for these spaces, this Master Plan evaluates the municipal supply of space. The municipal standard for gymnasia is 1 per 110,514 population.

\*\*\* This standard focuses on those fields that are actually appropriate for public use to more accurately reflect demand pressure.



### 3.2.1. Establishing Standards of Provision

This Master Plan establishes standards of provision as appropriate for various types of facilities as a general guideline for determining present and future facility needs based on population and/or participation thresholds (i.e. the number of people or participants per type of facility).

Provision standards have been established on the basis of an evaluation of:

- Current standards of facility provision in Thunder Bay on the basis of population and participation (where known);
- Community and user group demand for and utilization of recreation facilities as determined throughout consultation and through historic utilization statistics; and
- Standards of facility provision in other comparable Ontario communities.

The Exhibit 6 below reflects an appropriate standard of provision for individual classes of facilities in the City of Thunder Bay based on a holistic understanding of local market demand, the capacity of buildings and best practice in provision. Targets also take into account the complementary stock of facilities in the non-municipal supply and anecdotal understandings of how these facilities service local needs. Standards reflect the unique environment that is the City of Thunder Bay.

#### Population and Participation Standards

The table above provides an overview of standards by facility. Population-based target standards of facility provision are most appropriately applied to those facilities historically developed in response to community-wide and/or City-wide needs (such as arenas, indoor aquatic facilities etc.). In the case of new and emerging sports (i.e. niche activities such as Ultimate Frisbee) population-based standards have little applicability and do not reflect the scale and specificity of demand for such activities which may be influenced by a range of locational, demographic, historic and even ethnic dynamics. Individual recommendations of this Master Plan weigh the applicability of population-based targets accordingly.

Participation-based standards serve as an alternative measure for future facility provision and take into consideration of the nature of dynamics of local sport participation among youth and adults (i.e. trends). Sierra Planning and Management undertook an assessment of local level participation and team registrations by sport. Where participation information was available, participation-based standards were established.

In general, participation-based standards are based on minor sport registration due to data limitations regarding adult participation. It should be noted that standards do not speak to issues of facility quality and conditions and therefore represent one measure of consideration for future facility provision.

#### Exhibit 6: Participation Standards for the City of Thunder Bay

	2016 City Standard			Target/Comparable standard			
<b>Arena Ice</b>	1 pad	per	376	1 pad	per	450-700	minor sport participants
<b>Curling Ice</b>	1 sheet	per	169	Not applicable			
<b>Indoor Pools</b>	1 indoor pool	per	96	Not applicable			
<b>Soccer</b>	1 field	per	322	1 field	per	120	registered participants
<b>Baseball</b>	1 diamond	per	42	1 diamond	per	150	registered participants



## PART 2: CHANGE IN ACTION



## VISION:



Thunder Bay is a vibrant City providing **positive** and **animated places** and opportunities for residents and visitors to **recreate, engage** and **connect**.





## 4 Pillars of the Plan

This Master Plan - its vision, objectives and recommendations – are based on 8 key pillars:

### CITY SERVING + NEIGHBOURHOOD FOCUS

Planning for recreation is on a City-wide basis. It is also about planning for local needs. Some assets are city-regional, others community-serving and other neighbourhood in focus. This Plan recognizes this and redefines the appropriate service mandate for each class of facility.

The City will invest in multi-purpose/use community recreation hubs which provide the maximum opportunities for synergies and efficiency in programming and recreational delivery.

Partners for facilities, services and programs are also City-wide.

### AN INCLUSIVE CITY

The City has a leading role in helping shape quality of life, integration of a diversifying population, the specific needs of target groups and in setting standards for service.

An inclusive City promotes heritage, creates new traditions and harnesses emerging needs.

### AGE-FRIENDLY + ACCESSIBLE RECREATION

The City will seek to empower residents (irrespective of age, ethnicity and ability) to maximize / optimize opportunities for recreation in their daily lives by facilitating range of passive and active pursuits.

With the development of new recreation facilities, the City will engage in new/expanded programming opportunities to maximize the full benefit of facilities for children, youth, adults and seniors.

The City, through programming, partnerships and other opportunities will encourage active lifestyles and sport for life.

'Accessibility' is not necessarily 'local' by definition but includes a range of mechanisms that allow resident to connect virtually or physically to opportunities and services.

The City will prioritize program and service development efforts for key target groups (youth, seniors, families, Persons with Disabilities, Aboriginal residents) and important segments of the community that require a broad range of access and coordinated services.

### POSITIVE PLACES + ANIMATED SPACES

The City will help to foster positive environments, inspiring culture as well as excellence through investment in spaces and facilities that celebrate the diversity of the community and support a range of recreational pursuits.

Investment in infrastructure will seek to remove a range of barriers (physical, financial, social and cultural) to participation in recreation.

Centralizing, co-locating facilities to create synergy.

### CORE AND EVOLVING PARTNERSHIPS

The Recreation and Culture Division will strive to ensure the most effective use of City resources to maximize all opportunities for partnership development and sponsorship (including with industry and the corporate sector).

### SERVICES FOR THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The Recreation and Culture Division will endeavour to provide high quality and integrated services that are responsive to community needs.

With a focus on service excellence, the Division will work with service partners in recreation delivery to maximize outputs through the coordination of resources.

As a provider of facilities, high standards of planning will be applied to decisions on investment in facilities to meet the needs of a modern community.

### A MEASUREABLE PLAN

With a focus on outputs and annual targets.

A plan that leverages opportunities for City-controlled assets.

### AN AFFORDABLE PLAN

A plan that prioritizes value for money and the value proposition of investment for the broadest reaching benefits to residents.

# GOAL #1:

## **INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE AS A QUALITY OF LIFE PRINCIPLE**

### Objectives:

- Ensure long-term capital planning for infrastructure renewal as a principle of operational sustainability and efficient facility maintenance;
- To enhance where feasible and fiscally sustainable the use life of existing facilities – maintain assets, upgrade, expand or replace where necessary;
- Plan for and invest in multi-use and multi-generational (8-80) spaces – this may include investment in facilities and community hubs but also sport fields and other open spaces.
- Invest in infrastructure that links residents to recreation facilities and programming while promoting active transportation.
- Explore alternative facility delivery, operation models and pursue partnerships in funding and operations.

# GOAL #2:

## **PROMOTE HEALTH, WELLNESS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR COMMUNITY WELL-BEING**

### Objectives

- To promote physical activity as a way of life and quality of life through programming and education of target groups;
- To foster community connections through the promotion of opportunities for participation and volunteerism in recreation.
- To offer opportunities for participation in recreation for all members of the community irrespective of age, ability, ethnicity and income; and
- To ensure passive and active recreational opportunities are accessible through a range of unaffiliated activities (e.g. trails).

## **OPTIMIZE THE CITY'S ROLE IN PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Objectives:**

- Adopt a social development approach to program development and service delivery which recognizes recreation as a means to address issues of poverty alleviation, crime prevention and social inequality.
- Ensure efficiency in resource allocation when planning for recreation program and service delivery through dialogue and processes which support sustainable collaboration across a variety of sectors (municipal, public, private, institutional and community).
- To continue to target youth and children through programming by growing the program offer for older youth (ages 13-18) and investing in youth-centered spaces.
- As the older adult population grows, work to broaden the complement of active and leisure programs available to this age group.
- Encourage and facilitate new sport and non-traditional means of participation through alternative and informal outdoor opportunities and by keeping a pulse on emerging demand for activities.

## **GOAL #3:**

## **GOAL #4:**

### **A COORDINATED AND INTEGRATED DELIVERY SYSTEM – POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES**

#### **Objectives:**

- Ensure municipal cross-departmental collaboration, planning and decision-making.
- To enhance legislative policies and strategic planning around the delivery of recreation and support of community/volunteer driven pursuits.
- To develop, maintain and enhance effective, efficient and formal partnerships for program development, service delivery and facility maintenance.



## GOAL #5:

### **STRENGTHEN THE CITY'S TOURISM MANDATE AND LEVERAGE ITS ROLE AS A REGIONAL SERVICE HUB**

#### Objectives:

- To view the impact of recreation service delivery as more than City-wide, recognizing that investment in facilities, programs and services will attract users from surrounding areas;
- To pursue all opportunities to develop recreational infrastructure which offer the dual benefit of addressing local needs and maximizing tournament and event hosting opportunities through leveraging Provincial and Federal funding and partnership opportunities;
- To develop services in support of visitors and sport tourism.

## 6 Excellence in Stewardship and Investment in Facilities

Part I of this Master Plan outlines general planning considerations and trends impacting the delivery and demand for recreation programs, services and facilities. The following sections of this document speak specifically to the dynamics of utilization, condition, financial and other resource requirements directly affecting the delivery of individual categories of programs, services and facilities.

### Ontario's Recreation Infrastructure is in a State of Decline

Goals and objectives of this Master Plan provide for investment in infrastructure as a quality of life principle and recognize long-term capital planning for infrastructure renewal as a principle of operational sustainability and efficient facility maintenance.

Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) defines recreation infrastructure as “indoor and outdoor places and facilities that offer specific health, social, environmental and economic benefits to the individuals and communities in which they live.” In the report *Major Municipal Sport and Recreation Facility Inventory*, PRO identified that the majority of municipally-owned infrastructure in Ontario was in a state of decline, with up to 55% of municipally-owned community centres in the Province requiring significant upgrades or replacement in the short future as the majority of facilities were built between 1956 and 1980. Roughly 70% of Thunder Bay's recreation building stock was built during this same period.

Well-designed and functioning recreation facilities are important to creating and maintaining healthy communities. The following recommendations pertain to a range of recreation facilities. Recommendations give balanced consideration to:

- Current demand and utilization of facilities and addresses gaps in the existing inventory based on an understanding of user and community demand for spaces;

**Roughly 70% of Thunder Bay's recreation building stock was built between 1956 and 1980.**

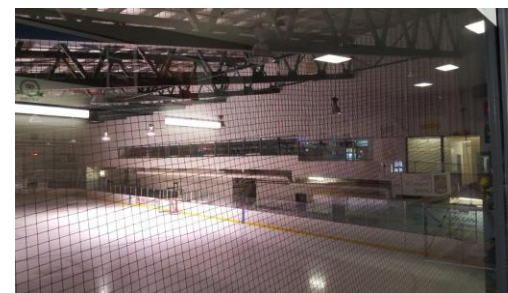
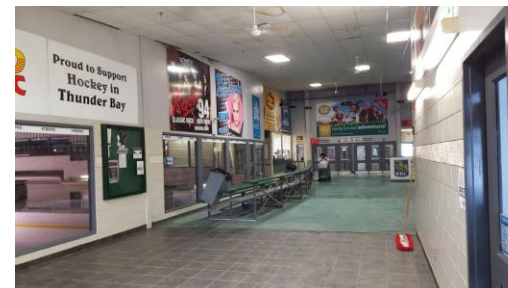
- Existing facility conditions as well as historic and future capital requirements as it relates to the efficiencies of individual buildings;
- The existing scale of use of facilities (City-wide/regional or community/neighbourhood-serving as appropriate); and
- The overall quantity and geographic distribution of facilities weighed against appropriate population and participation-based targets and standards for the City of Thunder Bay.

## 6.1 Arenas

- The City of Thunder Bay owns seven (7) indoor arena facilities – the majority of which are single-pad venues and range from 21 to 66 years in age. The Fort William Gardens facility is the oldest arena having been built in 1950. The Thunder Bay Tournament Centre is the Municipality's newer arena – it was constructed in 1995 and is the only twin-pad venue owned by the City of Thunder Bay.

### Condition & Capital Requirements

In terms of condition, the majority of arenas have a fair to good Facility Condition Index rating. This means that the required level of investment in these buildings (as defined by the total events costs below) does not amount to a share of the replacement value of facilities (2016 adjusted) to trigger investment in replacement. Based on condition only, none of the City's arenas warrant immediate replacement. It should be noted that both the Neebing and Fort William Gardens arenas have the highest FCI ratings and can be expected to warrant address over the longer-term.



Photos: Thunder Bay Tournament Centre

### Exhibit 7: 2016 Facility Condition Index Ratings for City-owned Arenas

Facility Name	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq.Ft.)	Cost / Sq.Ft.	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I. (adjusted event /adjusted replacement \$)
Current River Arena	41	\$915,100	5%	\$960,855	\$5,300,000	26,310	\$325	\$8,550,750	11%
Delaney Arena /Fort William Stadium	57	\$990,550	5%	\$1,040,078	\$6,400,000	35,100	\$250	\$8,775,000	12%
Fort William Gardens	66	\$5,872,500	5%	\$6,166,125	\$19,100,000	66,800	\$325	\$21,710,000	28%
Grandview Arena	48	\$1,157,790	5%	\$1,215,680	\$4,750,000	23,310	\$325	\$7,575,750	16%
Neebing Arena	47	\$1,647,300	5%	\$1,729,665	\$5,175,000	25,000	\$325	\$8,125,000	21%



Facility Name	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq.Ft.)	Cost / Sq.Ft.	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I. (adjusted event /adjusted replacement \$)
Port Arthur Arena	53	\$864,620	5%	\$907,851	\$5,600,000	30,087	\$325	\$9,778,275	9%
Thunder Bay Tournament Centre	21	\$4,018,500	5%	\$4,219,425	\$7,760,640	70,500	\$325	\$22,912,500	18%

Source: FORM Architecture based on Building Condition Reports provided by the City of Thunder Bay

INDUSTRY STANDARD FACILITY CONDITION INDEX (F.C.I)	
Rating	Description
0%-5%	<b>Very Good:</b> Functioning as intended; limited (if any) deterioration observed on major systems.
5%-10%	<b>Good:</b> The asset and its components are functioning as intended; normal deterioration observed on major systems.
10%-30%	<b>Fair:</b> Normal deterioration and minor distress observed. Program delivery is impeded by the asset's condition.
30%-60%	<b>Poor:</b> Not functioning as intended; significant deterioration and distress observed.
60% +	<b>Very Poor:</b> Not functioning as intended; significant deterioration and distress observed

The City of Thunder Bay's 20 Year Event Listing (2016-2035) anticipates a combined investment of \$20.5 million in capital maintenance and replacement expenditures across its existing arenas. Over the course of the 15-year Master Plan period, this reflects a cost of upwards of \$14.6 million.

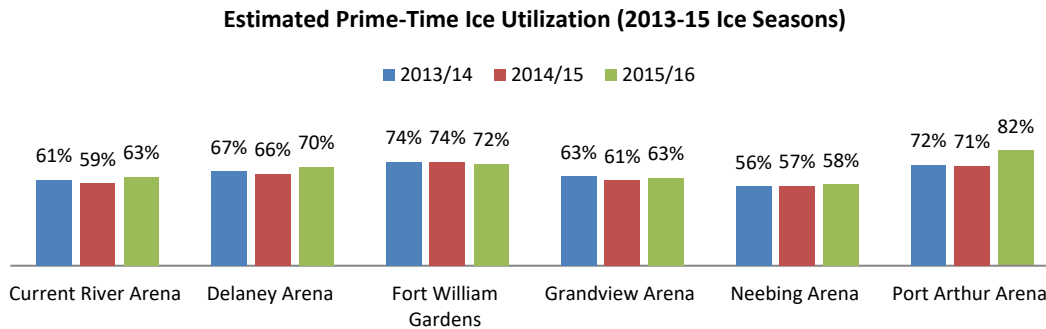
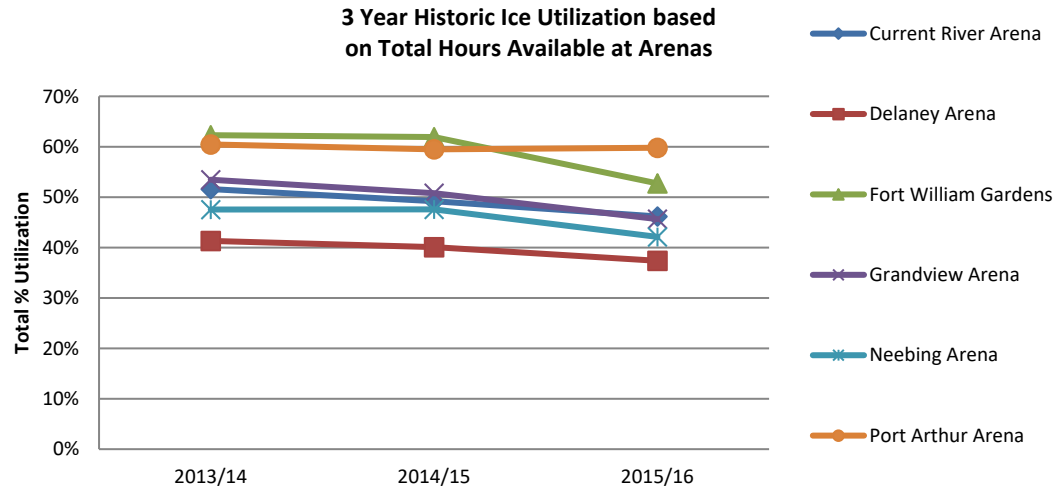
### Utilization

Municipal booking statistics indicate that some arena facilities are more utilized than others. Of the City's inventory, the Tournament Centre and Port Arthur Arena have the highest utilization. Analysis of prime time utilization indicates the Neebing Arena observes the least prime-time utilization of all the facilities.



Photo: Investment in twin ice surfaces (Thunder Bay Tournament Centre)

**Exhibit 8: Historic Arena Ice Utilization for City-owned Arenas**



Data source: Analysis by Sierra Planning and Management based on data from the City of Thunder Bay's Booking System & Nor'Wester

As it relates to the booking of arena facilities for organized sport, user group utilization is largely city-wide based on the current municipal process for ice allocation. The utilization rates across facilities indicate there is no significant pressure on the City's existing arenas to warrant investment in an 8<sup>th</sup> ice pad.

### Operational Performance

With the exception of the Port Arthur Arena, all other arenas operate at a deficit for an average of -\$250,000 per annum - this amounts to a deficit of -\$6.14 per square foot of arena per annum.

The Port Arthur Arena generates a marginal profit of \$55,000 and earns \$1.81 in profit per square foot on an annual basis. Improving the use of this facility where possible may serve to enhance its revenue generating capacity.

Exhibit 9: Financial operating performance for municipally-operated arenas

	Revenues	Expenses	NOI	Sq. Ft	Total Cost Per Sq. Ft	NOI per Sq. Ft.
	<b>Total Costs</b>					
<b>Current River Arena</b>	\$201,863	\$358,568	\$156,704	26,310	\$14	\$6
<b>Delaney Arena &amp; Fort William Stadium</b>	\$292,076	\$526,431	\$234,354	35,100	\$15	\$7
<b>Fort William Gardens</b>	\$350,789	\$985,854	\$635,065	66,800	\$15	\$10
<b>Grandview Arena</b>	\$198,775	\$307,015	\$108,241	23,310	\$13	\$5
<b>Neebing Arena</b>	\$185,954	\$284,052	\$98,098	25,000	\$11	\$4
<b>Port Arthur Arena</b>	\$452,261	\$397,784	\$54,477	30,087	\$13	\$2

Source: City of Thunder Bay - Community Services Department (Central Support)

### Standards of Provision

On the basis of standards, the City of Thunder Bay provides an acceptable level of ice when compared to other comparable Ontario cities of similar size including Sudbury and others surrounding the Greater Toronto Area. The same is true when compared to other Northern Ontario cities/centres.

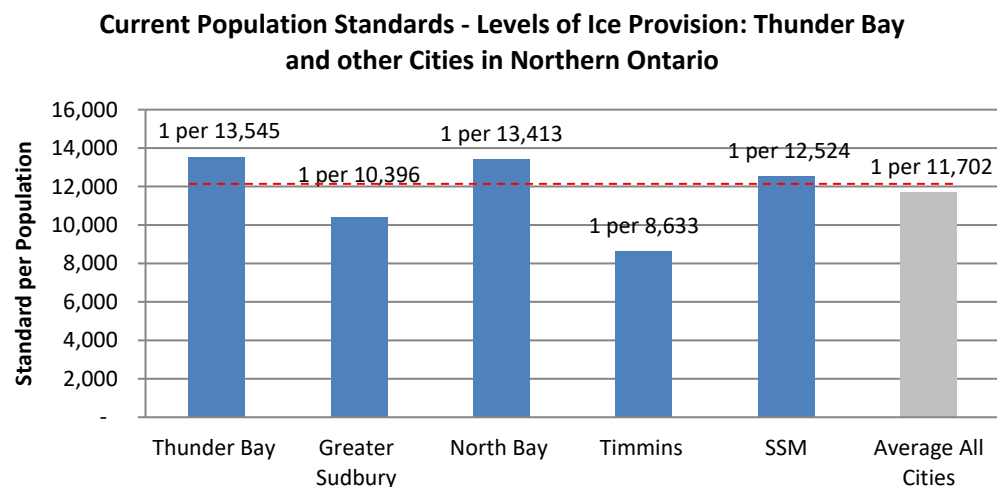


Photo: Grandview Arena

Exhibit 10: Current and Target Standards for Arena Provision

City of Thunder Bay	Current	Target
<b>Population Standard</b>	1 ice pad per 13,545 population	1 ice pad per 15,000-20,000 population
<b>Participation Standard</b>	1 ice pad per 423 youth participants	1 ice pad per 450-700 youth participants





The above indicates the City's arenas have been well-maintained but are aging. Utilization and standards do not indicate the need for investment in an 8<sup>th</sup> ice pad over the course of this Master Plan. Operationally, a number of City's single pad venues operate at a deficit. The opportunity to consolidate the number of geographic locations for ice in the City will offer operational efficiencies – fiscal and otherwise. The rationale for investment in ice per this Master Plan is based on the recognition that:

- The facilities represent an aging stock. While facilities are well maintained many are not modern functionally;
- There are greater operational efficiencies to be gained from twin ice facilities. These include those synergistic benefits related to the consolidation of facilities to achieve not only capital cost savings, but energy efficiency, labour cost efficiency and a variety of other benefits including the potential for hosting sport tourism more effectively; and

- Planning for these facilities is not based solely on sport tourism (though opportunities can be expected to arise through investment) but also recognition of the benefits to the community by way of enhanced recreational opportunities that can arise from investment twinning.

#### Recommendation 1

**Invest in twin ice at the Port Arthur Arena as part of a broader recreation campus plan with the Canada Games Complex. With twinning, plan for the repurposing of the Neebing Arena for other community uses or dispose of this asset.**

Investment in twin ice at Delaney Arena represents an important opportunity as part of broader master planning associated with Chapples Park and should also form part of the strategy to retain the current level of provision of community ice considering the potential loss of community arena ice at Fort William Gardens (FWG) linked to the 2014 Future Use Assessment for this facility.

