

City of Pickering Recreation & Parks Master Plan

December 2017



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PICKERING



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Recreation & Parks Master Plan

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Importance of a Strong Recreation and Parks System

Pickering's recreation and parks system is essential to the well-being of each resident living in the community, and for the City as a whole. Recreation facilities, parks and related programs provide Pickering's residents with countless physical, health, psychological, economic and environmental benefits. Not only does participation in recreation and park activities offer opportunities for a healthy lifestyle, it facilitates greater cognitive development and self-esteem among individuals, social interaction, economic spending, conservation of natural lands, and community vibrancy.

The field of recreation and parks planning has emerged to effectively position decision-makers and service providers to meet the needs of a community in a sustainable manner. Throughout Ontario, municipalities frequently undertake assessments of their recreation and park systems to develop policy frameworks, and quantify benefits and needs through performance measures.

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

~ A FRAMEWORK FOR RECREATION IN CANADA, 2015

An unparalleled and ever-growing network of parks and protected areas that defines our country, where Canadians live, learn, work and play together to conserve nature, build relationships, promote collaboration and celebrate diversity.

~ PARKS FOR ALL: A SHARED VISION FOR CANADA'S PARKS COMMUNITY, 2017 (DRAFT)

A Master Plan identifies what a community's needs and priorities are at a high level, in this case as they pertain to Pickering's recreation and parks opportunities. Master Plans provide Council, City staff, stakeholders, and the public with insights into recreation and parks needs that are rationalized by best practices, community engagement, quantifiable data, and a host of other inputs.

Recognizing that recreation and parks opportunities must work within the financial resources of the community, a Master Plan prioritizes needs and directions to ensure that the most pressing needs are addressed in a timely manner. Building upon this, a Master Plan can support City staff with securing external funding given that long term plans often assist with grant consideration. As a result, the importance of a community responsive and fiscally responsible Recreation and Parks Master Plan cannot be overstated.



The following vision statement illustrates how the City of Pickering would like its recreation and parks system to be viewed, and forms the fundamental basis through which this Master Plan has been developed.

Vision for Recreation and Parks in Pickering

We are active, cohesive, sustainable, and enjoy community pride in Pickering through our participation in recreation, parks and special events.

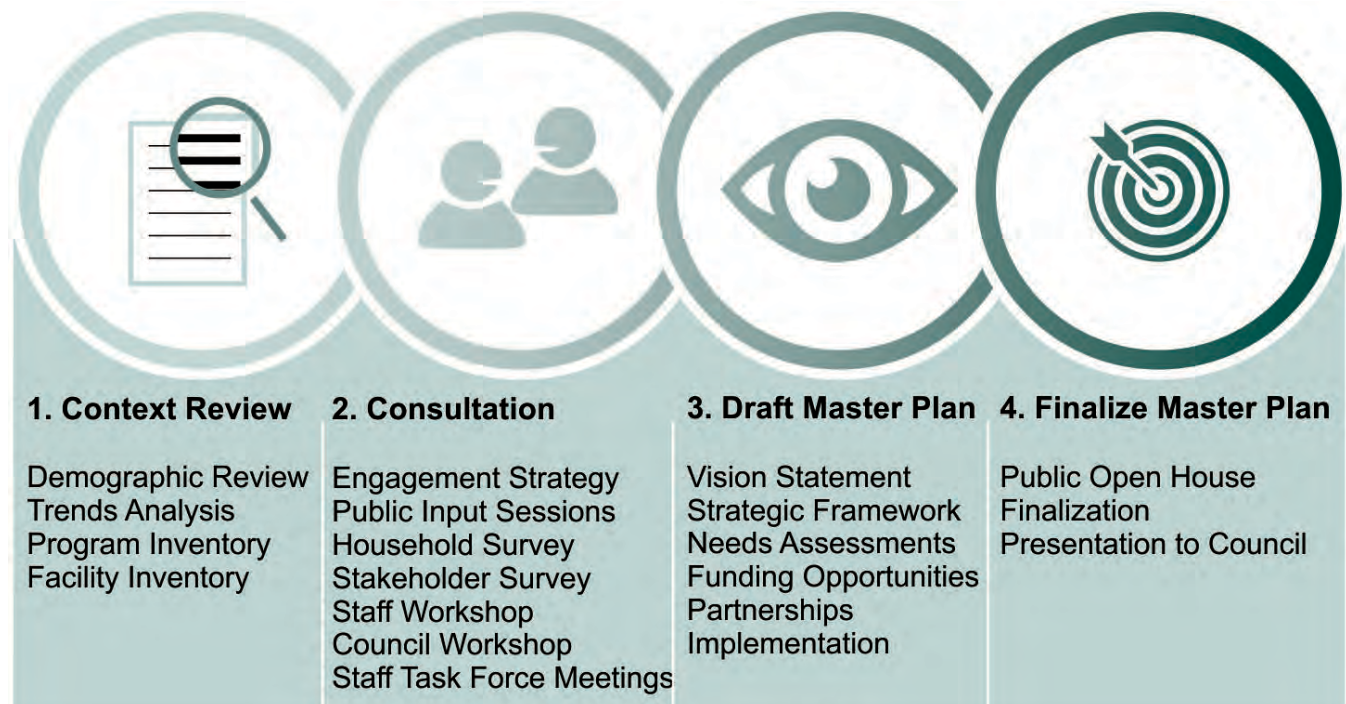
1.2 Project Scope and Methodology

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan (herein referred to as the ‘Master Plan’) is intended to guide decision-making for matters related to the provision of recreation and parks facilities, programs, and services in Pickering over the next 10 years. This Master Plan is an update to the 2002 Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services Master Plan, which will provide the City with up-to-date understanding of community needs, priorities, and perspectives, as well as effective ways to provide facilities and deliver programs on a go-forward basis. A Staff Task Force and the Consulting Team have collaborated in the development of the Master Plan based upon a Terms of Reference developed by the City of Pickering.

The scope of this Master Plan focuses on indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, parks, and municipal service and program delivery. Arts and culture, active transportation, and non-municipal service providers are beyond the scope of this Master Plan. Pickering has a Cultural Strategic Plan, which provides direction within this sector. An Integrated Transportation Master Plan is currently being completed in 2017-2018 by the Region of Durham, which will guide the development of active transportation infrastructure in the City.

The Master Plan is based on several inputs and has been prepared through a four step process, as illustrated in Figure 1. The recommendations contained in this Master Plan are built upon a number of inputs including demographics and trends, consultation, and facility and program inventory to ensure that they are responsive to the needs of Pickering’s residents.

Figure 1: Master Plan Process



1.3 Project Alignment

The Master Plan is influenced by numerous key background documents that speak to various aspects of Pickering including the City's population growth, land use patterns, facilities, programs, and other municipal elements. For this Master Plan to be responsive to current and future resident needs, it must align with the City's objectives and be synergistic with city-building policies contained in the Official Plan and related studies. Information gleaned from these documents is used to provide baseline content for the Master Plan, while integrating and/or reinforcing appropriate findings that support the provision of recreation and parks facilities, programs, and services.

The preparation of the Master Plan considered several relevant studies. Background documents that were reviewed as a part of the process, include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategic Policy Documents

- Durham Region Official Plan (2015)
- City of Pickering Official Plan (2010 Consolidation)
- City of Pickering Official Plan Amendments No. 22 (2014) and No. 26 (2015)
- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017)
- Greenbelt Plan (2017)

Recreation and Parks Documents

- Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services Master Plan (2002)
- Leisure Guide (2016/17)
- Utilization data for municipal facilities and programs
- Community Services organizational chart
- Proposal for the Seniors' and Youth Community Centre
- Various user agreements

Other Supporting Documents

- Accessibility Plan 2016 - 2020
- Capital Budget (2016)
- Draft Capital Budget (2017 – 2021)
- Financial subsidies and revenues
- Development Charges Background Study (2013)
- Cultural Strategic Plan (2014)
- 20 year population forecast
- Capital and operating budget forecast
- Various internal policies

2.0 Trends in the Recreation and Parks Sector

In developing a Master Plan, consideration of key trends that influence the provision of recreation and parks is necessary. The following section provides an overview of selected trends drawn from a variety of sources, including Statistics Canada, studies prepared by the City, as well as secondary research observed at the national, provincial and regional levels along with their potential implications in the local context. Additional trends are also referenced elsewhere in the Master Plan in support of specific facility and program assessments.

2.1 Implications of Population Growth

Pickering's population is estimated to be 96,000 persons, a figure that the Master Plan applies as the baseline population estimate for the year 2017.¹ After a period of nominal population growth averaging 0.2% annually between 2001 and 2011, the average rate of growth increased modestly over the most recent Census period to 0.7% annually between 2011 and 2016 (Pickering's 2016 Census population was recorded to be 91,770).² Low population growth has been historically attributable to land development largely relegated to established areas of the City due to provincial and federal restrictions that limited development of agricultural and other lands in Central Pickering.

In the years to come, however, Pickering is set to undergo substantial growth as a result of the provincially-led Central Pickering Development Plan (CPDP) and subsequently through a number of Neighbourhood Plans that are in varying stages of planning approval. The CPDP identifies the Seaton community as a place that could ultimately be home to 70,000 residents and 35,000 jobs. By the end of the Master Plan's timeframe in 2026, Pickering is projected to grow by 47% (or an average of 4.7% annually) to ultimately reach a population of 135,246 residents across the entire City.³ As a result of this growth, pressures can undoubtedly be expected to be much greater on Pickering's recreation and parks services compared to years past.

Growth-related pressures will not be uniformly distributed across the City (Table 1 and Figure 3), given that the vast majority of future residential development will take place in Central and North Pickering. The greatest share of population growth is expected to occur in the undeveloped Seaton urban area, which is expected to accommodate 33,615 residents by 2026. Within Seaton itself, the Lamoreaux neighbourhood is planned to accommodate the majority of this growth (16,533 residents). Seaton is projected to reach a population of 58,512 persons by 2031 and while this Master Plan primarily focuses on a 10-year timeframe, understanding future growth

¹ Estimated by the consultants through use of a straight-line extrapolation between 2016 Census and 2026 population forecast contained in the City of Pickering's Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast (2016), and rounded to the nearest 1,000 persons. The 2017 projection figure contained in the Detailed 20 Year Forecast has not been used in the Master Plan given that it is lower than the 2016 Census recorded population.

² Statistics Canada Census, 2001 to 2016, unadjusted for net Census undercoverage.

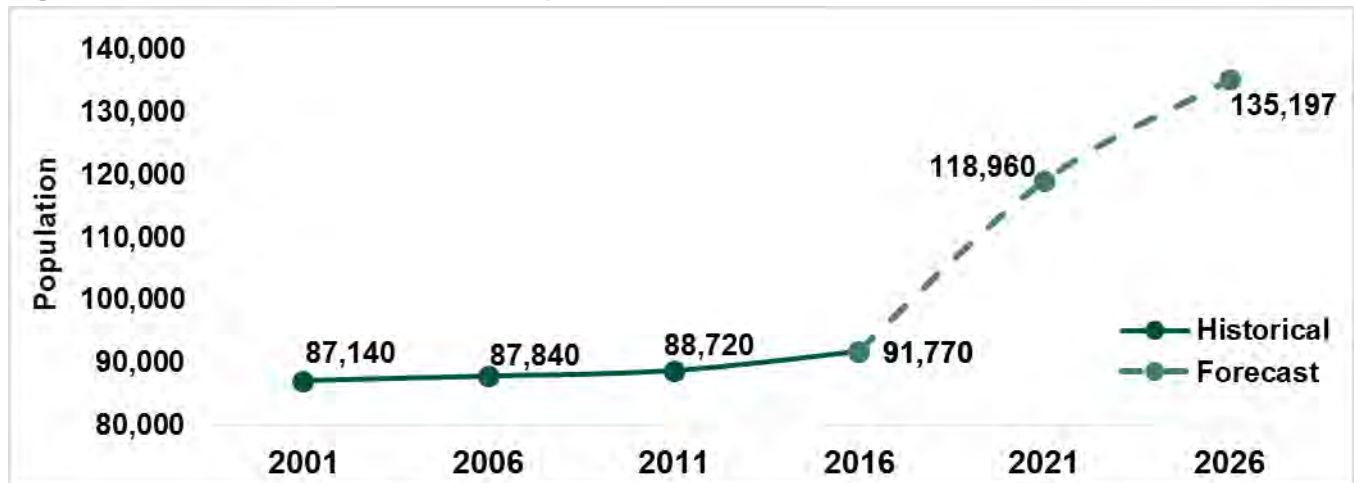
³ City of Pickering. Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast. March 2016.