#### Recommendation 2

**Long-term, invest in a second ice surface at Delaney Arena with the potential loss of community arena ice at Fort William Gardens (FWG). This links to broader planning for Chapples Park**

#### Recommendation 3

**Continue to invest in required event/maintenance/AODA costs for the Current River and Grandview arenas through annual capital planning. In the short-term, only essential capital investments should be made for those facilities subject to decommissioning, repurposing or further study to confirm potential (i.e. Port Arthur, Delaney and FWG arenas).**

suggests the need for a stronger agreement and an enforceable one with a private operator or, alternatively, that the City takes back control and liability for the facility.

#### Recommendation 4

**Continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the lease agreement for the operation of the Tournament Centre including customer satisfaction with the condition and maintenance of the facilities. Long-term, with the end of the current lease agreement, regain the operations of the Tournament Centre.**

### Strategy for the Thunder Bay Tournament Centre (TBTC)

The Thunder Bay Tournament Centre (TBTC) is a 21-year-old facility with a fair (18%) Facility Condition Index rating. Public consultation throughout the course of the Master Plan project indicates the current standard of maintenance of this facility has been poorly received by the community; however, the facility is well-used. In terms of available ice surfaces, the TBTC represents 25% of the current municipal ice supply. The City has no financial risk for operations to date but the expiry of the lease with the private operator could result in the City retaining control over a poorly maintained facility.

The downside of the City's lack of financial risk is public dissatisfaction. A strategy for the TBTC is important to this Master Plan. Evidence suggests that a no-cost option to the City through a partnership deal for operations is unlikely to occur unless multiple facilities are included. Despite no annual financial requirement, there is long-term risk to the City which

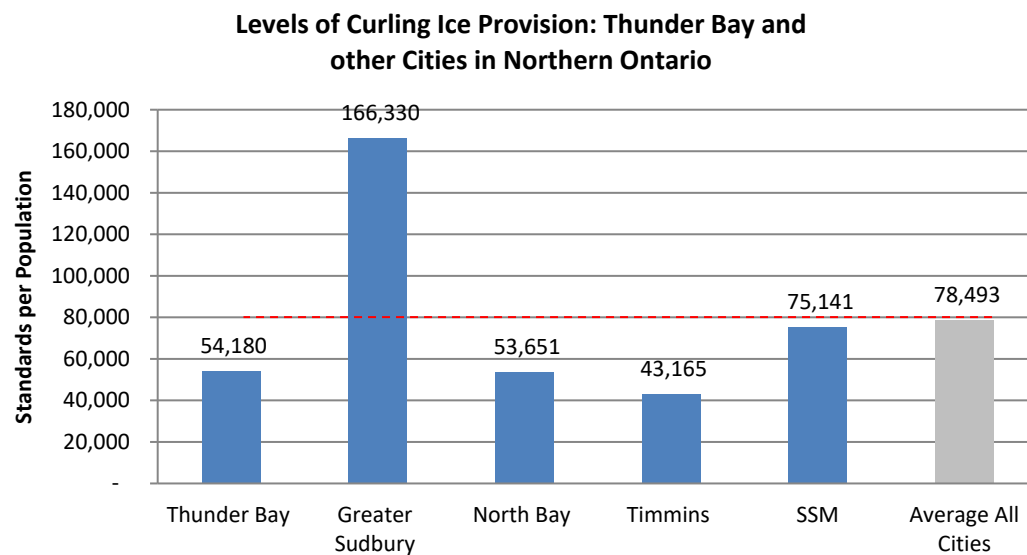
## 6.2 Curling

The City owns 1 curling rink within Fort William Gardens. While the City retains the operating costs of this facility, it leases the asset to the Fort William Curling Club – the latter is responsible for the day-to-day management of this facility including rentals and bookings. The Fort William Curling Club retains all rental related revenues.

### Condition & Costs

Exhibit 7 identified that the FWG including the curling facility was in a state of good repair. Replacement and maintenance cost comprise estimates for the FWG as outlined in Exhibit 7.

Annual operating costs comprise those identified for FWG in Exhibit 9.



### Standard of Provision

The current level of provision for curling ice is 1 per 54,148 population when considering the private stock which includes the Port Arthur Curling Club facility. In general, there are no standards applied to curling facilities and levels of municipal provision of curling ice are variable across the Province. The same is true for communities in Northern Ontario. For context, the exhibit below indicates the current level of provision of curling ice in Northern Ontario.

The sport of curling has a longstanding history in Thunder Bay and should be maintained. This Master Plan does not propose any additional curling surfaces as there is no requirement for this based on standards.

This Master Plan recognizes important recommendations of the 2014 Future Reuse Assessment for Fort William Gardens specifically as it relates to the opportunity to:

- Decommissioning arena ice at this location; and
- Investment in a range of hard surface uses including indoor tennis with the removal of

community ice – the results would be a multi-use indoor recreation centre which includes curling.

The loss of arena ice at this location will be offset by investment in a second ice surface at Delaney Arena over the long-term. The result will be no net loss of community ice in the City of Thunder Bay.

#### Recommendation 5

**Test the feasibility of adding curling to any new investment in community ice in order to allow Fort William Gardens to be fully disposed of for redevelopment and evaluate the cost-benefit of disposal.**

**Should the above not be feasible, the City has the option to retain curling ice at Fort William Gardens and proceed with recommendations of the 2014 Future Reuse Assessment for Fort William Gardens.**



Photos: Fort William Gardens





### 6.3 Indoor Aquatics

There are 3 indoor pool facilities which comprise the municipal inventory of assets – the Canada Games Complex, Sir Winston Churchill Pool and the Volunteer Pool. These pool facilities rank in fair to good condition:

- **Canada Games Complex (CGC):** Is the City's premier aquatic facility constructed in 1981 to host the Olympic Games. The facility is 2 storey multi use complex which accommodates 2000 spectators and hosts general day use, fitness, summer camps, competitions, tournaments, synchronized swimming shows. Primary users include Thunder Bay Diving and the Thunder Bolts swim club.
- **Sir Winston Churchill Pool:** a 1 storey pool facility attached to Sir Winston Churchill High School and comprises a standard 25-metre lane pool with additional leisure components.
- **Volunteer Pool:** a 2 storey pool facility attached to a community centre.

**Exhibit 11: Facility Condition Index ratings for municipal indoor aquatics facilities**

Facility Name	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq.Ft.)	Cost / Sq.Ft.	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I. (adjusted event /adjusted replacement \$)
CGC	35	\$3,470,000	25%	\$4,337,500	\$29,800,000	113,022	\$325	\$36,732,150	12%
Sir W. Churchill Pool	43	\$679,100	25%	\$848,875	\$2,325,000	11,015	\$325	\$3,579,875	24%
Volunteer Pool	54	\$585,650	25%	\$732,063	\$5,425,000	21,738	\$325	\$7,064,850	10%

Source: FORM Architecture based on Building Condition Reports provided by the City of Thunder Bay

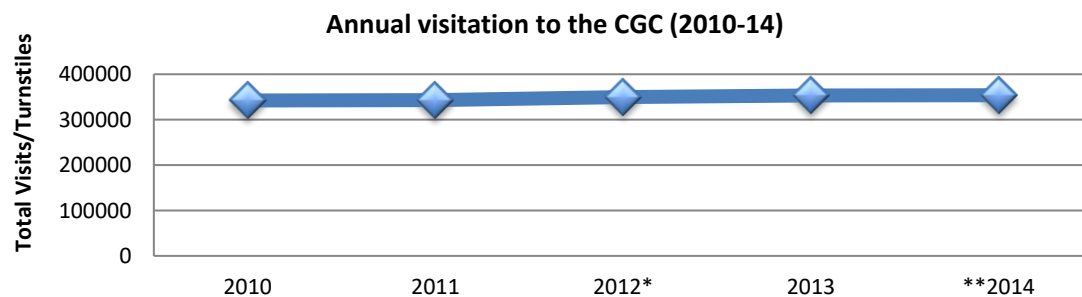
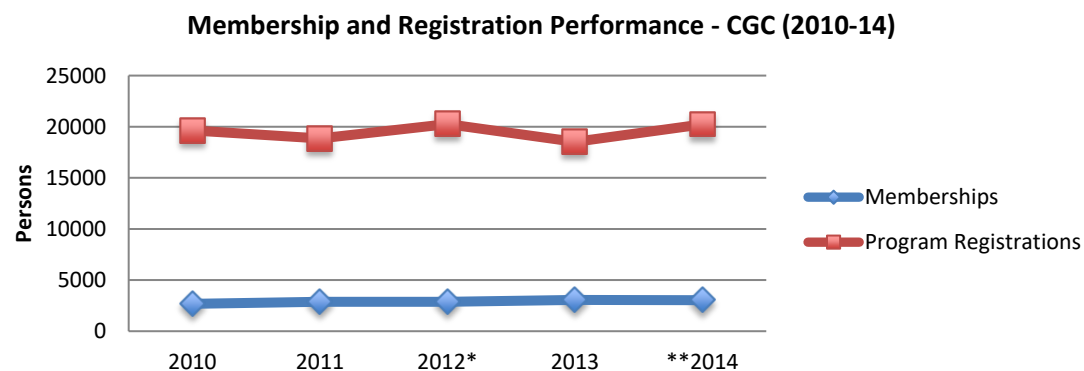
#### Condition & Capital Requirements

The exhibit above shows that the City's indoor pool facilities are in relatively good condition. Based on the current FCI rating, the Sir Winston Churchill Pool facility will require attention over the period of this plan to maintain the operational functionality of this asset.

#### Utilization

In general, indoor aquatic facilities generate greater utilization than their outdoor counterparts as these facilities offer year-round opportunities for recreation. Annual utilization across for the Sir Winston Churchill Pool and the

Volunteer Pool have been variable over the last 3 years – with both facilities generating around 5,000 hours of use per annum. The Canada Games Complex, as the city’s largest indoor aquatic venue, has generated increased utilization over the last 3 years. Annual memberships and visitation have continued to increase year over year. Annual program registration at the facility has similarly increased over the past few years despite fluctuations.



\* Utilization impacted by 2-week closure in June due to flood.

\*\* The number of program registrations was up in 2014 due to the popularity of private lessons and therefore more of these programs were offered.

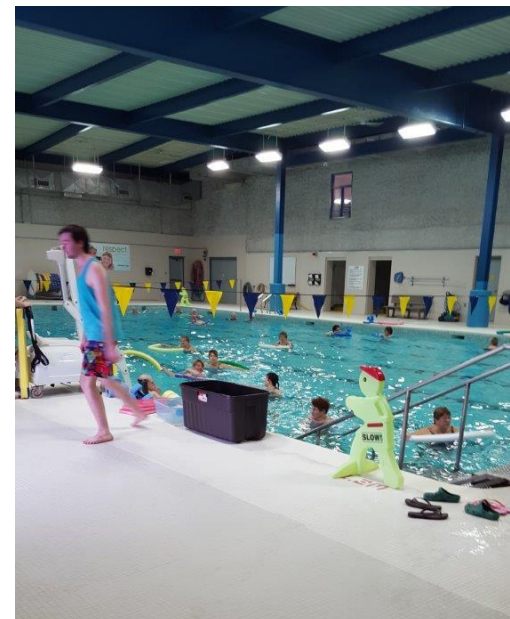
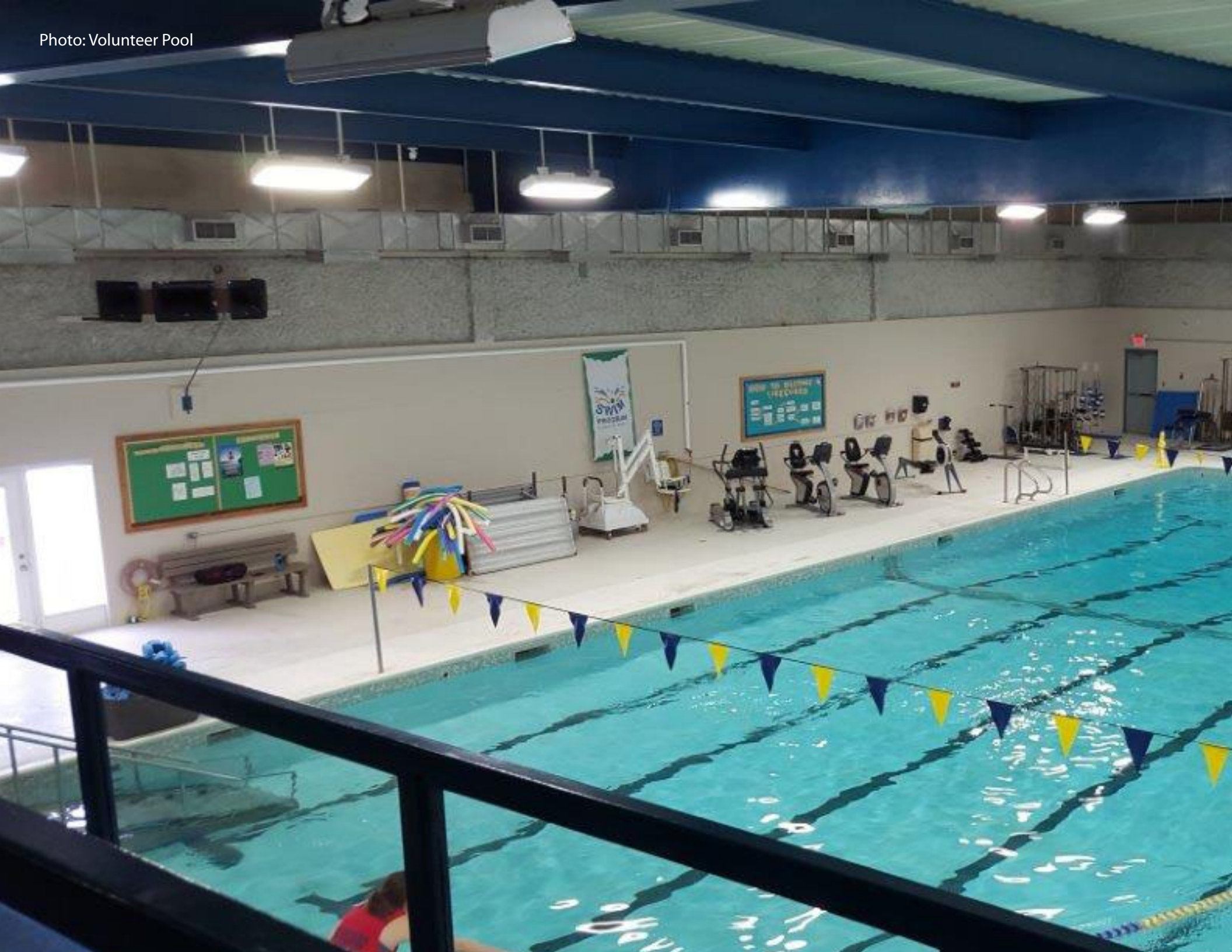


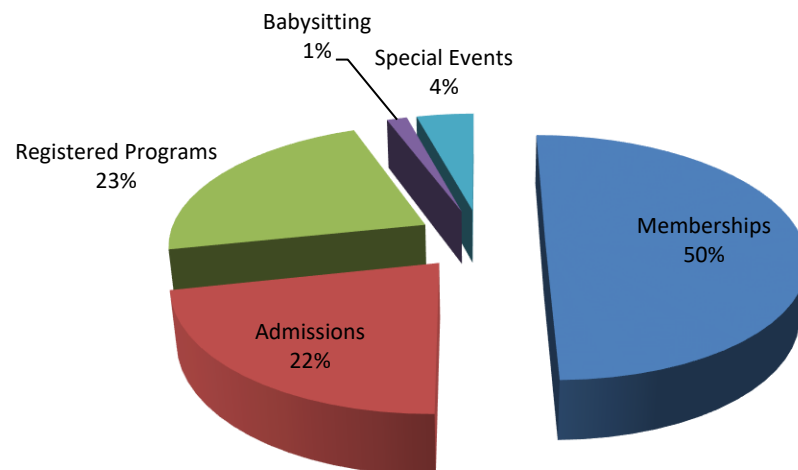
Photo: Volunteer Pool

Photo: Volunteer Pool



The Canada Games Complex averages around 350,000 visits per annum. The exhibit below provides a breakdown of the nature of visitation at the facility by activity.

**Breakdown of 2014 Visitation at the Canada Games Complex (CGC)**



Source: City of Thunder Bay Recreation and Culture Division

### Operating Performance

Across the Province, indoor aquatic facilities generally operate at a deficit. The facilities in the City of Thunder Bay are no different. Indoor aquatics facilities generate anywhere from - \$500,000 to -\$1.7m in deficit.

The above is illustrative of an average annual deficit of -\$500,000 per 25 metre of pool – this is not atypically of what has been observed across the Province and Canada.

In terms of revenues, indoor pools generated approximately \$2.5 million in operating dollars in 2015 – with the CGC accounting for roughly 76% of this revenue.

### Standards of Provision

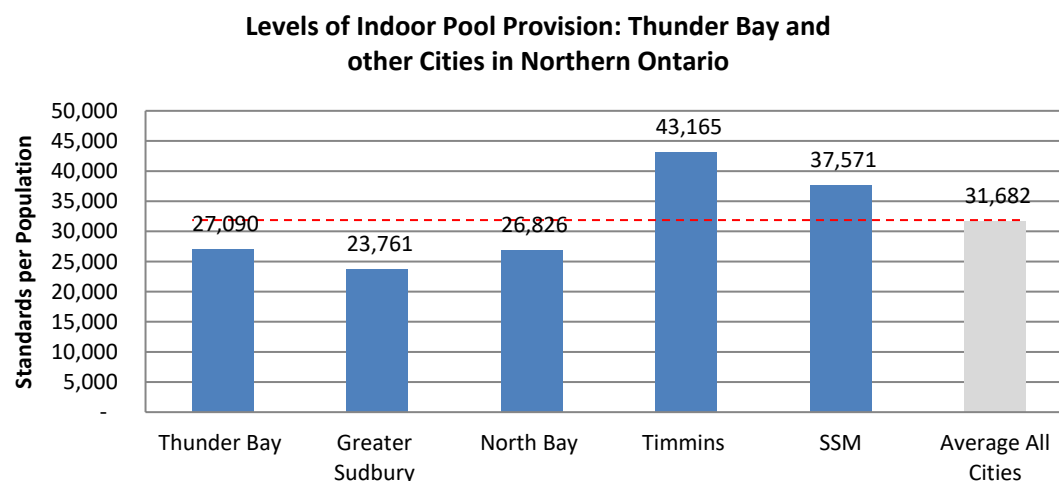
The City of Thunder Bay currently provides a standard of 1 indoor pool per 27,629 population. Comparable communities of similar size have established targets ranging from 1 indoor pool per 30,000 to 60,000 population – this includes comparable communities surrounding the GTA. In Northern Ontario, the current standard of indoor pool provision across major cities is 1 indoor pool per 20,000 to 45,000 population.

The City of Thunder Bay is comparable to other municipal counterparts in Northern Ontario and the Province and based on comparable targets is well within an acceptable range of provision for indoor aquatics.



City of Thunder Bay	Current	Target
Population Standard	1 indoor pool per 27,090 population	1 indoor pool per 40,000 to 50,000 population
Participation Standard	1 indoor pool per 96 registered participants	Not applicable

The value of these facilities within the context of Thunder Bay is evident in community use and their ability to provide for year-round health and wellness activities. Community feedback throughout the Master Plan process indicates demand for improved maintenance of these facilities as well as better public programming hours at the Sir Winston Churchill Pool and Volunteer Pool locations.



Indoor pools are major quality of life indicators for communities – Thunder Bay needs to ensure it maintains its investment. This Master Plan does not recommend municipal investment in a 4th indoor pool facility. Investment in indoor pool locations, as recommended by this Master Plan, support the physical integration of select facilities within a broader campus of recreational uses to enhance the value proposition of investment in these assets.

Based on standards, no investment is warranted in new indoor pools. The City is able to service the current population with its existing facilities – this is a situation that is not expected to change over the period of this plan or beyond in light of the projected population.

In terms of condition, none of the City's indoor pools present a requirement for decommissioning or replacement.

#### Recommendation 6

Continue to invest in planned capital maintenance at the Canada Games Complex (CGC). This facility is to be subject to a broader master planning exercise to physically connect the Complex to a twinned Port Arthur Arena and should comprise investment in new community space as part of the build-out of this recreation zone. The development of this site should provide trail and pedestrian pathways linking immediate surrounding assets (Port Arthur Stadium, Thunder Bay Community Auditorium etc.). The result will be a complex of interconnected recreation, cultural and civic uses for community enjoyment.

#### Recommendation 7

With the development of a new recreation zone/campus to comprise the CGC, evaluate and implement a best practice model for maintenance of the facility. The evolution of the site to create a larger community complex enhances the value of having dedicated, on-site maintenance staff to manage visitor volumes.

#### Recommendation 8

Continue to invest in planned capital maintenance at the Sir Winston Churchill Pool and invest in the expansion of this facility to comprise new non-aquatic, indoor community uses. The range of uses should be identified in consultation with the community and other programming synergies with the adjacent public school.

#### Recommendation 9

Ensure investment in planned AODA and capital maintenance requirements at the Volunteer Pool. This facility is located in a park setting with important outdoor assets (tennis court and basketball courts, playground). Investment in this facility should be part of a holistic plan to improve the site through parks and open space planning.

## 6.4 Outdoor Aquatics

Outdoor pools owned and operated by the City of Thunder Bay are Dease Pool, Heath Pool and the Art Widnall Pool.

**Exhibit 12: Specifications for Municipally-owned Outdoor Pool**

Facility	Year Constructed	Age (Yrs.)	Pool Dimensions
Dease Pool	1911	105	30m
Heath Pool	1953	63	35m long x 12m wide
Widnall Pool	1978	38	25'x25', L-shaped pool

Source: Asset summary sheets based on 2016 facility tours and available building condition reports

### Condition and Capital Requirements

Of these 3 assets, Dease Pool is the only facility observed to be in very poor condition – that is, not functioning as intended and showing significant of deterioration.

Dease Pool is 105 years old and with a 74% FCI rating will require \$1.5 million in capital dollars over the next 10+ years to maintain the facility in its present function. Of the City's entire asset inventory, Dease Pool has the worst FCI rating and is expected to require around 40% more in maintenance and replacement expenses over the next 20 years when compared to the other outdoor pool facilities (for a total of \$1.5 million compared \$803,000 - \$824,010 for the City's other outdoor pools).