beyond the planning horizon will strategically position the City to respond to long-term recreation and park needs in this area.

South Pickering can also expect to face additional pressures for recreation and parks services, albeit to a much lesser degree relative to the Seaton community. This lower rate of growth does not diminish the fact that nearly 10,000 additional persons are forecasted to arrive in South Pickering over the master planning period, and thousands more are anticipated in the years beyond 2026 as Pickering’s established areas continue to experience intensification and infill-related developments. In some ways, it will become more challenging for the City to address needs in mature neighbourhoods since lands available for recreation and parks facilities are few and far between compared to newly developing communities such as Seaton where the City has more options given the undeveloped nature of the area.

In contrast, Pickering’s rural settlement areas that fall outside of the Central Pickering Development Plan and the designated urban settlements are projected to receive nominal growth over the master planning period with just 281 new persons forecasted to be added. Nevertheless, growth will place a degree of pressure on existing parks and facilities located in the rural areas while lifecycle renewals will also continue to play a prominent role in improving quality of life to the communities surrounding these services, as they would in urban areas as well.⁴

Figure 2: Historical and Forecasted Population, 2001 - 2026



Source: Statistics Canada 2001-2016 Census. City of Pickering Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast (2016). Population includes census undercount of 4%.

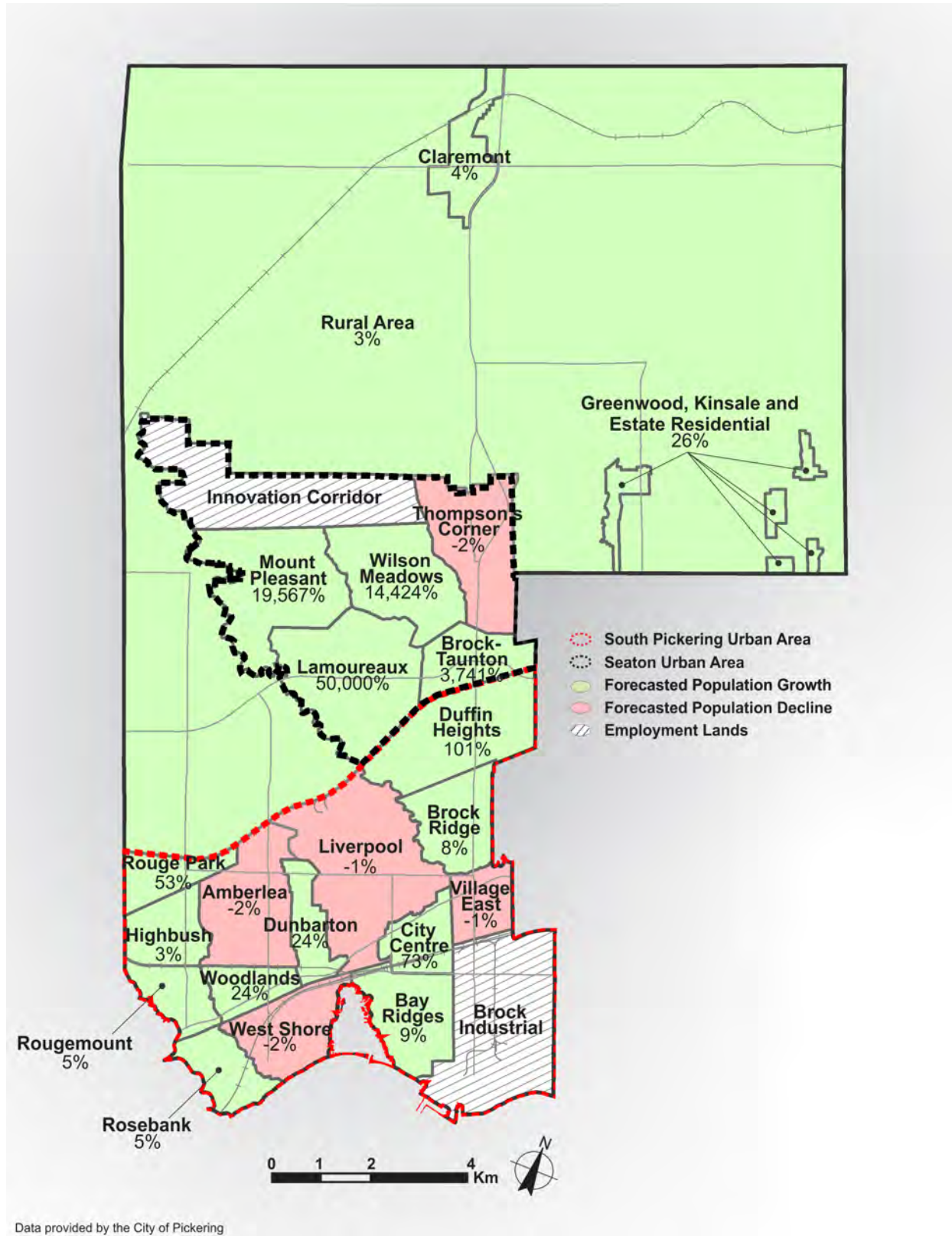
⁴ Ibid. Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast.

Table 1: Distribution of Population Growth by Neighbourhood, 2017 - 2026

Neighbourhood	2017	2026	Change (#)	Change (%)
South Pickering Urban Area				
Amberlea	13,302	12,982	-320	-2%
Bay Ridges	9,891	10,784	893	9%
Brock Industrial	12	12	0	0%
Brock Ridge	6,543	7,049	506	8%
City Centre	4,079	7,047	2,968	73%
Duffin Heights	3,852	7,726	3,874	101%
Dunbarton	2,814	3,492	678	24%
Highbush	6,306	6,517	211	3%
Liverpool	17,988	17,727	-261	-1%
Rosebank	2,937	3,080	143	5%
Rouge Park	1,095	1,679	584	53%
Rougemount	3,144	3,311	167	5%
Village East	5,613	5,539	-74	-1%
West Shore	7,098	6,923	-175	-2%
Woodlands	2,505	3,104	599	24%
Sub-Total	87,179	96,975	9,796	11%
Seaton Urban Area				
Brock-Taunton	39	1,498	1,459	3,741%
Innovation Corridor	36	36	0	0%
Lamoreaux	33	16,533	16,500	50,000%
Mount Pleasant	48	9,440	9,392	19,567%
Thompson's Corners	45	44	-1	-2%
Wilson Meadows	42	6,100	6,058	14,424%
Sub-Total	243	33,615	33,408	16,139%
Rural Pickering				
Claremont and Area	1,119	1,168	49	4%
Greenwood, Kinsale, and Estate Residential Clusters	633	797	164	26%
Remaining Rural Areas (e.g., Cherrywood, Whitevale, Green River, Brougham, Balsam, Spring Creek, Altona, etc.)	2,589	2,657	68	3%
Sub-Total	4,341	4,622	281	6%
Total	91,763	135,248	43,485	47%

Source: City of Pickering Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast (March 2016). Note: the 2017 forecasted population figure is lower than the population recorded in the 2016 Census.

Figure 3: Population Growth by Neighbourhood, 2017 - 2026



2.2 Recreation Preferences among Age Groups

Understanding the composition of Pickering’s population provides insights into the types of recreation and parks activities that are likely to be in demand. Research reveals that communities with a larger market of children and youth tend to be faced with greater demands for minor sports and active activities such as soccer, hockey, figure skating, and skateboarding. On the other end of the spectrum, municipalities with a substantial number of older adults and seniors often have stronger interests in health and wellness opportunities, arts and culture programs, and activities that encourage social interaction and cognitive stimulation.

The 2016 Census reports a median age of 41.6 years for Pickering residents, which is on par with the Province (41.3 years) and slightly older compared to Durham Region (40.2 years). This median is three years older compared to the median age recorded in the 2006 Census, suggesting that Pickering’s population is aging, which is driven by the aging baby boomer population as they move through the age cohorts.

Between the 2011 and 2016 Census, the majority of Pickering’s population growth occurred among residents over the age of 55. As illustrated in Table 2, the number of older adults grew by 20%. The number of children age 9 and under and adults age 20 to 34 increased by 5% and 11%, respectively, while the number of youth (age 10 to 19) and mature adults (age 35 to 54) experienced a decline of 12% and 7%, respectively.

Although the City does not have population projections specific to age cohorts for consideration at present time, development plans for the emerging Seaton community indicates that there will be a large housing stock that tends to be attractive to families with children (e.g. single and semi-detached units) that may bolster the number of younger residents. With these trends in mind, it is anticipated that the City will continue to experience a growing segment of older adults as well as young families with children, driving the need for a balanced portfolio of recreation and parks opportunities that appeals to all age groups.

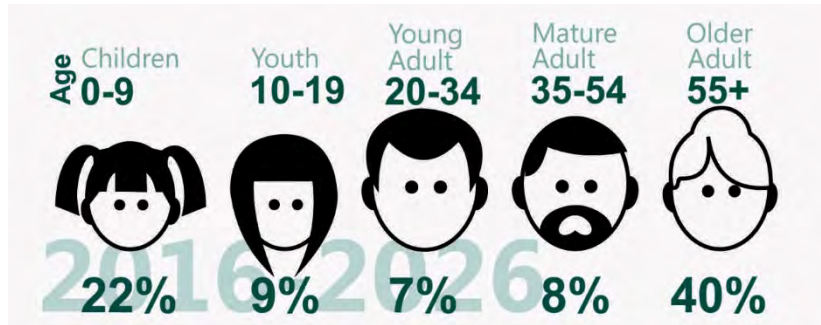
Further support for population growth among all age groups is revealed by looking at regional age forecasts prepared by the Ministry of Finance. By 2026, it is expected that Durham Region will experience the most growth among older adults and children, increasing by 40%, and 22% respectively. It is anticipated that all other age groups in Durham will grow modestly over the next decade (Figure 4).

Table 2: Pickering’s Population Growth by Age Cohort, 2011 - 2016

Age Group	2011	2016	2011-2016
Children (0 to 9 years)	9,035	9,455	420 (5%)
Youth (10 to 19 years)	13,425	11,750	-1,675 (-12%)
Adults (20 – 34 years)	15,845	17,610	1,765 (11%)
Mature Adults (35 to 54 years)	27,910	25,930	-1,980 (-7%)
Older Adults (55 years +)	22,495	27,035	4,540 (20%)
Total	88,710	91,770	3,070 (3%)

Source: Statistics Canada 2011 and 2016 Census.