A solution is required for this facility in the immediate term of this Plan.

### Utilization

Historic community use of outdoor pools has been highly variable over the last few years. Within the context of Thunder Bay, what can be an extensive winter season has resulted in

shorter summers and this reflected in reflected in the historic utilization data. As outdoor pool use is variable due to seasonal changes, it is important to ensure investment in the appropriate complement of indoor facilities.

**Exhibit 13: Historic Visitation for Outdoor Pools**

Annual Outdoor Pool Visits				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Art Widnall	18,791	15,601	12,589	13,704
Dease St.	7,034	4,800	3,549	3,311
Heath Park	9,772	8,639	7,689	9,370

Source: City of Thunder Bay

Of the 3 facilities, the Art Widnall Pool observes the greatest utilization in terms of annual pool visits. Dease Pool typically observes the least utilization of all the outdoor pool facilities. The Dease outdoor pool facility is unheated and this also impacts utilization.

### Operating Performance

In general – outdoor pools generate little to no revenues and achieve little cost recovery. Combined, City-owned outdoor pools generated a deficit of roughly -

\$347,000 in 2015. While the level of deficit varies across facilities, each building was evaluated on operating cost per square foot.

**Exhibit 14: Financial operating performance for municipally-operated outdoor pools**

	Revenues	Expenses	NOI	Sq. Ft	Total Cost Per Sq. Ft	NOI per Sq. Ft.
		<b>Total Costs</b>				
<b>Dease Pool</b>	\$ -	\$84,636	\$84,636	1,200	\$71	\$71
<b>Heath Pool</b>	\$298	\$115,144	\$114,846	1,800	\$64	\$64
<b>Widnall Pool</b>	\$316	\$147,397	\$147,081	5,593	\$26	\$26

Source: City of Thunder Bay Finance Department



Photo: Art Widnall Pool

Dease Pool had the greatest operating cost per square foot at -\$71. This is higher than observed for all the City's arenas combined.

### Standards of Provision

Outdoor pool provision is highly variable across communities and is generally the results of historic investment and planning. Few communities are investing in standalone outdoor pool structures. The general trend is one of investing in indoor aquatics or alternative outdoor water play.

This Master Plan supports the continued provision outdoor aquatics where prudent and efficient. Based on facility use capacity and trends, this Master Plan does not recommend new investment in a 4<sup>th</sup> outdoor pool. A solution to Dease Pool is an immediate priority for this Plan, the age and physical condition of this structure warrants this attention.



Exhibit 15: Outdoor Pools: Assessment of Use and Replacement Costs Implications\*

	Seasonal Person Use (at 2 weekly swims per person)	Replacement cost per Visit	Public Swim Rates
Art Widnall	787 persons weekly	\$14 per yr. over 20 years	\$2.85 (child) - \$5.85 (adult)
Dease Street	222 persons weekly	\$27 per yr. over 20 years	
Heath Park	481 persons weekly	\$12 per yr. over 20 years	
Total	1,490 persons weekly	\$53 per yr. over 20 years	

\*Assumed 8-week seasonal pool use.

Source: Analysis by Sierra Planning and Management based on utilization data provided by the City of Thunder Bay

Based on current utilization, Dease Pool is estimated to service around 200 persons weekly over the course of an 8 week opening season. In consultation with the public and staff, it is understood that these users reside in the immediate surroundings and are likely repeat visitors on a weekly basis. A complete replacement of Dease Pool would require around \$2M in capital investment (recognizing that the current facility services a relatively small proportion of the population). Additionally, the site offers no future expansion potential. Considering these factors as well as potential operational savings and an appropriate supply of indoor and other outdoor facilities in the City of Thunder Bay, investment in replacement at this location does not reflect best practice or use of limited municipal capital dollars.

It is also noted that the Art Widnall outdoor pool represents an existing facility and is currently located within 10 walking minutes of Dease Pool site.

#### Recommendation 10

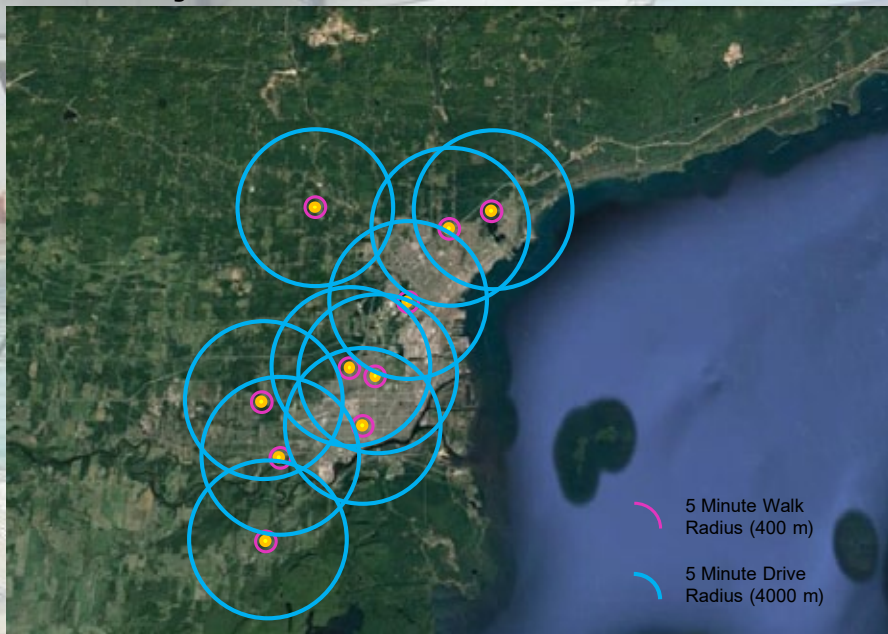
**Plan for and implement the decommissioning of Dease Pool and evaluate the opportunity to repurpose the site via sale for the other productive uses (e.g. residential development).**

#### Recommendation 11

**Retain both Widnall and Heath Pool and invest in required capital improvements at these locations. Investment in outdoor pool sites as multi-generational spaces will be important. Both of these facilities are located in park settings and investment should be complemented by parks and open space planning to animate these locations (through landscaping, pathways, shading, benches and more.)**

# CATCHMENT AREAS & COVERAGE

## Community Centres ●



The maps above illustrate the distribution of select types of facilities and the respective service areas of each based on a 5-minute walk radius and 5-minute driving radius. As illustrated, geographically the City's current stock of community centres and indoor pools have a city-wide coverage/catchment area based on a 5-minute driving radius.

The catchment area for outdoor pools is somewhat smaller but appropriate considering the location of Boulevard Lake/beach in the north-end of the City. The map of outdoor pools indicates that decommissioning Dease Pool is unlikely to impact the current serviceable area of outdoor pools based on a 5-minute driving radius.

## Outdoor Pools ●



## Indoor Pools ●





### 6.4.1. Investment in Alternative Water Play

As a forward measure, this Master Plan prioritizes investment in new opportunities for outdoor water play where the condition and supply of facilities validate consideration of alternative investment for the benefit of the community.

The City has invested in 3 outdoor water play features – the most significant being the splash pad/wading pool at Prince Arthur's Landing. The other 2 water play assets are small-scale spray fountains. It is a recommendation of this Master Plan that through its Parks and Open Spaces Section, the City of Thunder Bay invest in animated, multi-generational parks and alternative outdoor aquatics (e.g. splash pad/wading pools) in consultation with the local community on the nature of needs.



Photo: Marina Park Splash Pad

#### Recommendation 12

**Invest in 3 new splash pads (based on the typology developed at the waterfront) at other strategic park/facility locations in the City.**

The above recommendation is in keeping with the Municipality's recognition of the value of investing in these facilities in locations across the City. Locational principles for investing in large splash pad/wading pool facilities are as follows:

- Appropriate geographical distribution to serve the city; and
- The selection of locations should be with reference to where growth is occurring in Thunder Bay.

This plan acknowledges that the development of a new spray pad feature at North End Park has been approved.

Two additional spray pad facilities are being considered at other park locations. In planning for investment, the City's Parks and Open Space Section should evaluate whether these locations are suitable to accommodate the larger format splash pads/wading pools recommended by this Master Plan. A prime location for one of these facilities is Chapples Park.

## 6.5 Community Centres

Community centre facilities are provided at the neighbourhood/community service-level and are generally defined as multi-purpose buildings, which may be part of complex, where social and civic activities as well as recreational programming are accommodated. The City owns and operates over 60,000 square feet in gross floor area of community centre space of across ten (10) facilities as follows:

- Current River Community Centre
- Jumbo Gardens Community Centre
- North End Community Centre
- North McIntyre Community Centre
- Oliver Road Recreation Centre
- South Neebing Community Centre
- Vickers Heights Community Centre
- West Arthur Community Centre

- West Thunder Community Centre
- Volunteer Pool Community Centre
- Vale Community Centre

With respect to Vale Community Centre, the City operates and contributes to the capital maintenance of this building, however, this facility and property are owned by District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB). The community/neighbourhood service-level function of these facilities is a situation that is expected to continue over the period of this Plan.

**Exhibit 16: 2016 Facility Condition Index Ratings for City-owned or operated Community Centres**

Facility Name <sup>3</sup>	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq.Ft.)	Cost / Sq.Ft.	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I. (adjusted event /adjusted replacement \$)
Current River	26	\$429,600	5%	\$451,080	\$1,575,000	8,000	\$250	\$2,000,000	23%
Jumbo Gardens	56	\$195,600	5%	\$205,380	\$415,000	2,860	\$250	\$ 715,000	29%
North End	49	\$386,100	5%	\$405,405	\$ 895,000	4,916	\$250	\$1,229,000	33%
North McIntyre	53	\$681,200	5%	\$715,260	\$1,448,400	10,200	\$250	\$2,550,000	28%

<sup>3</sup> The Volunteer Pool facility has a community center component. Costs for this facility are blended with the pool and are as identified in Exhibit 11.

Facility Name <sup>3</sup>	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq.Ft.)	Cost / Sq.Ft.	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I. (adjusted event /adjusted replacement \$)
Oliver Road	37	\$491,600	5%	\$516,180	\$1,775,000	9,644	\$250	\$2,411,000	21%
South Neebing	50	\$276,800	5%	\$290,640	\$1,150,000	6,960	\$250	\$1,740,000	17%
Vale	42	\$532,600	5%	\$559,230	\$1,150,000	6,528	\$250	\$1,632,000	34%
Vickers Heights	45	\$393,100	5%	\$412,755	\$650,000	3,760	\$250	\$940,000	44%
West Arthur	32	\$416,430	5%	\$437,252	\$1,525,000	8,184	\$250	\$2,046,000	21%
West Thunder	24	\$709,700	5%	\$745,185	\$3,300,000	14,456	\$250	\$3,614,000	21%

Source: FORM Architecture based on Building Condition Reports provided by the City of Thunder Bay

### Current delivery considerations and challenges

This Plan recognizes that with respect to the day-to-day operations of these facilities there are challenges. In consultation with existing volunteer boards for the community centres in the spring of 2016, the following operational challenges were identified:

- The current relationship between the boards and the City was deemed to be not well-defined with respect to the responsibilities of each of the parties for various aspects of daily building maintenance.
- Board representatives noted that there have been occasions where requests for maintenance/capital improvements may be directed to staff but there is no protocol around relying and responding to such requests. Clarifying the roles of communication between parties is important for effective facility operations and delivery.
- The nature of volunteerism in the community has changed and the volunteer base supporting these centres has diminished over time – this has impacted the ability of

volunteer boards to operate these facilities (and is evident from the differing opening hours and variable level of programming across these assets).

- The need to balance the public perception of the function of these community centres. Board representatives noted that some residents were using these facilities as babysitting centres and that it was not within the mandate of these facilities, or the capacity of volunteers to manage this.

Many of the board representatives present at the May 2016 discussion session expressed a need for the above circumstances to change and a willingness



to work with the City to enhance operations for the benefit of the communities served. This included recognition that the presence of dedicated City Staff to enhance the programming mandate of these facilities would be beneficial. The Master Plan provides a strategy for how this may occur and is a process that can be expected to occur over time.

Public engagement throughout the project resulted in expressed demand from residents to access greater use of these facilities for recreation and enjoyment through programming. Other issues raised throughout the Master Plan consultation exercise included the following:

- Individual community centres vary in pricing, opening hours, programming and activities;
- Public access to volunteers responsible for booking facilities can be a challenge. The process and means for communicating with various facility volunteers varies based on the availability and capacity of these individuals.

### **Volunteer boards play an important role in the delivery of community centres**

The Plan recognizes that volunteer boards have played an important role in the operations of these facilities and supports this practice. This Plan, however, recognizes that community enjoyment of these facilities warrants staffing to accomplish the effective programming of these assets – this is an operational expense few volunteer boards exhibit a capacity to manage (specifically, at the time of this Master Plan none of the community centres are staffed by the City, and only 5 are staffed by volunteer boards (at their discretion). This is also impacted by the need for boards to address administrative requirements such as insurance and marketing.

This Master Plan recognizes that it is not within the City’s capacity to absorb full operational responsibility for all 11 facilities that exist. However, for key buildings (that is, those with a larger gross floor area and co-located amenities that can accommodate a range of programs), the City of Thunder Bay should take a lead role in staffing and programming these facilities.

It is recommended that the City work to transition select and prioritized community centres to an Advisory Board model of governance whereby the respective boards function in the capacity of advisors to the City. In taking on an advisory role, volunteer boards would be responsible for providing recommendations to the City on the nature of capital improvements, projects and programs to be initiated for prioritized buildings and locations.

The advisory board model has been successfully implemented in the City of Thunder Bay as evident in the current operation of the Thunder Bay 55+ Centre. This model recognizes the long historic value of the volunteer boards and that the maintenance of these entities – which comprise local residents – is important in ensuring future programming of these facilities reflects the needs of the neighbourhoods served.

#### Recommendation 13

**Work to transition prioritized community centers to an advisory board model of governance to allow for City staff leadership of the day-to day management and operation of these facilities; while maintaining community centre boards as advisors regarding programming opportunities and capital projects.**

**In prioritizing centres, it is the intent of this plan that those locations that offer the greatest opportunities for multi-use based on available amenities, configuration, and relative access for multiple communities be maximized for programming. Programming these facilities can be expected to have capital implications related to expansion and improvements.**

For those community centres that do not meet the above criteria for prioritization, the City of Thunder Bay should continue to work to refine the protocols for governance of these facilities.

#### Recommendation 14

**Develop and approve a governance framework – outlining the Municipality’s expectations and management processes for its relationships with the boards of management for the community centres that are not transitioned for City operation. In so doing:**

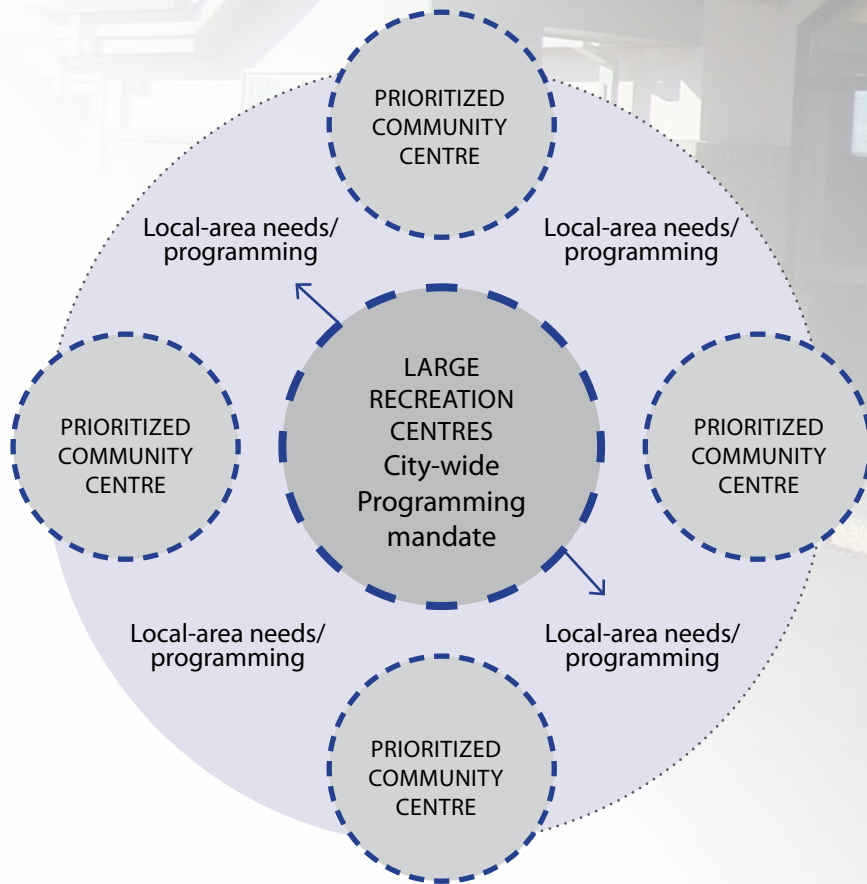
- **Establish and formalize operating standards that clearly define the Municipality’s expectations for the operations of Municipal facilities. The standards should include expected procedures, protocols, schedules and performance thresholds reflecting the minimum level of acceptable services for all aspects related to the management of the operating relationship.**

## 6.6 New Format Recreation Centre in Key Zones

While the existing neighbourhood community centres will continue to function as such, this Plan recognizes a gap in the local asset base in that none of the existing centres provide a City-wide level of service. This is due to the history of development of these facilities which reflect designs to primarily service localized areas. This is exhibited in the size and highly variable structure and configuration of these buildings. This Master Plan recommends investment in 2 new format recreation centres in the north and south of the City – not as standalone developments but as linked components of planned recreation zones at the Canada Games Complex and, long-term, at the Sir Winston Churchill pool location.

With respect to the Sir Winston Churchill pool site, this Master Plan anticipates that school board development plans to construct a new elementary school at Sir Winston Churchill Collegiate and Vocational Institute location (adjacent the existing pool) will present an opportunity for future site planning. Development of a recreation centre as part of an expansion

# HUB & SPOKE DELIVERY FOR CITY PROGRAMS/ CENTRES IN NEIGHBOURHOODS



of the existing pool building will require collaborative planning between the City and Lakehead District School Board. If for any reason the development of a recreation centre does not occur at this site, as a principle, an alternative location should be one that is based in a park setting in the southern end of the city.

These spaces should function as places in which all residents of the City may access local services, participate and social, cultural and recreational pursuits (including drop-in programming). In so doing, this Master Plan facilitates as 'hub and spoke' model for the delivery of these centres.

#### Recommendation 15

**The Master Plan recommends the development of 2 large new recreation centres – one on the north and one in the south end of the City:**

- **Location #1: At the CGC/Port Arthur Arena site via building expansion as part of a broader campus plan for site redevelopment.**
- **Location #2: At the Sir Winston Churchill pool site as an expansion to the existing building.**

**Centres should serve City-wide needs and should comprise:**

- **Around 30,000 +/- sq. ft. of community space;**
- **Dedicated youth space; daycare, potentially co-located services incl. library**
- **Older adult programming space;**
- **Double gymnasium/flex space (e.g. for pre-school/toddler programs, multi-use for racquet sport, pickleball etc.);**
- **Potentially field house uses including track, indoor tennis, pickle ball, soccer;**
- **Range of recreation program space in multi-purpose room format (e.g. studio/activity rooms);**
- **Multi-use gallery/event space; and**
- **Office space for complementary recreation service providers.**

## 6.7 Specialized Facilities

This Master Plan recognizes opportunities to integrate youth and seniors spaces into the recreation fabric of the community. Recreation zone development options present a clear opportunity to invest in these spaces as part of a broader recreation complex(es) – the benefits of which include greater ability to creatively and synergistically program for these cohorts by taking advantage of co-located active and passive amenities on-site. In keeping with principles of this Plan, investment in multi-generational spaces and facilities will be important in gaining the maximum benefit out of capital investment.

#### Recommendation 16

**Investment in key community/recreation centres and zones will offer opportunities to invest in youth and older adult spaces as a part of the development of these facilities. These opportunities should be evaluated by staff as the implementation of this Plan progresses.**



# INVESTING IN RECREATION ZONES



**1**

CGC/PORT ARTHUR ARENA SITE

In general, recreation zones were identified on the following basis:

- Co-location of a number of recreation facilities and parkland;
- Presence of prominent and viable aquatic and/arena facilities;
- City ownership of site with developmental potential for co-located civic and recreational uses if not already in existence. Some properties present more opportunities than others by the nature/scale of lands and surrounding uses. However, all have capacity to service for multiple communities/city-wide needs.
- Relative ease of access and capacity to service the north and south quadrants of the city.



**2**

DELANEY ARENA/CHAPPLES PARK



**3**

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL POOL SITE



**4**

ART WIDNALL POOL SITE



Decisions to invest in age-specific spaces (for older adults and youth) should be based on the demographic needs of the community. For example: population projections for the City of Thunder Bay indicate that the neighbourhoods around the Sir Winston Churchill pool site will be home to the greatest concentration of children (0-5 years) by 2025. Similarly, this area and neighbourhoods close to the CGC/Port Arthur Arena recreation zone are expected to have a high population of residents 65 years+. These dynamics should be considered when planning for facilities.

### 6.7.1. Older Adults

The West Arthur Community Centre and Thunder Bay 55+ Centre offer facilities for older adults in the south and north quadrants of the City respectively.

The Thunder Bay 55+ Centre is the only stand-alone older adult facility owned by the City. Community-level older adult programming and outreach is delivered by City staff and volunteers out of this location.

55+ programming is offered out of the West Arthur Community Centre and while the facility is not a dedicated older adult facility, this remains the primary base of activity in this building. Demand for older adult programming at this location continues to grow.

#### Recommendation 17

**Continue to maintain the Thunder Bay 55+ Centre as well as older adult programming at the West Arthur Community Centre location.**

**In planning for new recreation centres, the City should identify opportunities to include older adult programming space as part of these facilities.**

### 6.7.2. Youth Spaces

The City of Thunder Bay's most recent building acquisition is the Kinsmen Centre. This facility is operated as a dedicated youth centre. No historic utilization and condition data exists for this facility.

Pilot programs for youth spaces/zones as initiated in local libraries also provide a positive precedent.

There is a genuine need in Thunder Bay to provide dedicated space for this target group – for the delivery of organized programs as well as a welcoming environment for unorganized drop-in activities. Opportunities should include a range of civic, social, safety, and educational activity options. These spaces and opportunities will support broader municipal priorities for the delivery of youth services and crime prevention.