Figure 4: Durham Region Age Cohort Projections, 2016 - 2026



Source: Ministry of Finance Ontario Population Projections Update, 2013 – 2041

2.3 Celebrating Arts and Culture

Pickering’s Cultural Strategic Plan⁵ demonstrates the City’s commitment to celebrating and promoting the arts through which a vision for arts, culture and heritage is established. The Cultural Strategic Plan advances a number of strategic directions focused on policy, investment and City programs. Arts and cultural contribute to the quality of life of Pickering residents and are synergistic with many recreation and park services, therefore, this Master Plan is supportive of the directions and recommendations contained in the Cultural Strategic Plan. The six strategic directions contained in the Cultural Strategic Plan and a sampling of actions that have relevance to recreation and parks is contained in Table 3.

Table 3: Cultural Strategic Master Plan Strategic Directions and Actions

Strategic Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden and deepen city leadership and investment. • Build a strong and collaborative cultural sector. • Strengthen culture-led economic development. • Conserve and promote history and heritage. • Celebrate and support diversity and inclusion. • Cultivate opportunities for the creation, education and enjoyment of the arts.
Strategic Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop educational programs for youth focused on local heritage. • Expand the Central Library to provide additional meeting space. • Complete a Tourism Strategy. • Use art to enhance public spaces

Source: Cultural Strategic Plan, 2014.

2.4 Providing Inclusive Opportunities

Influences of Cultural Diversity

Pickering is a culturally diverse municipality and more immigrants are settling in the City to establish new roots. According to the 2011 National Household Survey (N.H.S.), 31% of Pickering’s residents are immigrants, which is the second largest proportion of immigrants in Durham Region after Ajax (34%). The N.H.S. also reported that the 35% of residents are visible minorities. The largest visible minority group is Black (32%) followed by South Asian (31%),

⁵ City of Pickering. Cultural Strategic Plan. 2014.

Filipino (10%) and Chinese (7%).⁶ Pickering's diversity profile is partly due to its proximity to other G.T.A. municipalities to the west with established immigrant communities such as Markham and Scarborough and relatively affordable housing options. Future growth, particularly in Seaton, will likely experience a continuation of the population diversity trend.

Research suggests that immigrants and minority populations are generally less likely to participate in recreation and parks opportunities compared to non-immigrants due to a number of factors such as a lack of skill or knowledge of the recreation activities, cultural or religious beliefs or traditions, income barriers, isolation, fear of discrimination, and community segregation. Furthermore, recent immigrants are less likely to participate in recreation and parks opportunities due to higher priorities such as seeking employment and financial stability.

To combat these factors, there are a number of strategies and best practices that have been implemented in Pickering and other municipalities to minimize participation barriers such as offering female-only programs, equipment rentals, celebrating various cultural backgrounds, offering materials in multiple languages, and educating residents about sport safety and the benefits of physical activity. Targeted consultation with minority and immigrant groups can also be undertaken to understand where barriers exist and what activities they would like to see offered.



Affordability

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute has found that participation in physical activity is proportional to a household's income. For example, it was revealed that children between the age of 5 to 19 who live in higher income households (\$80,000 per year or more) are more likely to participate in organized physical activities and sports compared to their counterparts who live in lower income households (\$30,000 per year or less).⁷

According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census, the median after-tax household income for 2015 in Pickering was \$85,572, which is higher compared to Durham Region (\$77,398) and the Province (\$65,285). This finding suggests that based on income alone, Pickering residents may be more active in physical activities (particularly organized sport) compared to the Region and Province. The 2016 Census reported that 13% of residents between the age of 0 and 17 are living in low income households, which is on par compared to the Region (13%) and lower than the Province (18%), which may suggest that Pickering children and youth are less vulnerable compared to their provincial counterparts. Nevertheless, there is a need to ensure that a degree

⁶ 2011 National Household Survey. Note: 2016 Census data pertaining to immigration and ethno-cultural diversity is scheduled for release on October 25, 2017.

⁷ Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.cflri.ca>

of affordable recreation and parks opportunities are made available by working to eliminate this barrier to participation.

The City's Access to Recreation Policy is a good example of working to minimize financial barriers to participation. This policy is designed to ensure residents have full participation in recreation programs and services regardless of their income status. Low income residents who are eligible for assistance include those already receiving social assistance from Durham Region, households whose income is below the Low-Income Cut-Off, residents over the age of 65, and persons with disabilities. Funding for this program is provided from a number of sources including the City of Pickering, Durham Region, and the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program. In 2016, nearly \$33,000 in financial assistance was provided to 144 applicants for recreation programs or memberships (two-thirds of this amount was funded by the City). This is an increase from 2014, where 111 applicants received nearly \$22,000 in financial aid, suggesting that the City is making greater investments in removing financial barriers to participating in recreation opportunities. It is recognized that in addition to the Pickering's Access to Recreation Policy, there are other financial aid programs available through other means, including assistance provided directly through community groups.

Persons with Disabilities

The 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability reported that approximately 3.8 million Canadians were living with a disability, representing 13.7% of Canadians and 15.4% of Ontarians.⁸ Applying the Provincial rate to Pickering's population leads to an estimate that potentially 14,000 residents could have some form of disability in the City. Given these findings, the importance of ensuring Pickering's recreation and park system is inclusive of persons with disabilities is recognized.

Accessibility in Pickering is guided by the City's Accessibility Policy, which was designed in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (A.O.D.A). The City's policy establishes the accessibility standards and regulations for a number of key areas including customer service, information and communication, transportation, employment, and the Design of Public Spaces. The City's 2016-2020 Accessibility Plan was developed in accordance with the A.O.D.A., providing a framework for removing accessibility barriers in Pickering. The following actions contained in the Accessibility Plan have relevance to this Master Plan:

- Include accessibility features as part of the overall design of playgrounds.
- Plan and implement procedures for consultation with the public and the Accessibility Advisory Committee as part of the planning and design process for playgrounds.
- Include technical requirements for Exterior Paths of Travel of the Design of Public Spaces Standard when planning exterior portions of City of Pickering facilities and public spaces.
- Various accessibility upgrades to municipal facilities including Civic Complex and Library, Pickering Recreation Complex, and Don Beer Arena.

⁸ Statistics Canada. Canadian survey on disability, 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca>.

2.5 Evolving Facility Design and Land Use Patterns

Aging Infrastructure

The 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card rated Canada's overall sports and recreation facilities as "Fair", which was the lowest ranking out of all municipal assets that were evaluated. This ranking suggests that municipal facilities require attention, show signs of deterioration, or have deteriorating facility components. On average, the Report Card found that community/recreation centres, pools, skateboard parks, and sports fields, were generally in good condition, while arenas, senior centres, and tennis courts were fair, and youth centres were considered in poor condition. The deteriorating condition of municipal sports and recreation facilities can be attributed to a number of factors such as competing infrastructure priorities resulting in deferred maintenance and replacement, and old age.⁹

Most recreation facilities across Ontario were built between the 1950s and 1980s, with a number of them constructed to celebrate Canada's Centennial year in 1967. Since this period, recreation infrastructure has generally been underfunded, though pressures have been somewhat alleviated through a variety of provincial and federal stimulus programs. In March 2017, the federal government announced its commitment of \$1.3 billion towards updating and improving recreation and cultural infrastructure. Nearly \$80 million was also added to the Enabling Accessibility Fund, which provides supports to improve physical accessibility and safety for persons with disabilities.

The parks system is also an example where aging infrastructure is often apparent. Whether in the form of aging outdoor park amenities and facilities – such as hard surface courts, internal paths, lighting systems, etc. – or an entire park unto itself, keeping pace with lifecycle renewal can be challenged by finite resources that can be reinvested in the system. Further, parks that were developed years ago may now be serving different demographic characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood compared to when the park was first built; this often results in park features that are no longer used or aging facilities that may better serve current residents through conversion to other in-demand uses.

Past stimulus programs included the Recreation Infrastructure Canada Program, which was a joint initiative between the federal and provincial government. The City of Pickering benefited from this program and received nearly \$1.9 million to undertake upgrades to Don Beer Arena and to expand the fieldhouse at Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park. Other funding sources were provided from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2012, which provided a grant to the City's Glendale Tennis Club to undertake improvements to their tennis club facilities (with additional support from the City).¹⁰ Notwithstanding these financial support programs, the City continues to undertake various lifecycle replacement projects through its annual capital budget process.

⁹ Canadian Infrastructure Report Card. 2016.

¹⁰ Durham Region. Pickering's Glendale Tennis Club receives Trillium grant. Retrieved from <http://www.durhamregion.com>

Multi-Use and Multi-Generational Parks and Facilities

There is an on-going and growing demand for recreation and park facilities to contain something for everybody, rather than being designed for singular uses. While single use parks still have merit in appropriate locations (e.g., sports field complexes), parks that provide opportunities for a range of ages, family types, and abilities are viewed as spaces for inclusive recreational activity. Furthermore, there has been a considerable trend towards participation in non-programmed (spontaneous) outdoor activities such as pick-up sports, picnicking, family gatherings, special events, etc. In this regard, parks may be better viewed as “outdoor community centres” that combine a number of programmed and non-programmed uses.

The provision of high quality, multi-field parks and open spaces in larger complexes or parks such as those found at Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park, Beverley Morgan Park, and Dunmoore Park not only encourage physical activities among all age groups, but are of high quality that provide opportunities for attracting sports tournaments at a regional and even international scale. When developing new or existing parks with sports fields, municipalities are considering the needs of local users as well as sport friendly features to support tournament play such as parking areas, lighting, spectator seating, concessions, washrooms, covered shelters, Wi-Fi, etc. Incorporating more non-programmed spaces, natural areas, and linkages to the trail network, will become increasingly important in serving local needs. Additionally, multi-use parks can achieve efficiencies through centralized staffing, construction, and sharing common infrastructure such as irrigation, lighting and drainage systems, and parking areas.

Environmentally-Friendly Design

The health of the environment is a significant issue among many Canadians. There is a recognition of the need to preserve and protect the environment by making efficient use of resources. Many municipalities demonstrate environmental awareness in the design and redevelopment of facilities that integrate state-of-the-art technologies to enhance environmental efficiency. Agencies such as the T.R.C.A. are also a valuable resource for strategies to minimize the environmental impact of development.

Pickering has demonstrated its commitment to environmental conservation through a number of ongoing projects to enhance green public spaces, which align with corporate initiatives such as the CEMP (Corporate Energy Management Plan). Such projects include:

- integrating best practices in integrated pest management;
- using drought-tolerant floral in civic landscaping;



Interpretive Signage at Maple Ridge Park

- encouraging neighbourhoods to act sustainably;
- practicing appropriate lawn and garden care; and
- educating the public through informative displays and signage, workshops, and events.¹¹

Infill and Intensification

Infill and intensification will play an important role in how communities accommodate population growth over the foreseeable future. To help future planning, Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) contains policies that speak to intensification, revitalization of downtown cores, creation of complete communities, limitation of suburban sprawl, and the reduction of traffic gridlock. One of the objectives of intensification is to produce a more compact urban form that encourages the efficient use of land, walkable neighbourhoods, mixed land uses, improved transit options, and reduced infrastructure. The outcome may be more townhouses and apartment buildings, higher densities, and mixed use developments.

Consistent with the Growth Plan, Amendment No. 26 to the Pickering Official Plan indicates that Pickering's City Centre shall be planned to achieve a minimum density of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare by 2031. Amendment No. 22 to the Pickering Official Plan also indicates that densities in Seaton shall range between 25 and 250 residents per hectare. Intensification in these areas may lead to increased demands for recreation and parks opportunities (including the expansion and renewal of existing parks). As the City is planned to grow by nearly 40,000 residents by the end of the planning period, there is a need to proactively plan recreation and parks opportunities, particularly in areas of intensification.

2.6 Service Delivery

Volunteerism

Volunteers are essential to the operation and delivery of high quality recreation and parks programs and services where communities rely heavily on their assistance; Pickering is no exception to this rule. The 2007 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating indicated that volunteerism is rising slightly, but experience in several other communities suggest that many groups still struggle in finding volunteers. One key result of the national survey was that 18% of the volunteer hours in Canada are in the sports and recreation sector, which is the highest of all sectors.