# RIVER STREET CAFE



Photo: Providing  
for Older Adults  
(Thunder Bay  
55+ Centre)

**Recommendation 18**

Continue to operate a Youth Centre at the Kinsmen Centre site. This links to boarder recommendations for investment in youth-centred spaces as proposed by this Master Plan (see Section 6.7.2) and is in keeping with the City's Youth Services Plan Implementation Report (2015) as well as recommendations coming out of the 2016 First Nations' Youth - Coroner's Inquest. Specifically, with respect to the latter, the Youth Services Plan outlines the following functions/space complement for a dedicated (i.e. standalone) youth centre:

- Facility functions to support multi-sector services for youth (via partnerships and office space); and
- Outdoor space (non-programmed, animated outdoor space, shade structures).

With successful programming and investment at this location, re-evaluate City retention of the operations of the Vale Community Centre which is adjacent the Kinsmen Centre site.

**6.8 Field Sports****6.8.1. Stadia**

The City of Thunder Bay owns two stadiums: Fort William Stadium and Port Arthur Stadium. The Port Arthur facility is a single storey baseball stadium with a covered grandstand and capacity for 5,400 persons. The facility further comprises 2 single-storey concession buildings. The facility was original built in 1954 with structural additions occurring in 1994, 1995 and 2006.

The Fort William Stadium was constructed in 1959 and is co-located with the Delaney Arena. The Fort William Stadium comprises a 400m outdoor running track and artificial turf field.

**Conditions and Capital Costs**

In terms of condition, the current FCI rating for Port Arthur Stadium indicates this facility is functioning and exhibits normal signs of deterioration. This is corroborated by the September 2015 KGS Structural Condition report which cited that only minor maintenance type repairs were required for the facility. Recent work to this facility includes the construction of the artificial field.



The Fort William Stadium ranks as having being in good condition based on its current FCI rating. Recent work includes a new parking lot for the facility. Over a 20-year period to 2035, both facilities are estimated to costs around \$2.4 million – that results in a combined average of \$120,000 per annum in maintenance and replacement costs.

#### Exhibit 17: Facility Condition Index rating for municipal stadia

Facility Name	Age	Total Event Costs	Inflation Value	Adjusted Event Costs	CTB Replacement Value	GFA (Sq. Ft.)	Cost / (Sq. Ft.)	Adjusted Replacement Value	F.C.I
<b>Delaney Arena/Fort William Stadium</b>	57	\$990,550	5%	\$1,040,078	\$6,400,000	35,100	\$250	\$8,775,000	12%
<b>Port Arthur Stadium</b>	62	\$1,290,120	5%	\$1,354,626	\$2,860,000	23,720	\$250	\$5,930,000	23%

Source: FORM Architecture based on Building Condition Reports provided by the City of Thunder Bay

### Utilization

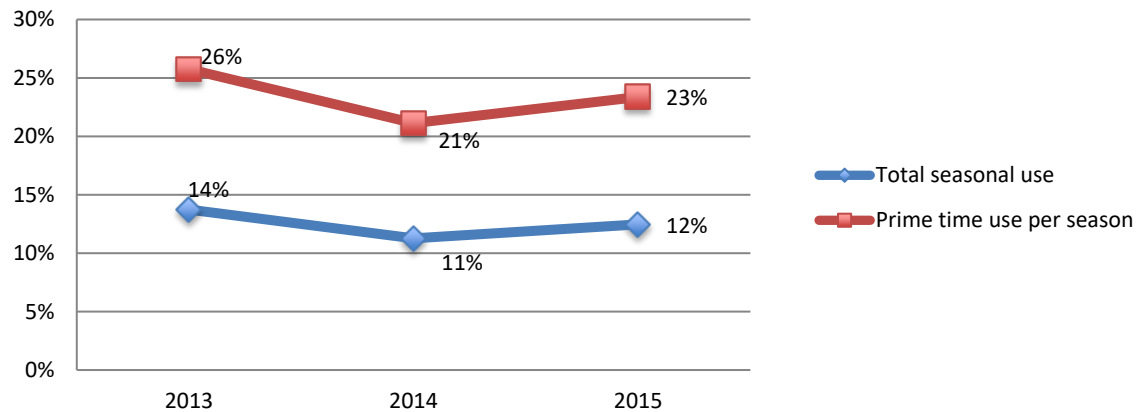
Utilization data for Fort William Stadium indicates the artificial turf field is well utilized during the peak season for field sport – at 100% prime-time utilization. The regional track component of this facility is less utilized (at anywhere from 48%-65% prime-time utilization during peak season).

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board has plans to invest in an artificial field with rubberized running track, lighting, fencing and bleachers at both the St. Ignatius and St. Patrick High Schools. This would add 2 additional turf facilities to the local supply for which some level of community access is to be expected. The existing turf field at Lakehead University is also understood to offer limited community access.

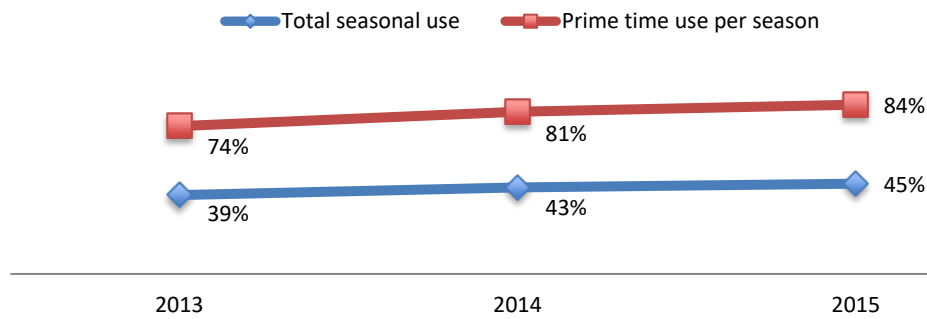


Photos: Stadia are premium facilities in the City of Thunder Bay

**Total and Prime Time Use of Port Arthur Stadium**



**Overall Facility Utilization - Fort William Stadium**



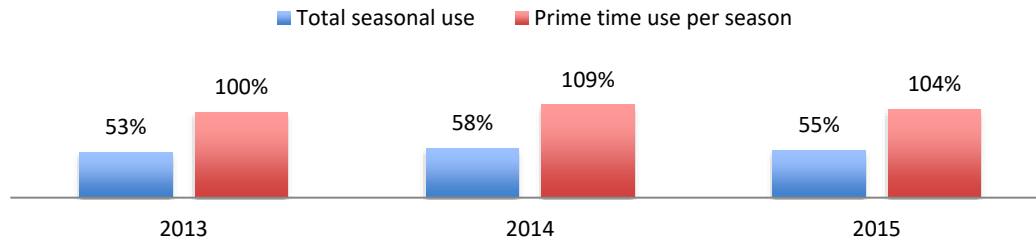
Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on facility booking data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Community Services Department



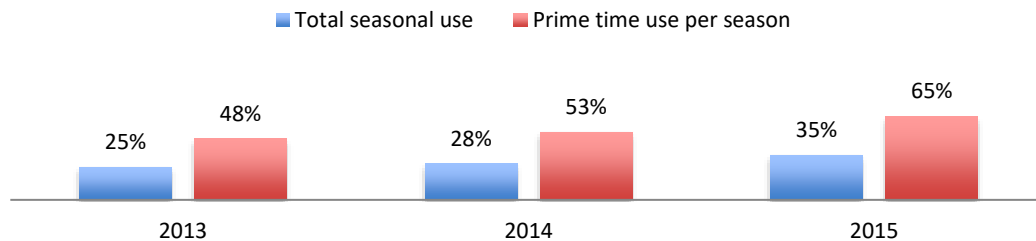
Photos: Stadia are premium facilities in the City of Thunder Bay



### Fort William Stadium – Soccer/Football Field Utilization



### Fort William Stadium – Royal Canadian Legion Track



Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on facility booking data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Community Services Department

### Operating Performance

Existing utilization at the facilities indicates room for growth in total seasonal use and consequently an opportunity for greater revenue generation. Prime-time seasonal use of the turf field at Fort William Stadium is at its maximum – this is largely the result of demand for

soccer play and is in keeping with the results of analysis of existing demand fields outlined in subsequent sections of this report.

As major competitive venues that are in relatively good repair, it is in the City's interest to maintain these assets and, in so doing, seek alternatives to increase the use of these facilities where feasible and appropriate.

#### Recommendation 19

**Continue to invest in necessary improvements at the Port Arthur Stadium as a major competitive venue.**

#### Recommendation 20

**Maintain and continue to invest in Fort William Stadium as a major competition hosting venue and seek to improve the utilization of the track facility.**

### 6.8.2. Soccer Fields

This Master Plan recognizes the following trends in field sport in the City:

- Soccer remains the largest field sport in terms of enrollment in Thunder Bay, with a trend towards growth.
- Baseball has witnessed a slight increase in enrollment among youth groups, and stability among adult leagues.
- Softball groups reported a slight decline in enrollment over the past three years. Minor football reported that enrollment has been relatively stable.

A definitive assessment of sports fields needs is not within scope of this Master Plan. Research has been undertaken on utilization of fields and the needs of sports field user groups, supplemented with survey and in-person opinion from user group representatives, individuals as well as citizens at-large. The estimated demand for general use sports fields (with an emphasis on their primary use for soccer at various levels of instructional, recreational and competitive use including children, youth and adults) is as follows at the current time and over the plan period.

#### **New supply warranted**

Based on a reasonable target standard (population-based standard), there is a nominal requirement to add an additional 7 fields at the current time.

It should be cautioned that this is a gross nominal addition based only on a population-based standard – it does not speak to the issue of how the City currently manages the use of its existing fields some of which are largely unusable in their current condition.

The fact is that quality of existing fields is a significant issue, and user groups have adjusted to this and the overall limitations in supply in their management of the use of the fields. As such, the participant count per field in the City is very high compared to other communities.

Based on a reasonable participant standard in other communities, this by itself would suggest an inordinate increase in fields is required. Clearly the city's user groups have run sport field usage with higher participation standards and therefore the application of other municipal standards has limited relevancy. However, these metrics do serve to demonstrate how pressured the use of functional city fields are in Thunder Bay.

Accordingly, new supply is warranted.

#### **Approach to planning and investment**

The manner in which this additional supply is determined in reality should reflect incremental improvements that are achievable – both to the existing fields and potentially new fields.

For example, given the current standards of use of the fields (at a higher participant count per field) the City should actively consider how the use of artificial field turf facilities could help meet the existing demand for sports fields without building a significant number of new fields.

Field turf allows for higher utilization, fewer field closures due to weather, and a longer season.

While the net additional supply required over the plan period is estimated, the total number of fields which will need to be constructed, reconstructed in-situ, substantially renovated or otherwise improved is to be determined by the City's Parks and Open Spaces Section through implementation planning informed by the capacity and utilization findings of this

Master Plan. The range of amenities necessary at each sports field complex should also be considered as part of this exercise.

**Exhibit 18: Assessment of standard of supply of soccer fields based on inventory of municipal, total and useable assets**

MUNICIPAL	Quan.	2016			2021			2026			2031		
Soccer Fields (total)	23	1 per	4,805	residents	1 per	4,823	residents	1 per	4,840	residents	1 per	4,844	residents
Soccer Fields (Senior)	18	1 per	6,140	residents	1 per	6,163	residents	1 per	6,184	residents	1 per	6,190	residents
Soccer Fields (senior in usable condition)	16	1 per	6,907	residents	1 per	6,933	residents	1 per	6,957	residents	1 per	6,963	residents

TOTAL SUPPLY: MUNICIPAL & NON-MUNICIPAL		2016			2021			2026			2031		
Soccer Fields (total)	30	1 per	3,684	residents	1 per	3,698	residents	1 per	3,711	residents	1 per	3,714	residents
Soccer Fields (Senior)	23	1 per	4,805	residents	1 per	4,823	residents	1 per	4,840	residents	1 per	5,307	residents
Soccer Fields (senior in usable condition)	21	1 per	5,263	residents	1 per	5,282	residents	1 per	5,301	residents	1 per	5,305	residents

Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Parks and Open Spaces Section

**Exhibit 19: Assessment of standard of supply of soccer fields based on inventory of municipal, total and useable assets**

Target Standards			
Soccer Fields	1 per	3,000	residents
Soccer Fields Based on Participation (based on average of comparable standards)	1 per	120	participants

**Required Additional Fields**

Current Supply:	
Soccer Fields (total - Municipal and Non-Municipal)	30

Total Required Based on Target Standard:	2016	2021	2026	2031
Soccer Fields	37	37	37	37

Additional Required Based on Target Standard	2016	2021	2026	2031
Soccer Fields	7	7 (same as of date)	7 (same as of date)	7 (same as of date)
Soccer Based on Participation	29			

Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on facility booking data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Parks and Open Spaces Section



**Recommendation 21**

The City should actively consider developing a complex of 3 or 4 field turf fields which would significantly improve the current lack of supply and go a long way to satisfy the stated needs of the soccer community.

The priority location for these new fields could be at the Chapples Park complex. Given the reality that investment in the existing fields may require significant renovation or complete rebuild, the City (via a sports field implementation strategy) should consider a plan for both renovation of fields and the addition of a complex of field turf fields at this site. Whether a concentration of new fields at this location is appropriate versus a more dispersed strategy is to be determined through implementation planning and discussions between the Parks and Open Spaces Section and relevant user groups.

**Recommendation 22**

A complete and balanced assessment of required sports field investment is an important aspect of any long-term recreation planning process. As an immediate priority it is recommended that the City's Parks and Open Spaces Section complete a sports field implementation strategy informed by recommendations of this Master Plan, the Chapples Park Master Plan and the 2015 sport field inventory assessment completed by Sport Turf International.

**6.8.3. Indoor Soccer**

There are merits to investment in indoor turf in a community like Thunder Bay, particularly when considering the climate (long winter season), the relative affordability of soccer and ability to cater to the needs of multiple groups (e.g. soccer, lacrosse).

This is in addition to the evident growth in local demand for soccer based on registrations and current field use.

There is intent on the part of the Soccer Northwest Ontario partner for investment in an indoor soccer facility.

**Recommendation 23**

The City, working with Soccer Northwest Ontario should establish the need for investment in an indoor soccer complex and evaluate successful models for the development of indoor soccer facilities. Models should reflect capital partnerships with municipalities and the full scope of liability being borne by soccer organizations.

**Recommendation 24**

Linked to the above, undertake a Feasibility Study and Site Location Analysis for an indoor soccer facility in Thunder Bay. As part of this exercise, Chapples Park should be evaluated as an opportunity in addition to industrial sites.

**6.8.4. Ball Diamonds**

Research has been undertaken on the utilization of ball diamonds and the needs of user groups, supplemented with survey and in-person opinion from user group representatives, individuals as well as citizens at large. The estimated demand for ball diamonds catering to various levels of instructional, recreational and competitive softball and baseball including children, youth and adult level play) is as follows at the current time and over the plan period.

Based on a population standard, there is a small oversupply of diamonds at present, however this standard based on comparables elsewhere may also reflect the existence of an oversupply in those other communities – many communities in Ontario are experiencing a general trend of underutilized ball diamonds.



Photo: Soccer is a growing sport in Thunder Bay



Photo: Little League in Thunder Bay (credit: Leith Dunick, tbnewswatch.com)

Exhibit 20: Assessment of standard of supply of ball diamonds based on inventory of municipal and total assets

MUNICIPAL BALL FIELD SUPPLY ONLY					
	Available (Total Supply)	Available (Supply in Good Repair)	Booked (2016 Season)	Not Booked (In Good Repair) 2016	Not Booked (Total Supply) 2016
Senior Ball Diamonds	28	26	18	8	10
Junior Ball Diamonds	17	16	12	4	5

MUNICIPAL	Quan.	2016			2021			2026			2031		
Ball Diamonds (total)	46	1 per	2,402	residents	1 per	2,411	residents	1 per	2,420	residents	1 per	2,422	residents
Ball Diamonds (Senior)	29	1 per	3,811	residents	1 per	3,825	residents	1 per	3,838	residents	1 per	3,842	residents
Ball Diamonds (Junior)	16	1 per	6,907	residents	1 per	6,933	residents	1 per	6,957	residents	1 per	6,963	residents

TOTAL SUPPLY: MUNICIPAL & NON-MUNICIPAL		2016			2021			2026			2031		
Ball Diamonds (total)	47	1 per	2,351	residents	1 per	2,360	residents	1 per	2,368	residents	1 per	2,371	residents
Ball Diamonds (Senior)	30	1 per	3,684	residents	1 per	3,698	residents	1 per	3,711	residents	1 per	3,714	residents
Ball Diamonds (Junior)	16	1 per	6,907	residents	1 per	6,933	residents	1 per	6,957	residents	1 per	6,963	residents

Target Standards			
Ball Diamonds	1 per	2,500	residents
Ball Diamonds Based on Participation (based on average of comparable standards)	1 per	150	participants

Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on facility booking data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Parks and Open Spaces Section

**Exhibit 21: Assessment of standard of supply of ball diamonds based on inventory of municipal and total assets**

<b>Current Supply:</b>				
Ball Diamonds (total - Municipal and Non-Municipal)		47		
<b>Total Required Based on Target Standard:</b>		<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2026</b>
Ball Diamonds		44	44	45
<b>Additional Required Based on Target Standard</b>		<b>2016</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2026</b>
Ball Diamonds		-3	-3 (as of current date)	-2 (as of current date)
Ball Diamonds Based on Participation		-34		

Source: Estimates by Sierra Planning and Management based on facility booking data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Parks and Open Spaces Section

Based on participation-based standards elsewhere, the current oversupply is significant. However, there is significant variation in actual participation standards across communities which reduce the value of applying non-local standards for provision.

Therefore, a more accurate interpretation is the known utilization of diamonds based on bookings by users. In Thunder Bay, data suggests as many as 8 diamonds are not regularly used during the season.

The above presents 3 scenarios for ball diamond rationalization:

- **Aggressive scenario:** based on participation only, the above indicates a required net loss of 34 diamonds over the plan period. Based on the current stock of ball diamonds (47), this would allow for the maintenance of 13 ball diamonds within the City's supply of assets.
- **Best-case scenario:** based on population the need to rationalize is less drastic and would only require a net loss of 3 diamonds.

- **Moderate scenario:** rationalizing 8-10 ball diamonds based on the known utilization – specifically those underutilized diamonds in season. This reflects a modest approach.

While the net over-supply of ball diamonds over the plan period is estimated, this is not the same as identifying the number of fields to be either temporarily or permanently repurposed or decommissioned from the parks portfolio altogether where a net public benefit exists.

These fields are assets for the residents across the City and careful consideration

of both their present and historic use should guide decision-making. Perhaps more importantly, their future use should be considered through public consultation and a due consideration of future recreational needs (including ball diamond sports).

#### Recommendation 25

**The development of a sports field implementation strategy should evaluate opportunities to decommission/ repurpose some City-owned ball diamonds and invest in outdoor soccer fields, giving consideration to condition, utilization and demand and other relevant factors such as location.**

**This strategy should also outline an approach to field maintenance based on the level of service these assets provide (i.e. City, community or neighbourhood serving).**

#### Recommendation 26

**Invest in Chapples Park as a central hub for active recreation. Potential twinning of the Delaney Arena and the co-location of ice with the Fort William Stadium and other major outdoor active uses (soccer, tennis, golf) position the Park to be developed as a premier sports venue. Master planning for the Park should reflect this aspiration.**

### Partnership-Based Sports Field Planning

Both the City of Thunder Bay and School Boards own and operate many of the formal sports field assets in the City.

While the City should assess its parks assets and the needs for formal sports fields, as well as how to deliver this service including the appropriate mix of field types, quality, lighting and amenities, field surfaces and more as part of a future sports field strategy; school boards actively plan for their own portfolio of assets including open spaces, fields and diamonds.

The relationship between the school boards and the City is already well established in a number of ways, not the least of which is the Community Use of Schools program that facilitates community access to indoor school board facilities.

The common interests of the school boards and the City should be reflected in a commitment to further the ties and partnerships in the interests of capital cost and operating efficiencies, sound planning and infrastructure development and innovative collaboration which is celebrated in the community and beyond.

Accordingly, the capital planning strategy of the Lakehead District School Board has demonstrated opportunities for partnering with the City which involve the development of new fields and the repurposing of some. Similarly, the Catholic Board is planning the development of new sports fields.



**Recommendation 27**

As it relates to sports field planning, it is recommended that in the future the potential for joint projects with the school boards is fully considered. Where viable, these projects can result in reduced overall capital costs, create policy outcomes that both organizations desire, and foster an approach to cost sharing that results in a double efficiency – on the one hand joint planning and implementation of facilities where this makes sense rather than duplication of effort (one facility where one is needed, not two) and on the other, subsequent benefits to both parties through cost sharing agreements.

**Recommendation 28**

In order to achieve the outcomes of Recommendation 27, the City of Thunder Bay and its partner school boards should establish a joint capital planning management committee as a standing committee to assess the ways in which the recommendations of this Master Plan and a future sports field implementation strategy can be aligned with the future development planning of the school boards.

**6.9 Indoor Court Sport**

The development of tennis in Thunder Bay meets many of the objectives of the City for active recreation catering to people of all ages and income levels. Examples of successful development of the sport are apparent in a number of cities across Canada, often based on partnerships between local tennis clubs and their host municipalities, with the active support of Tennis Canada.

A greater presence for indoor tennis in Thunder Bay is consistent with the goals of this Master Plan, enabling further choice for households to engage in a range of winter sports. The

development of a viable year-round tennis offer is also a reflection of the stated goals of the Thunder Bay Tennis Centre to grow the sport and widen participation of the City's youth in racquet sports.

The planned closure of the bubbled courts multi-use facility at Confederation College in 2017/18 will result in the loss of the City's only winter tennis service. The replacement and enhancement of this level of provision should therefore be a short-term priority for this Master Plan.

The involvement of the City of Thunder Bay in funding the development of a new indoor tennis venue should be contingent on an operational business case which demonstrates how increased participation will be achieved and sustained. Further analysis of the operating model and plan to develop a range of program offers, geared specifically to the social inclusion and sport for life goals of this plan, is required.

The Master Plan process has identified a level of demand for indoor tennis based on discussions with the Thunder Bay Tennis Centre.

## Options

A number of options exist for developing a new indoor tennis centre:

- The development of a new standalone indoor tennis centre, following an existing design template for recently developed and planned facilities in Canada (e.g. Fredericton, Saint John);
- Creating an air-supported dome (winter bubble) covering some or all of the existing 9 courts at the Tennis Centre located in Chapples Park (the site of the existing summer courts and club house). This option would likely restrict the bubble to a winter use which according to the Tennis Centre would prevent active use of the indoor space for summer camp indoor uses. Whether this is a material constraint to an effective operational model is a question that should be addressed through a full capital and operational financial feasibility assessment.
- Co-location opportunities with other recreation facilities, and a range of multi-use opportunities that may exist including the use of Fort William Gardens under a repurposing of that facility for a range of non-ice community recreation activities.

## Locations

The choice of a preferred location should be confirmed through a detailed capital and operating business plan. Site location options will be a function of the existence of viable options for co-locating the facility in partnership with other providers of recreational facilities such as the City of Thunder Bay or Lakehead University. The priority location at this time is the site of the existing Tennis Centre at Chapples Park. However, the interplay between capital costs and funding partnership options (capital and operating) can be expected to determine the choice of location.

## Recommendation 29

### Support Existing Model of Provision

**The timeline to develop a new indoor tennis centre, which is expected to include a contribution to capital through community fundraising, is not certain despite the recognition that development of a venue should represent a near term priority for the City.**

**Accordingly, the City, working in partnership with the Tennis Club, should continue to invest in required capital maintenance of the Thunder Bay Tennis Centre and progressively work with the Tennis Club to maximize public access to this facility.**

**The City should work with the Tennis Club to help secure a temporary replacement for the lost Confederation College facility through either bubbling existing courts, or helping secure re-use of an existing building in the City for indoor tennis. Any capital expended by the City to retrofit such interim space should be counted toward the City's contribution to any permanent home for winter tennis in the City.**

### Recommendation 30

#### Support Plans for a New Permanent Indoor Tennis Centre

1. Plans for a new centre should address the rationale for involvement of the City as a partner, as well as confirm the capital funding model, operational plan and performance metrics for the Centre. In so doing the preferred site will be confirmed.
2. The City should partner with the Tennis Centre to conduct an independent capital funding and operational plan for the Centre. The assessment should be co-funded by both parties, and funding support sought from other sources such as Tennis Canada and Provincial grant-making bodies to complete a comprehensive assessment.
3. The business plan should demonstrate a viable operating plan which minimizes the involvement of the City of Thunder Bay in operating liabilities, and creates a revenue model which maximizes access to the tennis centre by the public through a range of innovative service offers: membership, pay as you go, programs, camps, and events. In recognition of any capital funding by the City of Thunder Bay, the City should have a governance role in developing operations which seek to maximize access to the sport by all residents, as well as target populations including youth, seniors, Indigenous peoples, and low income households.

### Recommendation 31

#### Capital Funding: Specifics

1. The City should contribute capital funding on a partnership basis with other funders potentially including upper levels of government, the Tennis Club, fundraising and facility naming rights. Control and ownership of the centre should reflect the interests of the City as a funding partner.
2. Efforts to minimize the capital costs of the facility should necessitate active consideration of a range of building options including retrofitting existing City facilities, partnership with other user groups for co-located indoor facilities, and potentially partnership with Lakehead University as it moves toward the development of its own recreational assets on its campus.



Photo: Fun times at the Prince Arthur's Landing



## 6.10 Waterfront and Trail Investment

### 6.10.1. Prince Arthur's Landing (PAL)

Waterfront investment is an infrastructure priority and an ongoing initiative for the City. The City's Waterfront area – Prince Arthur's Landing (PAL) – has been under a multi-phased development process over the past few years. Phase 2 planning efforts resulted in the 2015 Council approval of the Waterfront Master Plan Update – a conceptual and 20-year implementation guide for the completion of the revitalization of the waterfront to include:

- The physical enhancement of the Festival Area at Prince Arthur's Landing, parking and circulation enhancements;
- Playground relocation; and
- Relocated and new trail development to facilitate a new band shell area.

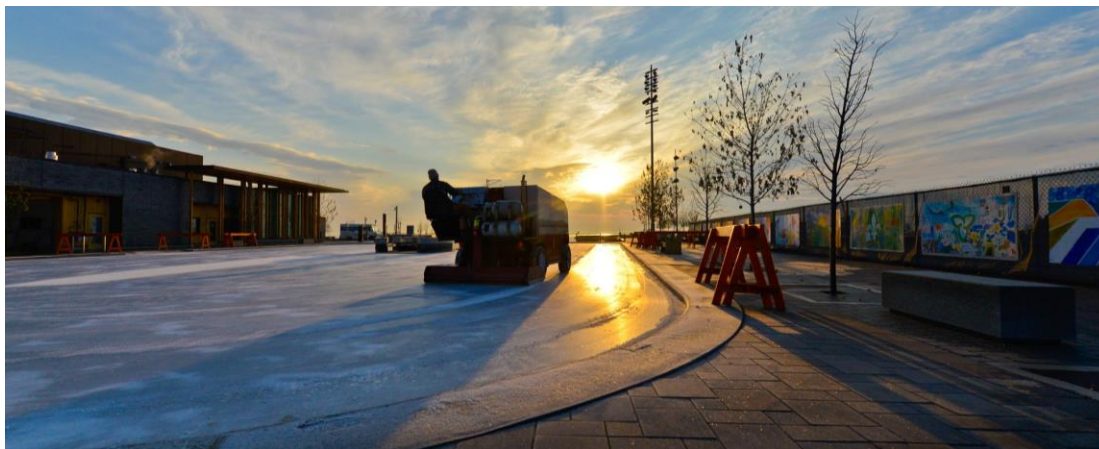


Photo: Prince Arthur's Landing

The Baggage Building Arts Centre facility falls under the purview of the Community Services Department and is located at PAL. The Baggage Building Arts Centre facility is a newly renovated arts centre comprising 3 exhibition spaces and numerous studios. The facility is a cultural and heritage asset and was originally built in 1915. The 2012 addition was a full extensive renovation of the existing building and new construction including exterior envelope, interior finishes, plumbing, HVAC, electrical. The building accommodates art classes, pottery, exhibitions, performances, workshops and is a valued part of the cultural and recreational scene in Thunder Bay.

#### Recommendation 32

**Continue with planned capital maintenance for the Baggage Building Arts Centre and continue to explore opportunities to maximize these facilities for community use through programming.**

### 6.10.2. Beach Areas

Other waterfront assets include Sandy Beach and Boulevard Lake and their associated buildings. These outdoor spaces accommodate a range of aquatic programming/training and community recreational activities including dry-land training. Additionally, the Boulevard Lake Area Improvement Plan is a conceptual plan that provides recommendations for the future activities, development and management of Boulevard Lake Park.



Photo: Beach at Chippewa Park

#### Recommendation 33

**Continue to maintain service buildings at Sandy Beach and Boulevard Lake to ensure the continued viability of these assets through ongoing capital investment and repairs.**

#### Recommendation 34

**Planning and investment in Sandy Beach for outdoor recreation opportunities is subject to a broader master planning exercise for Chippewa Park.**

### 6.10.3. Trails

Trails provide a significant contribution to the community in terms of health, recreation and education. They promote physical activity which contributes to improved fitness and mental health while making communities more liveable. They connect people to the natural surroundings and provide access to even greater recreational opportunities. Trails are also an important component of the City's active transportation system for commuter travel.

The City's Park and Open Spaces Section is developing a Trails Master Plan for the city. Recommendations of this Master Plan should be incorporated into this planning process as development and investment in recreation buildings and sites will present opportunities to enhance the city's trail network to provide effective linkages to these assets.

### Recommendation 35

The Trails Master Plan for the City of Thunder Bay should prioritize the development of a comprehensive system of trails that inter-connects the various corners of the City and major recreational assets and zones as proposed in this Master Plan.

The opportunity exists to connect major recreational facilities – from Boulevard Lake/Prince Arthur's Landing in the north-east to the Westfort Playfields in the south-west – via trail development that navigates the spine of the City. This opportunity should be investigated and can be expected to involve new connections to existing trails to appropriately connect the assets.

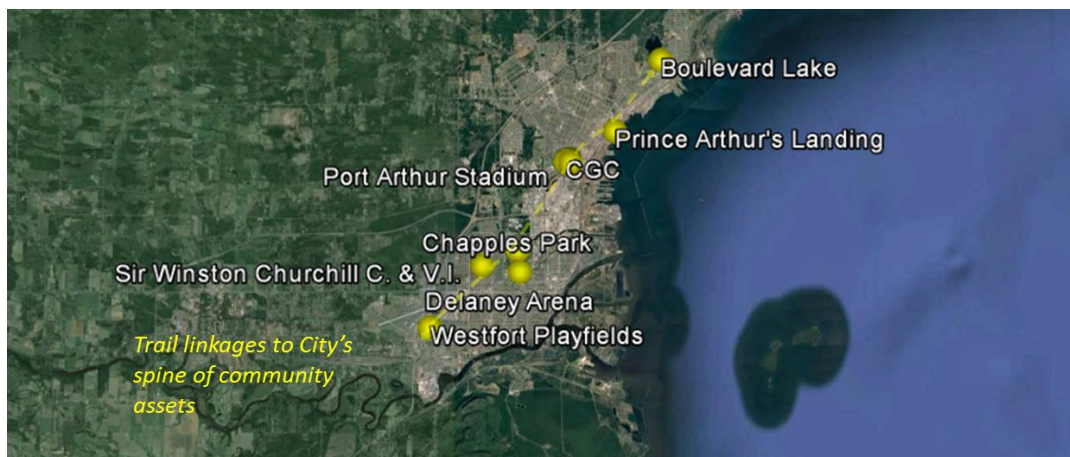


Image: Opportunity to link major City recreation assets through trail development

### Recommendation 36

As part of the Trails Master Plan, develop and adopt a trail classification system and hierarchy based on the designed use of trails as well as the type and volume of users.

### Recommendation 37

A capital plan should accompany the Trails Master Plan and provide a clear strategy for trail development based on an approved trails classification system/hierarchy. The strategy should include a plan for trail signage, on and off road trail connections, surface materials and accessibility standards etc.

### Recommendation 38

Support the Ontario Trails Strategy and leverage any related funding as may become available in future years to develop local trail infrastructure (building fences, bridges, culverts and on-going maintenance).

#### Recommendation 39

Develop interactive interpretive signage along key trail routes and in major open space areas for smartphone users. Through the use of QR codes, interpretive information related to the history and significance of the trail, nearby attractions, or open space/parks, could be obtained by smartphone users. This information could be in the form of videos, pictures, or links to related webpages on the City's website.

#### Recommendation 40

Continue to invest in active transportation infrastructure (including urban bike lanes) that link residents to recreation facilities and programming and provide effective connections to the local trail system.

#### Recommendation 41

Continue to update online interactive mapping and identify where on and off road trail connections are planned or exist, so as to help navigate visitors and users along trail routes. Mapping should distinguish between portions of trails which are off - road versus street - based.

## 6.11 Asset Management

Recent changes to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) requirements (per Ontario Regulation 368/13 filed to amend the new 2012 Building Code, O. Reg. 332/12) apply to major facility renovations and add additional requirements to any change to existing facilities within the municipal portfolio. This is further reason, in some instances, to focus on the benefits of new facility builds rather than improving existing facilities which are beyond their life span to accommodate needs which require significant renovation. The AODA requirements by themselves are not in question, but the requirements to comply in renovations may be an addition to required costs of renovation to the existing building supply to keep them up to standard and prolong their functional life.



**Recommendation 42**

Continue to invest in AODA requirements and implement long-term facility event listings/forecasts for the maintenance of existing buildings. For those facilities recommended for decommissioning, repurposing, renovation or expansion, only essential investments should be made to ensure public safety while in continued use in lieu of plans for facility redesign, expansion and/or decommissioning.

**Recommendation 43**

Continue to implement a long-term capital planning strategy as a framework for prioritizing investment in facilities. The framework should assist staff in making choices between those major capital items to implement and budget for on an annual basis. This Master Plan suggests the following approach when rationalizing major projects for implementation:

- Top priority – all items that address life safety in regards to either building code requirements for fire safety and or structural adequacy.
- Second priority – all items that involve protecting the building fabric from deterioration due to attack from external conditions, e.g. building envelope conditions that are either admitting water or causing condensation.
- Third priority – all other building code compliance items.
- Fourth priority – all remaining items.

The above should be the basis for long-term budget forecasting for facilities as a forward measure.

**6.12 Partnerships**

Partnerships are important opportunities for facility development. Each opportunity must be critically evaluated based on the appropriateness of the project.

Lakehead University has plans to develop a new Recreation Centre. This will involve significant investment in recreation assets including a sports medicine centre, gym facility, indoor walking track and major fitness facilities.

The University as well as local school boards are investors in recreation facilities – the City has a role to play in facilitating community access to these spaces and should evaluate opportunities to partner for the development of facilities.

It is unlikely that new investment as part of campus development at Confederation College will be valuable in meeting the community's recreation needs.

**Recommendation 44**

**Work with Lakehead University and leverage its investment in recreation facilities for significant community access for multi-use facilities, indoor soccer etc.**

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**Recommendation 45**

**In pursuing the idea of partnerships, the City should explore the opportunity to leverage the University's current plans for investment in a new Recreation Centre for the potential co-location of an indoor tennis centre as an alternative to the Chapples Park site.**

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In evaluating and pursuing partnerships, This Master Plan makes recommendations for strengthening the City's corporate policies around partnerships for capital facilities per best practice in the Province. Detailed recommendations may be found in Section 8 of this document.

## 7 Quality Services and Dynamic Programming

This Master Plan recognizes a number of social and cultural shifts have occurred at local-level that have impacted demand for recreation in the City and consequently bear influence the role and mandate of the Recreation and Culture Division present and in future.

Accordingly, this Master Plan and the recommendations herein address these shifts in demand for programming and services and evaluate the risks, challenges, partnerships and other opportunities associated with the implementation of related recommendations.

Some of the following recommendations are actions and opportunities to be evaluated with new investment in facilities. Others are not tied to investment in facilities and can be initiated within the immediate plan period.

### 7.1 Planning in the context of shifting demand for recreation

Extensive public, stakeholder and City staff engagement allowed for the identification of a number of changes in local demand for programming and opportunities for participation. The City of Thunder Bay has not been immune to those lifestyle-related and demographic shifts affecting the Province and Canada. Specifically:

- The City has witnessed a growing demand for unorganized and drop-in activities to meet the needs of increasingly busy lifestyles.
- Unstructured recreation opportunities have particular appeal to older youth that desire access to recreation independent of an organized team. Engagement with providers of service to Indigenous youth as part of this project also indicated this is an area of demand for Indigenous youth that board temporarily in the community during the school year. For Indigenous youth that have not yet developed a level of comfort or confidence to participate in a team setting, opportunities for unstructured play become a critical part of their orientation to the City.

- Planning for an aging population will be important. The need to appropriately cost services and still ensure the inclusion of target groups can be expected to not only affect the development of user fee/subsidy policies and protocols but also requires the City to innovative and adaptable in its approach to the delivery of programs.
- This Master Plan supports a social development approach to recreation delivery and is in keeping with *The Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015* which prioritizes individual well-being through access to as community well-being.







## 7.2 The City's Existing Mandate

As a municipal organization, the City of Thunder Bay supports recreation program delivery in 4 major areas:

- Cultural Development & Events;
- Arenas and Stadia;
- Aquatics & Wellness;
- Children & Youth; and
- Community, Older Adults & Child Care Centres.

The City of Thunder Bay has historically functioned as the provider of the first-resort for affordable, 'family-friendly' and essential recreation programming and will continue to do so over the life of this Plan. This function is distinct from the private market and is largely non-competing with local volunteer and community groups which tend to focus on niche pursuits, cater to specific target groups and/or support competitive play or elite sport development.

The following provides an overview of each of the core recreation program areas supported by the City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division:

- **Cultural Development & Events:** Section activities and assets include: support and development of the local cultural sector through Cultural Funding, professional development, the Thunder Bay Arts & Heritage Awards and Culture Days; management of the City's Public Art Program and collection of over 400 individual works of art; management of the divisional Volunteer program; planning and delivery of municipal events such as Canada Day, Youth Move, SnowDay and Live on the Waterfront; programming of Prince Arthur's Landing; planning, funding and equipment support for community events; coordination of municipal bids for multi-sport games; and operation of municipal arenas and stadia. This section also oversees and implements the Inspire Thunder Bay Culture Plan and advises City Council on issues, policies and strategies related to cultural enterprises and activity in the city, participates in City planning, and undertakes special initiatives approved by Council.
- **Arenas and Stadia:** administer opportunities for public skating as well as other organized activities such as learn-to-skate programs.
- **Aquatics & Wellness:** this program area centres on skill development in swimming – including life safety skills; as well as affordable and basic fitness and aquatic opportunities for all ages. The programming mandate does not include elite athlete development or premium fitness services. This section also plays a role in developing significant partnerships to provide therapeutic fitness programs to the community.
- **Children & Youth:** focus on the delivery of afterschool as well as summer programs and activities for children and youth such as camps, Playgrounds, Instructional Skating, and the Neighbourhood Recreation Program (NRP). PRO Kids also falls under this section and serves to facilitate affordable access to recreation for children of low-income households.

- **Community, Older Adults & Child Care Centres:** Through the Thunder Bay 55+ Centre and the West Arthur Community Centre, the City of Thunder Bay delivers a variety of older adult recreation, cultural and social programming. The City also provides a number of support services to this cohort through these facilities, specifically: Friendly Visiting, Telephone Assurance and Walk-a-Bit services to homebound older adults. The City also operates four Child Care Centres for children aged 18 months to 12 years and a Private Home Day Care program. These facilities and programs are outside of the scope of this Master Plan.

The City of Thunder Bay regularly recruits and trains volunteers to support the above programs and activities. Recruitment schedules and opportunities are regularly promoted through the City's recreation program booklet (The Key) and via communication with service partners. A volunteer appreciation event is also held annually for City volunteers that have been integral to facilitating the Division program delivery mandate. It is a recommendation of this Master Plan that the City continues to play a role as a direct program provider and actively evaluate and explore opportunities for program development over time.

#### Recommendation 46

The City's existing programs and partnerships should continue to be maintained, developed and monitored over time based on performance and ability to meeting community need. In so doing:

- **Monitor changes in demand for programs (e.g. new adult programming) and evaluate the appropriateness of City-delivery of options for activities.**
- **Continue to track program performance (registrations, shifts in participation) on an annual basis and progressively evaluate the sustainability of programs based on a range of factors including community need and demand (Metrics are outlined in Section 10 of this plan.**

### 7.3 Responsiveness and adaptive programming

It is important for the Recreation and Culture Division to be responsive to the evolving needs of the community of Thunder Bay. This Master Plan is not static, and recognizes that the cultures and practices of communities and residents evolve over time. It is incumbent on the Municipality as a service provider to implement programs, protocols and mechanisms which recognize, reflect and effectively plan to address changes in demand (as may be impacted by immigration, socio-cultural, demographic, household, economic and other shifts over time).

#### Regularly engaging community partners

A means of ensuring the ongoing relevance of programming and initiatives is the maintenance of an open line of communication with user groups and community partners that are not only involved in the direct delivery of programming but also are in a position to directly observe and plan for shifting trends and demand for sport and recreation as these occur over time.

The Recreation and Culture Division has made some strides in working with and reaching out to community partners; still a number of groups involved in the Master Plan consultation process expressed the need for a consistent and appropriate forum for broad range of groups/organizations that cross-cut the recreation and wellness sectors to collaborate on an ongoing basis and keep abreast of new program and service initiatives/challenges/resources and opportunities.

With respect to Master Planning, both user groups and services organizations involved in the consultation process felt the City had a role as a resource partner with capacity to facilitate partnerships across multiple sectors.



Photo: Outdoor fun and games

#### Recommendation 47

**Establish and host a Community Sport & Recreation Roundtable as an annual forum to engage local sports-related groups and organizations which support the delivery of recreation in planning and discussion around new recreation-related program and service initiatives across sectors to help:**

- Facilitate partnership identification and development;
- Resource sharing; and
- Eliminate the duplication of resources or undesired competition between events and activities.

**Events may be organized around themed discussions which vary on an annual basis.**

The remainder of this section speaks specifically to those developing initiatives and new opportunities for program development (as identified through public consultation) which should be progressively explored and initiated.

### 7.3.1. Addressing the needs of Indigenous residents

The Indigenous population in the City of Thunder Bay is projected to be one of the fastest growing populations. While existing research and consultation identified that Indigenous peoples born and raised in the Thunder Bay feel relatively able to access recreational and other services in the community, there is a segment of the local Indigenous population that resides in the City on a temporary basis – their needs, orientation and associations with the city differ from that of the longstanding resident population. This Master Plan and its recommendations recognize that the Indigenous community in Thunder Bay is diverse in its needs, backgrounds and interests.

A series of engagements were hosted with Indigenous leadership, stakeholders, service organizations and residents over the period of this Plan. These activities sought the collaborative identification of the systematic challenges to Indigenous individuals' participation in recreation as well as opportunities/strategies to address these. The recommendations outlined in this Master Plan reflect the results of these collaborative discussions.

One of the core issues identified throughout the abovementioned engagement activities was the current lack of information shared on recreation opportunities in the city between Municipality and First Nation and Métis Tribal organizations/leaderships as well as the need for a working protocol to establish these connections. This was deemed to be a particular challenge when considering the youth population that board in the City during the school year. These students face a number of challenges. Many reside with boarding/temporary families while in school in the city and may be required to board with a different family each year. Socially, a loss of familiarity and family support creates added challenges when coupled when getting settled in a new home, neighbourhood and class each year. Access to recreation is an important outlet especially when considering that City-owned recreation facilities are consistent and can be stabilizing features in the community. The opportunity to provide safe and welcoming facilities, services and programs (structured and unstructured) will be critical in helping Indigenous youth transition and enjoy quality of life in the city.

This Master Plan prioritizes a social development approach to the provision of recreation and is in keeping with the range of policies and strategies for the development of a safe and inclusive Thunder Bay.

**This Master Plan and its recommendations recognize that the Indigenous community in Thunder Bay is diverse in its needs, backgrounds and interests.**



Photo: A vibrant Aboriginal community



#### Recommendation 48

**Work with Indigenous leadership and stakeholders (including Fort William First Nation, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and service organizations such as Matawa Education etc.) to initiate an Indigenous Caucus as a forum for evaluating opportunities to better address the recreational needs of the Indigenous community in the City.**

**The City's Aboriginal Liaison Office and Recreation and Culture Division should canvas for interested participants and establish a Terms of Reference for the Caucus based on the principles and recommendations of this Master Plan.**

The Caucus should function as a standing committee to discuss gaps and help to evaluate new opportunities for programs, services and partnerships to address the needs and/or barriers affecting Indigenous resident/youth participation in recreation in Thunder Bay. Identified projects/activities should form the basis of an implementation plan that is to be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis.