At the same time, youth age 15 and under represent the smallest proportion of volunteers, representing a need to engage this age group early to improve the likelihood of retaining volunteers in the future. The volunteer requirement to graduate high school has shown some promise to attract youth into volunteering, though success is largely measured by whether teens continue to volunteer beyond the 40 hour requirement. However, one of the most common

¹¹ City of Pickering. Greening the City's public spaces. Retrieved from <https://www.pickering.ca>.

barriers to youth volunteering is the lack of free time. More youth lead structured lives with school, and organized sports coupled with increasingly more employed youth, resulting in the inability to make long-term commitments to volunteering. Other barriers identify that youth are unable to find opportunities or are unsure of how to get involved in volunteering, suggesting a gap in communication between organizations and the community. Lastly, today's youth feel that their opinions are not valued by organizations. Youth volunteers need to be engaged with community service delivery as they may provide new skills and perceptions that may be overlooked by other age groups.



Seniors currently represent the most active volunteer group; however, it is anticipated that this group will soon move on from the volunteer workforce, resulting in greater pressures on the delivery of services and impact programming capacity. This gap in the volunteer base opens opportunities to attract new volunteers, particularly among youth and the baby boomer generation as they move through the mature stage of their life cycle.

The City of Pickering provides a wide variety of civic volunteer opportunities for all ages, particularly for youth seeking to fulfill their required volunteer hours. Opportunities range from City-run events and programs, Assistant Councillor Program, Pickering Museum Village, Pickering Public Library, and the Youth Snow Removal program.

Partnerships

Organizations such as conservation authorities (e.g., T.R.C.A.), recreation associations, school boards, and non-profit organizations offer access to recreation facilities, parks, natural areas, and activities throughout Pickering. These services complement those of the City of Pickering's and are sometimes facilitated through informal understandings or formalized partnership agreements. The most successful partnerships are derived from common objectives (e.g., environmental conservation, community improvement, physical activity, trail development, etc.) to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, utilizing the skills and strengths of each group in delivering access and programming to recreation and parks while sharing responsibilities and minimizing risks (e.g., costs and liabilities).

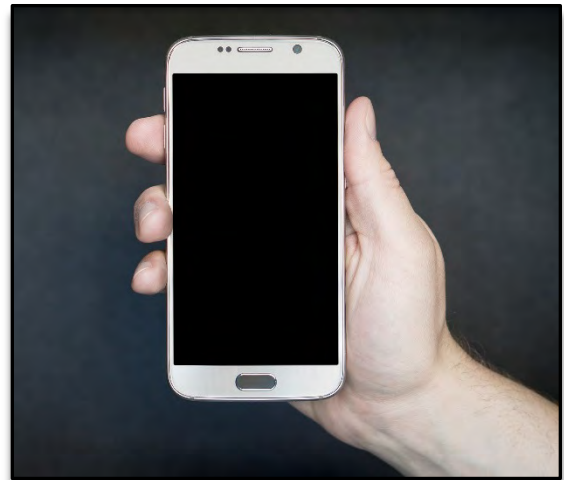
Maximizing the resources of each party in a partnership is a beneficial way to increase the amount of publically accessible facilities and recreation activities provided that the public interest is maximized and that partnerships fulfill the desired objectives of the City and its partners. For example, many communities provide facility space for programming, events and activities while the staffing responsibilities are provided by partnering with community organizations. Other partnership opportunities exist with private sector businesses through sponsorships, project funding, and donations. These types of partnerships allow businesses to give back to the community while gaining market exposure, although some corporate partnerships may cause community opposition with respect to negative stigmas associated with certain businesses and products that may encourage unhealthy and inactive lifestyles. Nevertheless, this trend towards an integrated provision approach is growing with the realization that communities cannot do it alone.



Technology and Customer Service

In recent years, the adoption of new technologies has provided many municipalities and community groups with a more advanced and streamlined process to track participation levels, improve scheduling and provide quick registration for participants when used affectively. At present, Pickering's website is a well utilized resource for the promotion and coordination of recreation and parks opportunities through the online Leisure Guide, eNewsletter, and online registration resources for community programs through Active Net.

Social media and personal devices have revolutionized the way people communicate and socialize while using very few resources. However, the application of these innovative communication techniques require communities to understand and apply these methods in an effective manner to inform all age groups in the community. Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter provide the City as well as organizations with an outlet to market City parks, events, programs, and services to a wide market. Social media can also be used as a forum to collect valuable information using group discussions and surveys, providing effective and efficient opportunities to communicate feedback and requests and develop social connections with the community. Pickering and its community groups currently utilize multiple social media platforms for the purpose of communicating and collecting information. These tools can often be supported by the use of Quick Response codes or "QR" codes that have increasingly become popular in communicating information.



3.0 Community Engagement

Community engagement is an integral component of the master planning process as it provides an opportunity for the public to provide insights relating to the provision of recreation and parks opportunities. Engagement tools were designed to maximize community involvement and were tailored to respond to members of the public, local stakeholder groups, and City staff and Council. The Master Plan's engagement tools included:

- Public Input Sessions, a Pop-Up Event and Written Submissions
- Random Sample Household Telephone Survey
- Stakeholder Group Survey
- Input from Community Groups
- City Staff Workshops and Interviews
- Council Interviews
- Regular Meetings with the Staff Task Force

Public Open Houses will be scheduled to present this draft Master Plan to the public, test recommendations, and solicit community feedback. A presentation to Council will be held to present and seek adoption of the final Master Plan. This Master Plan considered input provided from all engagement tools, together with feedback from the Staff Task Force, to ensure that the Master Plan is representative of community interests and is consistent with other municipal initiatives.