An important first project of the Caucus should be the development of a Welcoming Strategy for new and temporary Indigenous residents to the City.

#### Recommendation 49

**Building on the City's 'The Welcome Project', relevant City Staff (Community Services, Corporate Strategic Services, and the Aboriginal Liaison Unit) and the Caucus should work to develop and implement a Welcoming Strategy for new and temporary residents of Indigenous background. This should be a collaboratively developed and comprehensive delivery framework for key recreation-related initiatives, services and resources including those described in the following recommendations.**

#### Recommendation 50

**Initiate a social marketing campaign to promote City-owned recreation facilities as safe public spaces for all people including Indigenous residents. This campaign should involve:**

- **Cultural sensitivity training for city staff within facilities; and**
- **The expansion of orientation tours for new Indigenous students boarding in the city to allow youth to become acquainted with key program and facility staff within City- owned recreation buildings.**



**Recommendation 51**

**Develop a mentorship program through the City's Children and Youth Section that pairs Indigenous students with other resident youth in the community to help them become acquainted with their new place of residence. The City should seek partners to develop, implement and promote this program. Potential partners include Indigenous Liaisons for the local school boards.**

A desire for the City's recreation staff complement to better comprise individuals of Indigenous identity was another matter highlighted over the course of engagement activities. This was deemed to be important in ensuring that the design and delivery of programs reflected the needs of the local Indigenous community. A greater appreciation for learned experience and alternative certification/training within the City's hiring process for recreation staff – particularly with respect to programming – was deemed to advantageous to encouraging greater ethnic diversity in new recruits.

**Recommendation 52**

**Reevaluate and, as appropriate, revisit the hiring requirements for Recreation and Culture staff to reflect learned experience and alternative certification/training to allow persons with non-traditional education to access employment opportunities within the City for the delivery of recreational programs and services.**

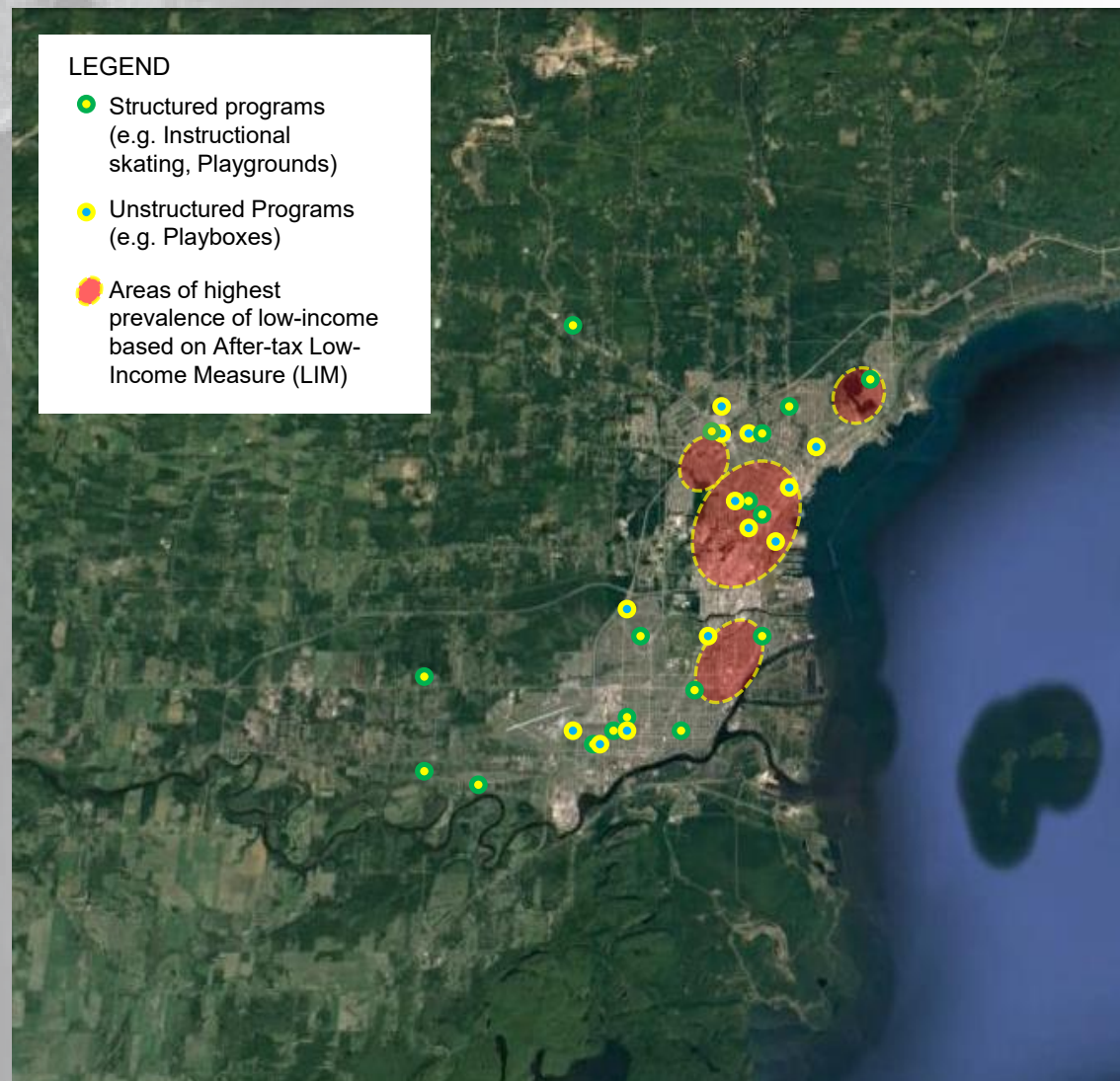
### **7.3.2. Reaching key populations and at-risk communities**

This Master Plan provides for the development of youth and older adult spaces across select community centre locations and as part of 2 new larger recreation centres, where population dynamics and market demand in the surrounding area warrant this investment. Section 2 identifies the neighbourhood areas where the youth and older adult population is forecast to experience growth.

The map below identifies low-income parts of the City and identifies the geographic spread of the City's existing recreation programs. The ability to invest in youth and older adult spaces as part of City re-entry in the staffing and operations of key community centres and investment in 2 large recreation centres, will present opportunities to deliver relevant programs to these target groups over time and based on changing needs and demand.

# CITY PROGRAMMING & LOCALIZED NEEDS: ADDRESSING LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES

Mapping is illustrative of zonal locations only and not to scale



Mapping informed by The Social Risk Index (2011 Census) for Thunder Bay CMA - Communities Together for Children; Healthy Kids Community Challenge - MapCMS - Thunder Bay Recreation Map



**Recommendation 53**

**Continue to expand neighbourhood-based youth programming options with City re-entry in the operation of key community centres. These opportunities should be progressively evaluated based on community need and demand for programming.**

**Recommendation 54**

**Linked to the above, investment in large recreation centres in the north (CGC/Port Arthur Arena) and south ends (Sir Winston Churchill pool) of the city will present opportunities to develop youth centre and (non-dedicated) older adult programming spaces as components of these buildings. The City should seek to:**

- **Continue to expand the Youth Move program as a model for youth centre programming to provide a range of supports including computer access, leadership and personal development, active and passive recreational and cultural opportunities including teen fitness, cooking, reading clubs and other on-site activities. Program delivery out of youth centre space(s) may be done in partnerships with groups that support this mandate including the Boys and Girls Club and Evergreen: A United Neighbourhood.**
- **Evaluate opportunities to develop non-dedicated older adult programming space as part of these buildings in recognition of opportunities to integrate seniors into the fabric of recreation in the City and to allow for greater creativity and synergies in planning for programs for this cohort due to a range of co-located active and passive amenities on-site.**

New investment facilities can be expected to offer a number of multi-generational programming opportunities. For example, investment in outdoor amenities and civic uses as part for key recreation zones, splash pads and co-located infrastructure will provide venues for family experiences and residents of all ages and of varying interests and pursuits.

Throughout the consultation process, participants identified the importance of bring new recreation opportunities into low-income areas as well as to parts of the community where investment in new major infrastructure is not feasible.

**Mobile programming and infrastructure**

A creative means of accomplishing this and enhancing access to low-cost recreation opportunities is through mobile park programming options.

Benefits of mobile park programs include:

- Low-cost investment in mobile infrastructure;
- Ability to animate passive park spaces for active recreation;

- Ability to bring programs directly to at-risk/low-income neighbourhoods.

The City of Thunder Bay strives to implement creative program options to maximize access to recreation for all persons including those of low-income (this is evident through the City's free Playgrounds program for young children). Investment in mobile park infrastructure builds on this precedent.

#### Recommendation 55

**Explore Mobile Park programming for both children and youth. Alternative activities that may be accommodated through mobile park infrastructure (as examples, this may include rock climbing, disc golf etc.). Key sites for mobile programming include Prince Arthur's Landing and other outdoor assets.**

**As part of this, work with the local Skateboard Coalition, BMX and Ultimate Frisbee Club to identify opportunities to invest in mobile skate/BMX park infrastructure and develop partnerships to deliver activities in park areas across the City (including low-income parts of the community).**

The pursuit of mobile park programming can be expected to enhance current 'pop-up programming' initiated by the Children and Youth Section of the Recreation and Culture Division.

#### Recommendation 56

**With proposed/potential investment in new indoor facility(ies), work with the local tennis/soccer clubs to ensure the provision of dedicated time slots for public clinics (e.g. non-member, learn-to-play activities for children and youth). This will be important to ensure fair and affordable public access to these premium spaces.**





In working to target the needs of youth, the City of Thunder Bay has progressively made the link between recreation and cultural planning through the Inspire Thunder Bay Culture Plan. In keeping with recommendations of this Plan, the City has expanded its annual 'Youth Week' to connect young individuals to cultural and creative resources and opportunities (such as entrepreneurial/mentorship programs, volunteer opportunities, cross-cultural and arts education as well as local projects). This Master Plan supports the celebration of the diversity, talents and contribution of youth in the city and acknowledges cultural pursuits as part of the vitality of the recreation offer in Thunder Bay

#### Recommendation 57

Continue to implement recommendations of the Inspire Thunder Bay Culture Plan as follows:

- **Position the Baggage Building Arts Centre to deliver youth arts programming that leverages the proximity of the skateboard park as an activity anchor for teens.**
- **Create more opportunities for intergenerational and cross-cultural programs from existing community culture initiatives such as storytelling projects, Culture Days, Urban Arts Festivals, after school programs, Indigenous Festivals and community events, art gallery events, community kitchens.**

#### 7.3.1. Managing risks and challenges associated with program development and delivery

The above recommendations speak to broaden the City's programming mandate. Specifically, as it relates to:

- **Staffing key community centres:** Recommendations support the City playing a lead role in staffing and programming prioritized neighbourhood community centres over the life of this Plan. This should be done incrementally through a pilot process

to ensure the effective transition of these facilities to an Advisory Board model of governance. In so doing the process of achieving these recommendations can be expected to span a number of years.

Program development and implementation should likewise be expected to be transitional. In order to effect change appropriately, the Recreation and Culture Division will need to evaluate where and when staff resources can be (re)allocated to facilitate 1 full-time equivalent staff person at each prioritized location to function as a centre programmer/manager.

- **Programming for key populations:** The City's current recreation programming complement is not reflective of the diverse needs of the local Indigenous population. While a number of Indigenous residents are serviced by traditional recreation program opportunities, the City must plan for the non-traditional as well. These activities



may not be entirely recreation-focused but reflect the interplay of cultural and social wellness components required to address emotional and social barriers to participation for Indigenous residents.

In order to do this effectively, a social development approach requires partnerships. The City has a role to play in leading partnership development for progressive programming. The establishment of an Indigenous Caucus will facilitate this. These partnerships will require time for development but most effective to success will be the definition of parameters for these partnerships /relationships. This requires an identification of who should be at the partnership table; how will partners work together and how often should this occur; and should involve the identification of an appropriate format for these discussions. The initial address of these key questions should be a collaborative process with willing stakeholders. This Master Plan envisions the Caucus will reflect a range of inter-related interests and should include representation from service providers to the Indigenous community in the areas of education, health and wellness and other social services.

As with any new programming initiatives, implementation should reflect market demand and the performance of programs should be annual monitored and evaluated. Section 10 of this Plan speaks more specifically to useful metrics of success.

- **Investment in new facilities:** Any municipal investment in new facilities places onus on the City to effectively program these spaces for maximum utilization. Where partnerships can be developed for hosting community group programming within City spaces, these should be accommodated in a manner so as not to infringe on public enjoyment of these spaces.

## 7.4 Welcoming services and accessible opportunities

### 7.4.1. Divisional marketing & customer service

The foundations of a welcoming environment for participation in recreation should begin outside of the facilities at an individual's point of first contact or awareness of an opportunity. Initial contact with information is generally facilitated through a website, marketing booklet or via word of mouth which then navigates individuals to these sources.

From the perspective of this Master Plan, the provision of welcoming services and accessible opportunities is threefold and involves:

- The City's online interface and marketing tools;
- The in-person service experience; and
- Policies and protocols that impact the manner in which services are delivered.

### Improving the online experience for residents

This Master Plan presents an opportunity to revamp and reposition recreation through the City's marketing mechanisms as well as enhance the online experience for residents seeking to access information and opportunities.

#### Recommendation 58

**As part of a broader redesign the City's website, continue to promote the Department's new role (since restructuring) through a comprehensive communications strategy that articulates the pillars of this Plan. Other mechanisms to be employed include marketing in The Key and other promotional print content, social media and other appropriate City channels.**

At present, the City of Thunder Bay does not maintain an online public booking and registration system. The typical process for accommodating resident requests for space and registrations for programs is via an in-person or mail-in application or over the phone. While these options should be maintained, the residents of Thunder Bay (as consumers of recreation) are demanding faster, and more convenient access to these services as offered through an online system. Financial investment and staff training will be required to effectively implement this. An online interface for booking and registrations allow for resident ease of access to services and may reduce the current level of staff effort and time to administer calls and process hardcopy registration forms.

#### Recommendation 59

**Invest in and implement an online booking system that allows residents 'self-book'/request spaces/facilities and register for programs online via the City's website. Any investment in an online booking system should comprise an online payment feature. In the long-term, this will lessen the demand on staff and will allow for adequate planning for room bookings and preparation. This will allow residents to have convenient, 'at-home' access to facility booking services.**

Enhancing the online interface with the public can also enhance staff responsiveness to real-time community needs. One of the City's maintenance requests which, dependent on the facility, must sometimes be filtered to a contract maintenance firm.

#### Recommendation 60

Initiate an online facility maintenance request system for facilities (e.g. via an online E-mail/ message submission tool on the City's website) where residents may submit an email or real-time alert/request to facilities maintenance staff on issues to be addressed (repairs, washroom maintenance etc.). These requests may be directly transmitted via email notification to the appropriate maintenance staff/sub-contractors and reduce the turnaround time for solutions to be implemented.

Additionally, digital availability of information is important to increasing the awareness of local recreational opportunities and related services to the community. Online mapping of recreation facilities and services is also an important tool to help residents geographically locate the services and opportunities within their area, and in so doing facilitate access and involvement.



Photo: Friendly competition

#### Recommendation 61

Continue to invest in the seasonal recreational guide ('The Key') and continue to ensure digital availability on the City's website.

#### Recommendation 62

Continue to work with local partners - Thunder Bay District Health Unit, the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre and Communities Together for Children – to enhance and maintain the Thunder Bay Recreation Map (online tool). As new programs service and facilities are added to the City's asset base, the online community map should be updated to reflect this.

Develop a protocol to review and update the map information in conjunction with local partners as a means of ensuring the continued relevance of information.

### Enhancing the in-person service experience

All new frontline service workers are required to go through customer service training as part of the recruitment process. However, volunteers also play a valuable role in enhancing the customer service mandate of the Division. Like staff, volunteers are also required to complete basic training on safety and conduct. However, with a decline in the level of volunteerism in the city, this Master Plan recognizes the potential to bolster local pride and interest in these activities through rewards and recognition as well as the ongoing promotion of the value proposition of volunteerism.

Strategies for recruitment and internal recognition of the City's volunteer base are already being employed by the City of Thunder Bay. The City of Thunder Bay is a supporter, facilitator and rewarder of volunteerism and this can help to reinject community enthusiasm in participation.

#### Recommendation 63

**Continue to recognize volunteers within the Recreation & Culture Division and wider community through support and promotion of community-based volunteer appreciation awards to celebrate community champions and promote a culture of volunteerism in the city.**

#### Recommendation 64

**Routinely evaluate the City's volunteer training process and implement improvements where required.**



Photo: Value in volunteerism

#### Recommendation 65

**Continue to maintain the Teens 'n Training (T'nT) program and work progressively to expand the range of volunteer opportunities for adults, newcomers and Indigenous youth that are transitioning to life off-Reserve as a means of facilitating settlement, integration and inclusion.**

### Policies and protocols to enhance services

The City of Thunder Bay has employed a number of strategies to ensure access and affordability for low-income families and



Persons with Disabilities – either in the form of programs that are well entrenched in the culture of the organization or as part of general practice.

One of the challenges with the current approach is the lack of a Council-approved policy framework around which services and programs are most appropriate for direct cost subsidization. While affordability is a consideration for staff when it comes to the annual fee setting process, these decisions need to be guided by a policy to ensure that a reasonable and equitable proportion of the total cost to deliver recreation programs and services is recovered through user fees bearing in mind principles of this Master Plan regarding access for key target groups and recognition that some programs (e.g. general ‘learn to swim’ or basic activities) are more appropriate for subsidization while other premium services (such as private swim lessons) do not warrant this.



The City of Thunder Bay should continue to provide Inclusion and Junior Inclusion and other related services as a means of ensuring the participation of Persons with Disabilities in recreation and cultural activities and work directly with educational, social service and healthcare institutions to promote these services on an ongoing basis.

#### Recommendation 66

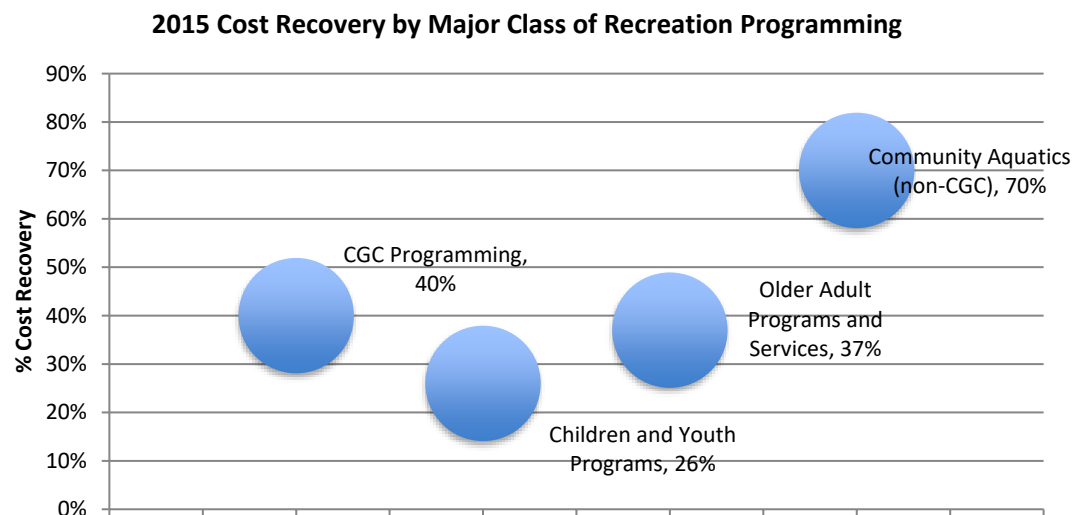
**Develop and approve a Municipal User Fee Policy that confirms, validates and prioritizes an approach to pricing in keeping with best practice and that:**

- Ensures standardized and transparent procedures for the administration / determination of financial assistance for recreational programs and services delivered by the City where user fees are unaffordable; and,
- As it relates to annual fee setting, provides for higher levels of direct subsidy for those categories of programs and services which teach essential life and safety skills to persons of all ages and provide basic/essential introductory programming for children, youth and seniors and encourage active living.

This may take the form of a revision of the 2004 Draft User Fee Policy (not approved by Council) or the development of new policy all together.

Linked to the above, is the need the (re)evaluate the appropriateness of current levels of cost recovery for programs in light of prioritized target groups and the true cost of service for program delivery.

The City offers a range of programs for children right through to older adults. In 2015, total direct cost recovery for municipal programs delivered in City facilities was 43%. This figure does not include revenues related to general admissions, rentals or costs associated with corporate overhead for administration.



\*Note: Cost recovery for Children and Youth reflects general programming only and does not include child care (i.e. day care).

Source: Data provided by the City of Thunder Bay's Finance Division

#### Recommendation 67

**In developing a User Fee Policy, the Recreation and Culture Division should complete a detailed assessment of the full cost of service (direct and indirect costs) for the delivery of programs and assess whether current levels of cost recovery across various categories of programs are acceptable or require improvement. The City's current program fee rates and cost recovery should be evaluated against other comparable communities (benchmarking).**

With respect to accessible recreational opportunities for low-income children and youth through municipal support and delivery of PRO Kids Thunder Bay, this service to the community should continue to be maintained and funded. PRO Kids supports access to recreation for over 1,000 children from low-income households in Thunder Bay. The opportunity exists to increase the number of children and consequently families supported through this service. This is currently impacted in part by the stigma associated with accessing this service.

**Recommendation 68**

Enhance the marketing effort around PRO Kids through the development of a campaign designed to remove the stigma associated with the program. This campaign should employ community champions and include direct promotions to children/parents through local schools and public healthcare providers. The concept of ‘no child being left out’ should be promoted.

In implementing recommendations, and exploring the growth opportunities for PRO Kids, a review of the adequacy of the staffing and other resourcing for this program should be conducted by the City. Adequate resourcing is essential to effective delivery – particularly as it relates to application intake, evaluation and timely response.

**7.4.2. Supporting community-driven initiatives**

With respect to support for community and volunteer-driven groups, activities and events, the City of Thunder Bay is not only a provider of space and facilities but is also a partner through grant funding and other procedural assistance for the development of events. Community grant funding as provided by the City of Thunder Bay comprises the following:

- **Community, Youth, and Cultural Funding Program:** The primary means through which the City supports local community non-profit organizations that deliver complementary recreation, cultural and youth services. Through this program, funding is provided under three categories:
  - **Operating Grants:** are provided for a maximum term of 3 years to non-profit organizations that have an ongoing presence in Thunder Bay and a track record of providing quality programming and/or services. The grant may be renewed from term to term, but not necessarily at the same level of funding.
  - **Sustaining Grants:** After successfully completing five (5) years of operating funding, Council may consider placing an applicant into the Sustaining Grant category.
  - **Project Grants:** are offered for one-time non-operational activities such as a non-profit special event.
- **Street Event Grants:** are available to local non-profit community organizations to offset the cost of event hosting and are valued at 1) up to 50% of expenses related to hiring Extra Duty Police officers and/or a Police dispatcher for traffic control of race routes on City streets; and 2) up to 100% of expenses to purchase advertisements and/or host public meetings required by the City to inform public of street closures. Events supported under this grant are those that are expected to

attract participants and/or other visitors from out-of-town resulting in greater economic impact to the City.

- **Event Development Grants:** Distinct from the above, this grant is focused on supporting non-profit organizations that are bidding or have been selected to host regional, provincial, national or international events in the City and/or are staging a new/inaugural event, tournament or festival. Grant support is provided for expenses related to event bid preparation and presentation, bond or holding fees required to secure an event once a bid has been won, start-up costs for organizing committees as well as marketing costs and legacy planning.

This Master Plan recommends the continued provision of these financial supports to activities which can have major social, cultural and economic impacts on the community. The continued support of local community non-profit organizations for the delivery of complementary recreation and cultural services and programs will be important in ensuring the community vitality and quality of life.



Photo: Family fun at City events

#### Recommendation 69

Regularly evaluate the performance of the Community, Youth, and Cultural Funding Program and identify opportunities for expansion and/or improvements to enhance the implementation of this program over time.

#### Recommendation 70

Evaluate the potential to expand the Event Development Grant to support major events beyond the first year of hosting so as to facilitate the sustainability of major events.



## 7.5 Festivals, Events and Sport Tourism

Linked to the above, this Master Plan recognizes that recommendations herein – from facility investment to grant and planning support for events – have implications for sport and cultural tourism. Enhancing the capacity of buildings and developing spaces amenable to major festival, event and tournament hosting will be important in positioning the City as an event venue in the region and Province. Sport and cultural tourism and event hosting should form important components of a boarder strategy to position the City as a play and visit. The recreation offer in Thunder Bay is expected to be a significant generator of tourism receipts. It is understood from the regional market profile that while this may largely reflect inter-regional demand, the City of Thunder Bay and District also attracts visitation from other parts of Ontario including the south west and south eastern portions of the Province.

### Recommendation 71

**Develop a Tourism Strategy for the City of Thunder Bay that evaluates best bet opportunities, tools and mechanisms to enhance the City's role in targeting key markets (e.g. sport tourism, winterized sport, cultural tourism including festivals/events and Indigenous culture, outdoor adventure and more).**

### Recommendation 72

**As part of a municipal Tourism Strategy, evaluate the value proposition of investment in a stand-alone tourism destination website designed to target key markets (e.g. sport tourism, winterized sport, cultural tourism including festivals/events and Indigenous culture, outdoor adventure and more) through a series of information tools (visitor events calendar, tourism asset mapping, marketing etc.) and incentivized/bundled travel experience packages. The Strategy should include a reevaluation of municipal organizational support for sport tourism and where warranted make recommendations to enhance this.**

### Recommendation 73

**Work with the Community Sport & Recreation Roundtable to investigate opportunities to cross-promote festivals and events with tournaments to increase overnight visitation in the City. This may involve creating packaged promotions and incentives for tournament attendees.**

### Events planning to enhance the City's recreation mandate

The City's Cultural Development & Events Section is an important complement to the municipal recreation portfolio and delivers a range of appropriate, free, family friendly community events on a seasonal basis. Public feedback on municipally-hosted events indicates a high level of community satisfaction with these activities.

Photo: Waterfront fun



**Fit Together Recreation & Facilities Master Plan  
Public Online Survey Results: What do you think about  
both the quality and quantity of events in the city?**

■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Average ■ Poor ■ Undecided



The City of Thunder Bay should continue to provide accessible, inter-generational activities for its residents through affordable public events. The marketing and positioning of activities as currently done through the City Events Guide will continue to be important.

Community events play a key role in developing a welcoming environment. Specific to the pillars, goals and objectives of this Plan, the Cultural Development & Events Section should continue to work with Indigenous stakeholders to expand or enhance existing events that celebrate the City's Indigenous community and heritage.

#### Recommendation 74

**Continue to work with Indigenous stakeholders to expand or enhance existing events that celebrate the City's Indigenous community and heritage and consider new opportunities for events in collaboration with the Indigenous Caucus.**

#### Recommendation 75

**Evaluate new opportunities for festivals and events and develop partnerships to deliver these as they arise over time. Investment in major recreational infrastructure at Chapples Park and other venues proposed by the Master Plan will allow for multi-faceted event hosting (e.g. community golf games and/or trail runs linked to other entertainment (such as culinary activities, music and more.)**

In addition to hosting events, the City of Thunder Bay, through its Cultural Development & Events Section provides a range of event hosting services to community groups at no cost. These services include equipment lending, license and permit assistance as well as promotion via the City's event calendar. This is an important support service that should continue to be maintained.

## **8 Governance & Partnerships**

### **8.1 Developing and Sustaining Healthy Partnerships**

The City's Community Partnership Policy presents a framework for the establishment of partnerships for major capital projects between the City of Thunder Bay and non-profit community groups. The policy requires the development of a project business plan as part of the approvals process and stipulates requirements for a partnership agreement that outlines the appropriate level of City involvement during the various phases of facility development.

As a corporate policy, the Community Partnership Policy is a step in the right direction. This Master Plan recognizes that the landscape of potential partners for capital facilities has expanded over time and likewise, the City's policies should be expanded to guide decision-making around the full range of partnerships options pertinent to not only capital development but also for the operation and delivery of recreation facilities.

#### **Framing the scope of partnerships**

Many municipalities across Canada and the province have benefited from the implementation of a standardized partnership framework as the lens through which all potential partnership opportunities are examined, held accountable and eventually selected as appropriate. These frameworks are generally designed to meet the needs of the respective municipality are elementally similar.

A well-structured framework stipulates the municipal response to an opportunity as well as obligations of potential partners and is flexible in its recognition that each project is unique. These frameworks are meant to evolve as new types of projects and proposals come to the fore but are designed to ensure a transparent process of evaluation. Protecting the public interest, demonstrated community need, client/service orientation, risk allocation, desired levels of operating control and quality assurance are principles on which a framework may be based.



Partnership frameworks differ from lease agreements for municipal facilities and may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis due to the specifics of the nature of associated spaces and operational activities.

The following are important recommendations to ensure a level of consistency in the approach to municipal decision-making regarding partnerships.

#### **Recommendation 76**

**Revamp the existing Community Partnership Policy to provide a holistic decision-making framework for a range of partnership options (capital and operating) to enhance the delivery of facilities (including consideration for public-private partnerships). An effective partnership framework will help municipal decision makers answer several important questions:**

- **Is the service/facility needed in the community?**
- **Is the service/facility consistent with municipal values?**
- **Who is best equipped to deliver the service?**
- **Will municipal interests be protected within the selected approach?**

**Partnership frameworks offer guidance for the examination of project proposals arising from the private sector, non-profit agencies or community organizations. The policy should also stipulate the manner in which the City of Thunder Bay will procure its partners.**

#### **Recommendation 77**

**Develop a municipal policy that stipulates when it is appropriate to contemplate terminating an operating agreement and/or replace a facility operator due to underperformance.**

## **8.2 Ensuring fairness and access to facilities**

The development of a partnership framework – as described above – is one component of ensuring fair and equitable public access to facilities. Guaranteeing an appropriate level of public access for those assets partly funded by public dollars will be important as the Municipality evaluates recommendations, options and opportunities for investment in facilities on a forward basis.

Other corporate policies and procedures seek to ensure fair community access to space through municipal booking procedures in cases where facilities are municipally-owned and operated. This is the case with the City's arenas. The City's Ice Allocation Policy provides a framework for the distribution of ice time to various community/user groups across the City. This policy was last revised in 2005 and should be regularly reviewed and evaluated.

**Recommendation 78**

**Regularly review the City's Ice Allocation Policy and evaluate the effectiveness of its implementation. This may be done through consultation with user groups to understand the level of satisfaction with the ice allocation process. Where deemed necessary, the policy should be revised and updated.**

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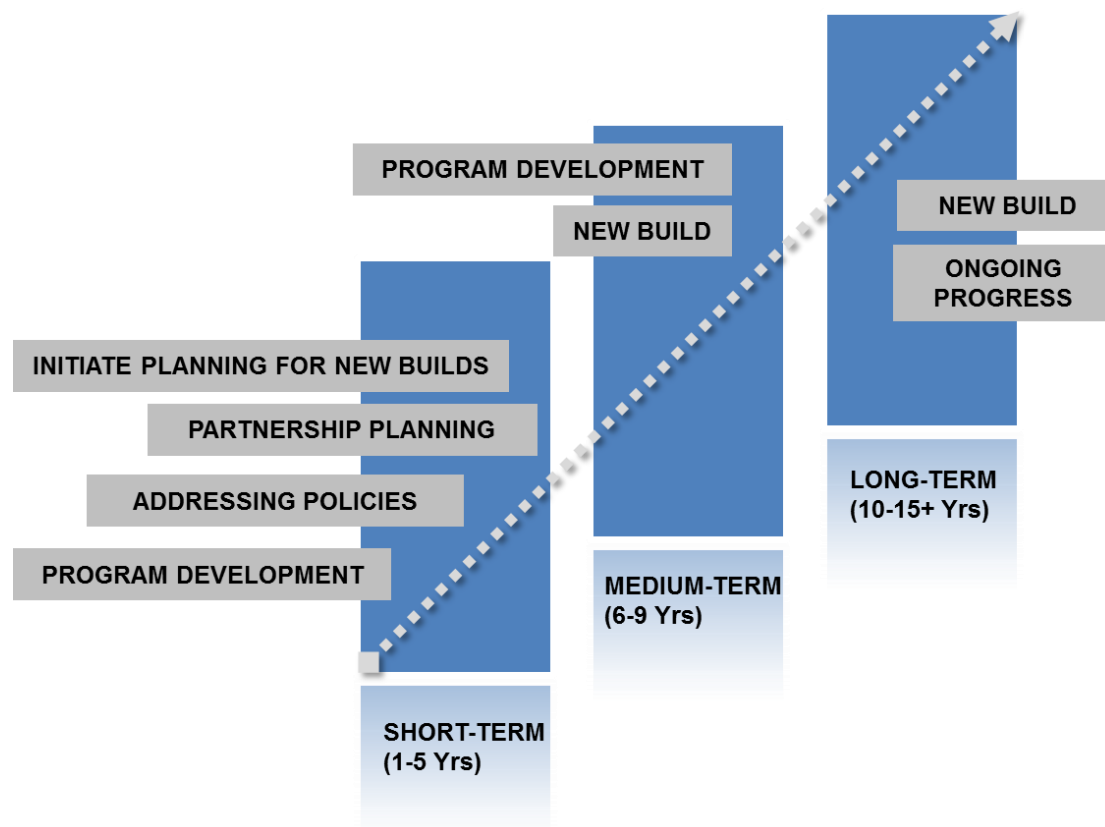
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## **PART 3: PATHWAY FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

## 9 Implementation

The implementation of recommendations of this Master Plan has implications for the current approach to operations and the day-to-day delivery of facilities, service and programs as well as considerations for facilities planning. Implementation considerations – for capital and operations planning – are reviewed below.



### Establishing realistic timelines and expectations

The Master Plan is based on a 12-15-year planning timeframe. As illustrated in the graphic, some recommendations are expected to extend well beyond this time horizon – in particular, those involving major capital expenditure the timing for which can only be estimated based on further assessment of partnership funding sources.

On the other hand, a number of the recommendations regarding services represent actions that once initiated, are expected to remain in place over the full life of this Master Plan and beyond. This includes those procedural and organizational changes.

### 9.1 Planning for Facilities

#### The interlink between parks and facilities planning

Within the scope of this Master Plan, facility recommendations are focused on those assets under the stewardship of the City's Community Services Department.



The assets include arenas, indoor pools, outdoor pools, stadia, community centres, older adult facilities; the Baggage Building Arts Centre at Prince Arthur's Landing as well as related waterfront assets and beach area facilities. In planning for the above, this Master Plan makes recommendations for major categories of outdoor park-based infrastructure on the basis that these assets (as delivery by the City's Parks and Open Spaces Section) serve as complement to their indoor counterparts. For example:

- In planning for baseball and track and field stadia in the City a thorough analysis of the use, quality and quantity of the entire supply of ball diamonds and soccer fields is required in order to refine recommendations as to scale and location of investment versus disinvestment/repurposing of sports fields;
- In addressing outdoor aquatics, park-based alternatives for aquatic play were addressed; and
- As a number of major indoor assets are located within park settings, recommendations for investment in these building speak holistically to the development of the sites as a whole including the parks within which these facilities are located.

This Master Plan therefore provides a series of recommendations related to indoor recreation infrastructure as well as major outdoor and park-based infrastructure – this includes future investment artificial sports fields and standards of supply for outdoor soccer fields and ball diamonds based on the existing condition and use of these facilities. It is the intent of this Plan that park investment and facilities planning be harmonious and synchronous.

#### Recommendation 79

**On a go forward basis, the parks planning and implementation should be based on an established open space hierarchy outlining an appropriate range of amenities and level of maintenance across the various classifications of parkland. Parks and trails master planning should incorporate principles of accessibility and public safety considerations in design.**

#### Recommendation 80:

**Linked to the above recommendation, parklands associated with major facilities (such as community centres and outdoor pools) should be prioritized for investment to holistically improve the park setting through signage, wayfinding, paths and trails, public art, active park uses such as courts as appropriate. An example of prime planning opportunity is the Volunteer Pool site.**

#### Establishing Core Integrated Systems of Planning

Linked to the above, stakeholders and staff identified internal challenges to effective planning and coordination of resources for the delivery of programs and services. Throughout the Master Plan consultation process, it was identified that the separation of the Recreation and Culture Division from the Parks and Open Spaces Section has resulted in silos with respect to operational and capital planning for recreational assets – work to bridge this

gap will need to be prioritized to achieve the holistic vision for recreation in Thunder Bay.

#### Recommendation 81

**Establish an Interdepartmental Working Group comprising Parks and Recreation Staff with a mandate to meet on a monthly/bi-monthly basis to discuss planned capital projects, programs and new services. The Group should routinely evaluate opportunities to maximize departmental resources and, where possible, collaborate on projects which have implications for both facilities and parks and open space assets, including some recommendations of this Master Plan.**

The City should monitor the effectiveness of the current organizational structure for the delivery of recreation. Over time should the separation of the recreation and Parks and Open Spaces Sections be deemed to be less effective than desired, the City and Council - at its discretion - may seek to re-evaluate and amend this model over time.

#### 9.1.1. Conduct Due Diligence

This plan is designed to steer Council and municipal decision-makers in addressing priorities for planning and investment in recreation. However, recommendations related the development of facilities and repurposing of existing ones – require detailed consideration of how these required changes will come about – that means further design and concept planning, but also an assessment and technical feasibility of repurposing. All of which will require public review and approval.

The staff and Council of the City of Thunder Bay will need to further evaluate and investigate the feasibility of implementing individual recommendations/actions through formal study (as may occasionally be required) as well as on an annual basis as part of the municipal planning and budgetary process.

#### Delivering capital projects

The range of means to deliver large-scale municipal capital projects has evolved in recent years. No longer are the options restricted to traditional public sector procurement, ownership and operation approaches, but a range of alternative financing and procurement (AFP) models have been implemented by jurisdictions throughout Canada and elsewhere. The determination of which method of project delivery is most appropriate is, in most cases, a case-specific exercise in establishing the objectives of the project, the risks associated with delivery and ongoing operation, and the range of opportunities for these risks to be shared by both the private and public sectors.

The following discussion of project delivery partnership options is focused on the development of real estate assets and its ongoing operation. We therefore distinguish principally between the private sector and the public sector. The potential for other partnerships in funding and operating a particular facility, such as with educational institutions, is another important opportunity.

There are a number of ways to design, fund, build and operate recreational assets, including:

- The traditional approach to facility procurement; and
- A variety of forms of public private partnership (PPP or P3s).

The choice approach is not necessarily a binary one and can reflect a range of hybrid solutions. What is important is that the City give due consideration to the ways and means to deliver new recreational infrastructure in a cost-effective manner.

Informing the decision of how to engage the private sector, if at all, is the complement of uses in a new facility(ies). In the case of Thunder Bay, this Master Plan speaks to investment twin ice as part of 2 larger recreation venues. In general terms, the wider the array of community-focused activities, including aquatics, the more limited the opportunity to partner with the private sector which may more appropriately provide management services for fee as opposed to putting capital at risk in financing deficit producing capital assets. For a fee, However, this is NOT a universal principle, and while many ice arenas are built and operated by the private sector for profit in partnership with municipalities who purchase ice time at market rates, there remains the potential to expand municipal underwriting of private risk in the form of guaranteed payment of rental fees for use of the facility. The City should consider all options for funding, financing and operating new facilities.

### **The Traditional Public Procurement Approach**

In the traditional municipal procurement method, municipal or other public sector funds are used to fund capital construction costs and the Municipality is responsible for facility operation, maintenance and life cycle works.

Public Sector Owner	A - Design Development
	B - Construction Tenders
	C - Operation and Maintenance Control & use of Contract Suppliers

Under the traditional approach, the public sector as owner of the facility separates out the components of project design construction and delivery, through one or more design development contracts, and a series of construction tenders, managed by a project manager contracted by the Municipality.

The operation and maintenance of the facility is the responsibility of the Municipality with necessary short-term contracts with private sector companies to provide supplies and specific services. Under this model, the Municipality has 100% control of the facility, its financing and requirements, operations and therefore assumes all risks associated with the project including any delays or cost overage prior to completion, and any

ongoing operating liabilities (financial or otherwise) during the operation phase of the project.

### The Range of P3 Options

Several essential principles define public private partnerships and the reasons that municipalities and other public sector organizations seek these models:

- Involving the private sector in project delivery and/or operations enables the transfer of risks to the private sector while also providing the necessary profit incentive for the private sector;
- Partnerships are based on reducing overall costs both in the short term and over the long-term;
- Roles and responsibilities reflect the relative expertise of public vs. private sector parties; and
- The arrangement potentially frees up scarce public sector resources.

The extent of private sector involvement and therefore the degree of project risk transferred to the private sector varies depending on the type of private sector partnership. In the first limited form, the involvement of the private sector is in the provision of the design-build services whereby the design and construction (not necessarily the financing) is undertaken by the private sector. Ownership and operation of the facility when complete, remains with the public sector. At the other end of the spectrum is complete privatization whereby the private sector fully substitutes the public sector in the provision of the facility, service or other activity under consideration. Between these two limits, lie a range of risk transfer mechanisms which have proven valuable to a number of municipalities in the delivery of large scale, long term capital facilities.

A brief explanation of some of the terms includes the following:

- Operation and Maintenance (O&M) – involves a private sector operator managing a facility owned by the private sector on the basis of a specific contract for a specified term, while ownership of the asset remains with the public sector;
- Build-Finance is a condition where the private sector builds and finances the construction of a capital asset during the construction period only. Following this, the responsibility for the repayment of the capital cost and the operation of the facility resides with the public sector only;
- Design-Build-Finance-Maintain (DBFM) – this is often considered a true and complete form of public private partnership whereby a municipal capital facility is designed, constructed, financed, maintained and (sometimes) operated by the private sector on behalf of the municipality or other public sector organization which has the use of the facility; and
- Concession – a full private sector solution to public sector requirements. This also involves a level of control residing with a private sector as well as the majority of project-related risks over a specified concession period. This method is often used for large scale municipal capital facilities as well as transportation infrastructure.



For community recreation facilities (albeit those providing a more limited usage of services such as ice only), comprehensive P3 solutions can involve the guaranteed purchase of programming time by the Municipality to enable a private sector model of facility development and operation.

### **Pre-Requisite for Capital Funding**

There are two elements to the recommended capital funding necessary to implement the Master Plan:

- Smaller-scale capital funding to enable necessary consulting and other services on all matters related to the management of the assets of the Municipality, decommissioning and repurposing assets, as well as the feasibility of developing new recreational assets; and
- Large-scale capital funding as part of a broader strategy for the delivery of built facilities, repurposing and renovating existing assets as necessary.

Building on this Master Plan as well as the range of delivery options described above, the City of Thunder Bay should seek funding from its Provincial and Federal Government partners through the variety of existing capital funding programs/streams available, in order to first undertake the necessary feasibility and strategy making process, and subsequently build these facilities.

### **Establishing a Capital Reserve for Facilities**

For all municipal capital assets that represent sunk costs over time, the creation of a capital reserve from operations will help to pay for necessary renovations and the replacement of major building components as these facilities continue to age. With new facilities, the City of Thunder Bay should align itself with other municipalities within the Province that have attempted to consistently apply the principles of a capital reserve to be built into the operating finances of the facilities in question. This represents forward planning which is

essential to long-term sustainability and should be central to any asset management plan. For practical reasons, it is often not possible to operate a capital reserve on the basis of the expected lifecycle of a building as this represents a significant annual allocation to such reserves. However, we would suggest that following common practice in other municipalities, 1-2% of the original capital cost of new building infrastructure should be allocated to a capital reserve(s).

In addition, the operating savings arising from the decommissioning and repurposing of selected assets over the course of the Plan should be allocated to a capital reserve(s) as a means to bolster the level of funding necessary to apply for future capital priorities.

## 9.2 Other Operational Implications and Approaches

### Transitioning prioritized community centres

As discussed elsewhere in this report, the implementation of prioritizing community centres for transitioning to an advisory board governance model will not be an immediate wholesale change. General steps to accomplish this effectively and prudently are as follows:

- Staff completion of a criteria-based assessment and evaluation to confirm which community centres are to be prioritized for transition;
- City staff consultation with the respective volunteer boards to review the proposed model and establish expectations of the process for transitioning;
- Staff report to Council on the results of the criteria-based assessment and initial discussions with the respective boards;
- Ongoing work with the respective volunteer boards to draft a formal agreement and charter/constitution for their function as an advisory board. In keeping with directions of this Plan, this should take the form of a standardized agreement. At this point, a clear definition of the new working relationship between the City and boards should be established;
- Internal business planning by staff for the operation of centres – this should include an identification of which facility(ies) will be transitioned first and the timelines associated with this. Planning should also address resource requirements including staff (re)allocation as necessary.
- Staff report back to Council on the results of business planning and draft agreements.
- With Council agreement to proceed, plan accordingly.

The above also has capital implications for these facilities. Plans to actively program and expand the use of these venues can be expected to warrant some level of capital improvements and enhancements to these buildings – the scale of which can only be determined over time with successful operational transitioning.

## 9.3 Framework of Timing

The following table summarizes the general timeframe for implementing recommendations of this Plan. As illustrated by the graduated shading below, some actions are ongoing, others ramp up with the commencement of due diligence (as in the case of facilities) moving through to full implementation. Other recommendations are immediate requirements – this is particularly true of those policy and administration related requirements which set the tone for future recreation planning priorities.

**Key:**

Action commenced (for e.g. through required due diligence, planning and negotiations)

Continued progress

Implementation and/or project completion

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1 5 Years)	Medium Term (6 9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
<b>Excellence in Stewardship and Investment in Facilities</b>				
1	Invest in twin ice at the Port Arthur Arena as part of a broader recreation campus plan with the Canada Games Complex. With twinning, plan for the repurposing of the Neebing Arena for other community uses or dispose of this asset.			
2	Long-term, invest in a second ice surface at Delaney Arena with the potential loss of community arena ice at Fort William Gardens (FWG). This links to broader planning for Chapples Park.			
3	Continue to invest in required event/maintenance/AODA costs for the Current River and Grandview arenas through annual capital planning. In the short-term, only essential capital investments should be made for those facilities subject to decommissioning, repurposing or further study to confirm potential (i.e. Port Arthur, Delaney and FWG arenas).			
4	Continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the lease agreement for the operation of the Tournament Centre including customer satisfaction with the condition and maintenance of the facilities. Long-term, with the end of the current lease agreement, regain the operations of the Tournament Centre.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
5	Test the feasibility of adding curling to any new investment in community ice in order to allow Fort William Gardens to be fully disposed of for redevelopment and evaluate the cost-benefit of disposal.			
6	Continue to invest in planned capital maintenance at the Canada Games Complex (CGC). This facility is to be subject to a broader master planning exercise to physically connect the Complex to a twinned Port Arthur Arena and should comprise investment in new community space as part of the build-out of this recreation zone.			
7	With the development of a new recreation zone/campus to comprise the CGC, evaluate and implement a best practice model for maintenance of the facility. The evolution of the site to create a larger community complex enhances the value of having dedicated, on-site maintenance staff to manage visitor volumes.			
8	Continue to invest in planned capital maintenance at the Sir Winston Churchill Pool and invest in the expansion of this facility to comprise new non-aquatic, indoor community uses. The range of uses should be identified in consultation with the community and other programming synergies with the adjacent public school.			
9	Ensure investment in planned AODA and capital maintenance requirements at the Volunteer Pool. This facility is located in a park setting with important outdoor assets (tennis court and basketball courts, playground). Investment in this facility should be part of a holistic plan to improve the site through parks and open space planning.			
10	Plan for and implement the decommissioning of Dease Pool and evaluate the opportunity to repurpose the site via sale for the other productive uses (e.g. residential development).			



#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
11	Retain both Widnall and Heath Pool and invest in required capital improvements at these locations. Investment in outdoor pool sites as multi-generational spaces will be important. Both of these facilities are located in park settings and investment should be complemented by parks and open space planning to animate these locations (through landscaping, pathways, shading, benches and more.)			
12	Invest in 3 new splash pads (based on the typology developed at the waterfront) at other strategic park/facility locations in the City.			
13	Work to transition prioritized community centers to an advisory board model of governance to allow for City staff leadership of the day-to day management and operation of these facilities; while maintaining community centre boards as advisors regarding programming opportunities and capital projects.			
14	Develop and approve a governance framework – outlining the Municipality’s expectations and management processes for its relationships with the boards of management for the community centres that are not transitioned for City operation.			
15	The Master Plan recommends the development of 2 large new recreation centres – one on the north and one in the south end of the City: > Location #1: At the CGC/Port Arthur Arena site via building expansion as part of a broader campus plan for site redevelopment. > Location #2: At the Sir Winston Churchill pool site as an expansion to the existing building.			
16	Investment in key community/recreation centres and zones will offer opportunities to invest in youth and older adult spaces as a part of the development of these facilities. These opportunities should be evaluated by staff as the implementation of this Plan progresses.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
17	Continue to maintain the Thunder Bay 55+ Centre as well as older adult programming at the West Arthur Community Centre location. In planning for new recreation centres, the City should identify opportunities to include older adult programming space as part of these facilities.			
18	Continue to operate a Youth Centre at the Kinsmen Centre site. This links to boarder recommendations for investment in youth-centred spaces as proposed by this Master Plan (see Section 6.7.2) and is in keeping with the City's Youth Services Plan Implementation Report (2015) as well as recommendations coming out of the 2016 First Nations' Youth - Coroner's Inquest			
19	Continue to invest in necessary improvements at the Port Arthur Stadium as a major competitive venue.			
20	Maintain and continue to invest in Fort William Stadium as a major competition hosting venue and seek to improve the utilization of the track facility.			
21	The City should actively consider developing a complex of 3 or 4 field turf fields which would significantly improve the current lack of supply and go a long way to satisfy the stated needs of the soccer community.			
22	As an immediate priority it is recommended that the City's Parks and Open Spaces Section complete a sports field implementation strategy informed by recommendations of this Master Plan, the Chapples Park Master Plan and the 2015 sport field inventory assessment completed by Sport Turf International.			
23	The City, working with Soccer Northwest Ontario should establish the need for investment in an indoor soccer complex and evaluate successful models for the development of indoor soccer facilities.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
24	Linked to the above, undertake a Feasibility Study and Site Location Analysis for an indoor soccer facility in Thunder Bay. As part of this exercise, Chapples Park should be evaluated as an opportunity in addition to industrial sites.			
25	The development of a sports field implementation strategy should evaluate opportunities to decommission/repurpose some City-owned ball diamonds and invest in outdoor soccer fields, giving consideration to condition, utilization and demand and other relevant factors such as location.			
26	Invest in Chapples Park as a central hub for active recreation. Potential twinning of the Delaney Arena and the co-location of ice with the Fort William Stadium and other major outdoor active uses (soccer, tennis, golf) position the Park to be developed as a premier sports venue.			
27	As it relates to sports field planning, it is recommended that in the future the potential for joint projects with the school boards is fully considered.			
28	In order to achieve the outcomes of Recommendation 27, the City of Thunder Bay and its partner school boards should establish a joint capital planning management committee as a standing committee to assess the ways in which the recommendations of this Master Plan and a future sports field implementation strategy can be aligned with the future development planning of the school boards.			
29	The City, working in partnership with the Tennis Club, should continue to invest in required capital maintenance of the Thunder Bay Tennis Centre and progressively work with the Tennis Club to maximize public access to this facility.			
30-31	Support plans for a new permanent indoor tennis centre.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
32	Continue with planned capital maintenance for the Baggage Building Arts Centre and continue to explore opportunities to maximize these facilities for community use through programming.			
33	Continue to maintain service buildings at Sandy Beach and Boulevard Lake to ensure the continued viability of these assets through ongoing capital investment and repairs.			
34	Planning and investment in Sandy Beach for outdoor recreation opportunities is subject to a broader master planning exercise for Chippewa Park.			
35	The Trails Master Plan for the City of Thunder Bay should prioritize the development of a comprehensive system of trails that inter-connects the various corners of the City and major recreational assets and zones as proposed in this Master Plan.			
36	As part of the Trails Master Plan, develop and adopt a trail classification system and hierarchy based on the designed use of trails as well as the type and volume of users.			
37	A capital plan should accompany the Trails Master Plan and provide a clear strategy for trail development based on an approved trails classification system/hierarchy.			
38	Support the Ontario Trails Strategy and leverage any related funding as may become available in future years to develop local trail infrastructure (building fences, bridges, culverts and on-going maintenance).			
39	Develop interactive interpretive signage along key trail routes and in major open space areas for smartphone users.			
40	Continue to invest in active transportation infrastructure (including urban bike lanes) that link residents to recreation facilities and programming and provide effective connections to the local trail system.			



#	Recommendation	Short Term (1 5 Years)	Medium Term (6 9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
41	Continue to update online interactive mapping and identify where on and off road trail connections are planned or exist, so as to help navigate visitors and users along trail routes.			
42	Continue to invest in AODA requirements and implement long-term facility event listings/forecasts for the maintenance of existing buildings. For those facilities recommended for decommissioning, repurposing, renovation or expansion, only essential investments should be made to ensure public safety while in continued use in lieu of plans for facility redesign, expansion and/or decommissioning.			
43	Continue to implement a long-term capital planning strategy as a framework for prioritizing investment in facilities.			
44	Work with Lakehead University and leverage its investment in recreation facilities for significant community access for multi-use facilities, indoor soccer etc.			
45	In pursuing the idea of partnerships, the City should explore the opportunity to leverage the University's current plans for investment in a new Recreation Centre for the potential co-location of an indoor tennis centre as an alternative to the Chapples Park site.			
<b>Quality Services and Dynamic Programming</b>				
46	The City's existing programs and partnerships should continue to be maintained, developed and monitored over time based on performance and ability to meeting community need.			
47	Establish and host a Community Sport & Recreation Roundtable as an annual forum to engage local sports-related groups and organizations which support the delivery of recreation in planning and discussion around new recreation-related program and service initiatives across sectors.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
48	Work with Indigenous leadership and stakeholders (including Fort William First Nation, NAN and service organizations such as Matawa Education etc.) to initiate an Indigenous Caucus as a forum for evaluating opportunities to better address the recreational needs of the Indigenous community in the City.			
49	Building on the City's 'The Welcome Project', relevant City Staff (Community Services, Corporate Strategic Services, and the Aboriginal Liaison Unit) and the Caucus should work to develop and implement a Welcoming Strategy for new and temporary residents of Indigenous background.			
50	Initiate a social marketing campaign to promote City-owned recreation facilities as safe public spaces for all people including Indigenous residents.			
51	Develop a mentorship program through the City's Children and Youth Section that pairs Indigenous students with other resident youth in the community to help them become acquainted with their new place of residence. The City should seek partners to develop, implement and promote this program. Potential partners include Indigenous Liaisons for the local school boards.			
52	Reevaluate and, as appropriate, revisit the hiring requirements for Recreation and Culture staff to reflect learned experience and alternative certification/training to allow persons with non-traditional education to access employment opportunities within the City for the delivery of recreational programs and services.			
53	Continue to expand neighbourhood-based youth programming options with City re-entry in the operation of key community centres. These opportunities should be progressively evaluated based on community need and demand for programming.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1 5 Years)	Medium Term (6 9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
54	Linked to the above, investment in large recreation centres in the north (CGC/Port Arthur Arena) and south ends (Sir Winston Churchill pool) of the city will present opportunities to develop youth centre spaces as components of these buildings.			
55	Explore Mobile Park programming for both children and youth. Alternative activities that may be accommodated through mobile park infrastructure include rock climbing, disc golf etc.			
56	With proposed/potential investment in new indoor facility(ies), work with the local tennis/soccer clubs to ensure the provision of dedicated time slots for public clinics (e.g. non-member, learn-to-play activities for children and youth). This will be important to ensure fair and affordable public access to these premium spaces.			
57	Continue to implement recommendations of the Inspire Thunder Bay Culture Plan.			
58	As part of a broader redesign the City's website, continue to promote the Department's new role (since restructuring) through a comprehensive communications strategy that articulates the pillars of this Plan.			
59	Invest in and implement an online booking system that allows residents 'self-book'/request spaces/facilities and register for programs online via the City's website.			
60	Initiate an online facility maintenance request system for facilities (e.g. via an online e-mail/ message submission tool on the City's website) where residents may submit an email or real-time alert/request to facilities maintenance staff on issues to be addressed (repairs, washroom maintenance etc.)			
61	Continue to invest in the seasonal recreational guide ('The Key') and continue to ensure digital availability on the City's website.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
62	Continue to work with local partners - Thunder Bay District Health Unit, the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre and Communities Together for Children – to enhance and maintain the Thunder Bay Recreation Map (online tool). As new programs service and facilities are added to the City's asset base, the online community map should be updated to reflect this.			
63	Continue to recognize volunteers within the Recreation & Culture Division and wider community through support and promotion of community-based volunteer appreciation awards to celebrate community champions and promote a culture of volunteerism in the city.			
64	Routinely evaluate the City's volunteer training process and implement improvements where required.			
65	Continue to maintain the Teens 'n Training (T'nT) program and work progressively to expand the range of volunteer opportunities for adults, newcomers and Indigenous youth that are transitioning to life off-Reserve as a means of facilitating settlement, integration and inclusion.			
66	Develop and approve a Municipal User Fee Policy confirms, validates and prioritizes an approach to pricing in keeping with best practice.			
67	In developing a User Fee Policy, the Recreation and Culture Division should complete a detailed assessment of the full cost of service (direct and indirect costs) for the delivery of programs and assess whether current levels of cost recovery across various categories of programs are acceptable or require improvement.			



#	Recommendation	Short Term (1-5 Years)	Medium Term (6-9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
68	Enhance the marketing effort around PRO Kids through the development of a campaign designed to remove the stigma associated with the program. This campaign should employ community champions and include direct promotions to children/parents through local schools and public healthcare providers. The concept of 'no child being left out' should be promoted.			
69	Regularly evaluate the performance of the Community, Youth, and Cultural Funding Program and identify opportunities for expansion and/or improvements to enhance the implementation of this program over time.			
70	Evaluate the potential to expand the Event Development Grant to support major events beyond the first year of hosting so as to facilitate the sustainability of major events.			
71	Develop a Tourism Strategy for the City of Thunder Bay that evaluates best bet opportunities, tools and mechanisms to enhance the City's role in targeting key markets (e.g. sport tourism, winterized sport, cultural tourism including festivals/events and Indigenous culture, outdoor adventure and more).			
72	As part of a municipal Tourism Strategy, evaluate the value proposition of investment in a stand-alone tourism destination website designed to target key markets (e.g. sport tourism, winterized sport, cultural tourism including festivals/events and Indigenous culture, outdoor adventure and more) through a series of information tools (visitor events calendar, tourism asset mapping, marketing etc.) and incentivized/bundled travel experience packages.			
73	Work the Community Sport & Recreation Roundtable to investigate opportunities to cross-promote festivals and events with tournaments to increase overnight visitation in the City.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1 5 Years)	Medium Term (6 9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
74	Continue to work with Indigenous stakeholders to expand or enhance existing events that celebrate the City's Indigenous community and heritage and consider new opportunities for events in collaboration with the Indigenous Caucus.			
75	Evaluate new opportunities for festivals and events and develop partnerships to deliver these as they arise over time. Investment in major recreational infrastructure at Chapples Park and other venues proposed by the Master Plan will allow for multi-faceted event hosting e.g. community golf games and/or trail runs linked to other entertainment (such as culinary activities, music and more.)			
<b>Governance &amp; Partnerships</b>				
76	Revamp the existing Community Partnership Policy to provide a holistic decision-making framework for a range of partnership options (capital and operating) to enhance the delivery of facilities (including consideration for public-private partnerships).			
77	Develop a municipal policy that stipulates when it is appropriate to contemplate terminating an operating agreement and/or replace a facility operator due to underperformance.			
78	Regularly review the City's Ice Allocation Policy and evaluate the effectiveness of its implementation.			
<b>Implementation</b>				
79	On a go forward basis, the parks planning and implementation should be based on an established open space hierarchy outlining an appropriate range of amenities and level of maintenance across the various classifications of parkland.			

#	Recommendation	Short Term (1 5 Years)	Medium Term (6 9 years)	Long Term (10+ years)
80	Linked to the above recommendation, parklands associated with major facilities (such as community centres and outdoor pools) should be prioritized for investment to holistically improve the park setting through signage, wayfinding, paths and trails, public art, active park uses such as courts as appropriate. An example of prime planning opportunity is the Volunteer Pool site.			
81	Establish an Interdepartmental Working Group comprising Parks and Recreation Staff with a mandate to meet on a monthly/bi-monthly basis to discuss planned capital projects, programs and new services.			

## 10 Monitoring Performance

Operating performance measurement is a process for obtaining the necessary information on which actions and decisions are based.

Program and service delivery systems, facility maintenance procedures and many other essential recreation service functions must therefore be carefully monitored. Over time, the collection of these facts, ratios and performance benchmarks can offer insights about the impact and consequences of shifts in operating strategies that could lead to augmented efficiencies, access to new markets or the introduction of improvement strategies – all of which could increase the community benefits resultant from recreation services at the same or less cost to the tax payer.

The Municipality's monitoring and oversight enhancement process should begin with the Municipality creating key performance indicators (KPIs) as well as meaningful and measurable operating and financial metrics. This Master Plan recognizes that the City of Thunder Bay participates in provincial performance monitoring programs – primarily the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI). This plan does however recognize that the limitations of this system in providing the necessary value-added metrics which help both staff and Council address success at varying levels.

The following tables provide a sample of statistics, metrics and performance or service ratios that are commonly used to evaluate effective and successful implementation and apply to both municipally-delivered facilities and programs as well as those managed by non-profit/private partners for facility management. These may also be incorporated into the evaluation process for community group operating grants delivered by the City of Thunder Bay.

The City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division should review and evaluate the appropriateness of these metrics and develop a straight-forward methodology unique to its own internal needs to routinely evaluate the performance of its service and facility delivery model. As a starting point, we recommend that staff (i.e. the Interdepartmental Working Group recommended as part of this Plan):

1. Identify what sources and processes already exist to the help gather the data below;
2. Where there are gaps, evaluate where strategies can easily be put in place to collect this information; and
3. Determine holistically what information is most useful to address staff's planning needs and develop a methodology around this accordingly.

Exhibit 22: KPIs for evaluating the City's Recreation Delivery Model - Reporting Recommendations

Statistic/Metrics	
	Reporting Frequency
# Hours of Operation	Daily, weekly, annually
\$ Revenue	Per revenue category and area of operation
\$ Expenses	Per cost area and area of operation
# Hours Rented	Per rental type
# Facility Visitors	Per program area
# Pass Holders	Per each type of passholder
# Programs	Per each type of program
# Program Participants	Per each type of program
# Events	Per each type of event
# Event Attendees	Per type of event (concerts, shows, etc.)
# Groups of Users	Demonstrating diversity of reach
# Staff (FTEs)	Per department or activity

Service Ratio	
	Reporting Requirements
Participant Retention	Number of returning clients over period
Client Satisfaction Index	Participant rating vs. expectations
Staff Retention	Length of staff tenure over period
Staff Satisfaction Index	Participant rating vs. expectations
# of Complaints	Formal complaint policy (i.e. response time)
# Safety Issues vs. Traffic	Assume safety issue tracking policy

**Ultimately, the City of Thunder Bay has the opportunity with this Plan to craft a result-based monitoring and evaluation methodology that is both qualitative and quantitative and meets the needs of the municipal corporation.**



Performance Ratios	
	Reporting Requirements
% Cost Recovery	Revenue over ( $\div$ ) cost per service area & total
Change in Revenue	Year over year performance
Change in Expenses	Year over year performance
Change in Facility Traffic	Year over year performance
Change in Pass Holders	Year over year performance
Change in Programs	Year over year performance
Change in Program Participants	Year over year performance
Change in Events	Year over year performance
Change in User Groups	Year over year performance
Change in Complaints	Year over year performance
Expense per hour operation	Per each department or activity type
Revenue per hour rented	Compared to published rental rates
Revenue per visitor	Compare to change in revenue and traffic
Cost per visitor	Compare to change in traffic
Payroll % of Revenue	Payroll cost over ( $\div$ ) revenue per service area
Payroll per Visitor	Payroll cost over ( $\div$ ) visitor per service area
Revenue per Sq. Ft.	Revenue over ( $\div$ ) facility size per service area
Cost per Sq. Ft.	Cost over ( $\div$ ) facility size per service area
% Revenue	Per department or service area

Some of the above metrics have been developed at a high-level as part of this Master Plan (such as cost and revenues per square foot of space) and may be incorporated within the Division's existing data gathering practices.

Ultimately, the City of Thunder Bay has the opportunity with this Plan to craft a result-based monitoring and evaluation methodology that is both qualitative and quantitative and meets the needs of the municipal corporation.

## 11 Protocols for Reviewing & Updating this Plan

### 11.1 Annual monitoring

While a range of staff support and partnerships will be required to enact recommendations, there must be senior management commitment and administrative oversight for effective implementation.

Individual recommendations cross-cut a range of municipal divisions including Parks and Open Spaces, Recreation and Culture and Facilities. The development of an Interdepartmental Working Group as recommended by this Plan will provide an appropriate mechanism for regularly reviewing and evaluating progress and successful achievement of targets of this Plan and will allow for accountability.

Annual progress in the implementation of this Master Plan should be outlined by staff report to the Council of the City of Thunder Bay.

### 11.2 Evaluating directions recognizing that municipal priorities shift

The Master Plan should also be placed in the broader context of all obligations of the City of Thunder Bay as a provider of services, facilities and infrastructure. Changes in the wider municipal environment in terms of priorities in fiscal capacity can be expected to result in changes to the priorities contained in this Master Plan. Council will need to review priorities on an annual basis.

Further, the Plan is expected to be delivered in an accountable manner, with annual monitoring of success in both resourcing and implementing the recommendations of the Plan taking into account these external forces. Municipal priorities as it relates to other areas of service be it infrastructure related, services, financial priorities as well as responding to emerging community needs are all expected to inform, adjust and contextualize the pace at which recommendations within this Plan are undertaken.

Recognizing the above and long-term scope of this Plan, this document and its recommendations should be subject to an internal departmental/divisional review every 5 years to determine and re-calibrate as necessary the timing of recommendations to light of shifts in the municipal planning environment.

**Municipal priorities as it relates to other areas of service be it infrastructure related, services, financial priorities as well as responding to emerging community needs are all expected to inform, adjust and contextualize the pace at which recommendations within this Plan are undertaken.**