The following pages summarize key themes emerging from each community engagement tool. **The information and suggestions presented in this section do not represent recommendations, nor has the public input been altered** even in instances where comments may not reflect the City's actual policies, practices, or level of service provision. The public input received through the community engagement process is considered with other research and analytical inputs to support the Master Plan's recommendations that are contained in subsequent sections.

3.1 Summary of Community Engagement Strategy

A broad range of comments were expressed throughout the community engagement sessions. Table 4 summarizes the most common themes that were heard based on the opinions, preferences, and priorities of participants attending the various events. These themes are not listed in any order of importance or priority.

Table 4: Key Themes from Community Engagement Sessions

	Public Input and Pop-Up Sessions	Household Telephone Survey	Stakeholder Survey / Community Group Input	City Workshops and Interviews
Residents enjoy Pickering’s recreation and parks system, most notably the Pickering Recreation Complex, waterfront, programs and services, parks, and green spaces.	•	•	•	•
Ensuring a wide range of recreation and park programs for all age groups, with consideration given to non-sport activities such as arts and crafts, fitness, family nights, etc.	•	•	•	•
Enhancing Pickering’s parks by expanding the trail system, investing in the waterfront, and improving various amenities (such as shade areas, garbage bins, seating, washrooms, etc.) is desirable.	•	•	•	
Additional recreation and parks facilities were requested ranging from pickleball courts to trails, indoor walking track, indoor and outdoor pool, tennis courts, and more.	•	•	•	•
Pickering’s recreation and parks opportunities should be inclusive and accessible to all members of the community.	•	•	•	•

3.2 Public Input Sessions and Pop-Up Event

Public Input Sessions were held on the afternoon and evening of January 31, 2017 at the Pickering Recreation Complex to introduce the Master Plan and encourage residents to convey their needs and ideas. In addition, a Pop-Up event was held on February 20, 2017 at the same location. These sessions were informal events where attendees arrived at their convenience to review information displays and to respond to a series of questions regarding a broad range of topics related to recreation and parks opportunities. More than 50 people participated in the events and submitted comments, of which key themes are summarized below. A more fulsome transcript of feedback received can be found in **Appendix A**.

Living and Playing in Pickering

- Residents spoke highly about Pickering being a safe, close-knit community to raise a family.
- Proximity to community facilities, adjacent municipalities, the waterfront, and public transportation systems was mentioned as a strength.
- Residents enjoyed having a broad spectrum of recreation and park-based options available with specific references being made to the Pickering Recreation Complex, the skateboard park, outdoor exercise equipment, and parks and greenspaces.

Improving Indoor Recreation Facilities

- It was generally felt that there should be more community facilities in different parts of the City, particularly in the north and west ends.
- There is more that could be done to update and modernize existing facilities. The Abilities Centre in Whitby was cited as an example that the City should look towards for new facility development.
- The most requested recreation facility was pickleball courts. A number of residents felt that between three to four indoor pickleball courts should be provided. It was suggested that providing indoor pickleball courts at the East Shore Community Centre could be an option, although it was indicated that this solution would not be sufficient due to the likelihood that the courts would be too small.
- Other suggestions for new or improved recreation facilities included basketball courts, indoor walking track, climbing wall, warm water pool, and squash courts, among others.

Improving Outdoor Recreation Facilities

- Requests were received for outdoor pickleball courts given that there are currently none available in Pickering. Residents indicated that they currently have to travel to other municipalities such as Markham to play pickleball. Of note, the City of Pickering has recently provided pickleball markings on a hard surface court at Village East Park.
- Other requested outdoor recreation facilities included a pool, splash pad, skating rink, running track, and tennis courts.
- There were a number of participants that expressed the desire for more and improved skateboard facilities as they provide a safe location for youth to gather and participate in physical recreation activities. Several suggestions were received with respect to the design of future skateboard parks such as having convenient and accessible locations that are visible in the community, including components for a range of skill levels and action sports, indoor and outdoor skate parks, looking at best practices in other communities with skate parks such as Markham, Burlington, Ajax, and Toronto. The need to engage youth throughout the planning process of future skateboard parks and opportunities to partner with other community groups was also suggested.

- While Pickering’s waterfront is beyond the scope of the Master Plan, suggestions to enhance the waterfront were submitted. Requests were made to permit the use of non-motorized watercrafts and to have a shuttle to the waterfront as sufficient parking was identified as an issue.

Improving Parks and Open Spaces

- The majority of suggestions were related to enhancing the design and amenities of Pickering’s parks such as adding permanent or portable washrooms, planting trees to provide shade areas, and providing a mix of active parks and naturalized open spaces.
- Requests were made to enhance active transportation opportunities to promote and support walking, cycling, and other non-motorized modes of transportation. Residents felt that there should be stronger linkages throughout Pickering, including connections to the waterfront, providing sidewalks in all areas, and linking the parks system. In addition to these comments, requests were made to provide trail lighting and seating.

Improving Recreation Programs and Activities

- Programs should be offered at different times to accommodate residents’ busy lifestyles, offering programs at multiple locations, providing more fitness and yoga classes, holding regular family nights, exploring new and unique program areas, expanding popular programs, and more.
- Recreation programs and activities should be inclusive and affordable, with some free activities to encourage residents to try something new.
- There should be more active opportunities for older adults, particularly during the day. References were made to the active older adult opportunities offered in Whitby and Oshawa.
- There needs to be an understanding of the interests among children and youth to respond accordingly.
- Other suggestions included providing more summer camps, adding more grassroots programs (e.g., learn to skate/swim), and offering high performance programs for athletes.

3.3 Household Telephone Survey

A random sample household telephone survey was conducted between February 27 and March 20, 2017. The purpose of this survey was to collect statistically representative data from 384 households, yielding a confidence level of $\pm 5\%$ (19 times out of 20). The survey focused on participation, opinions, and priorities of various recreation and parks facilities and programs in Pickering. This section summarizes the principal findings of the household survey and excludes 'Don't Know' and 'No Response' responses. Tabulated survey data is contained in **Appendix B**.

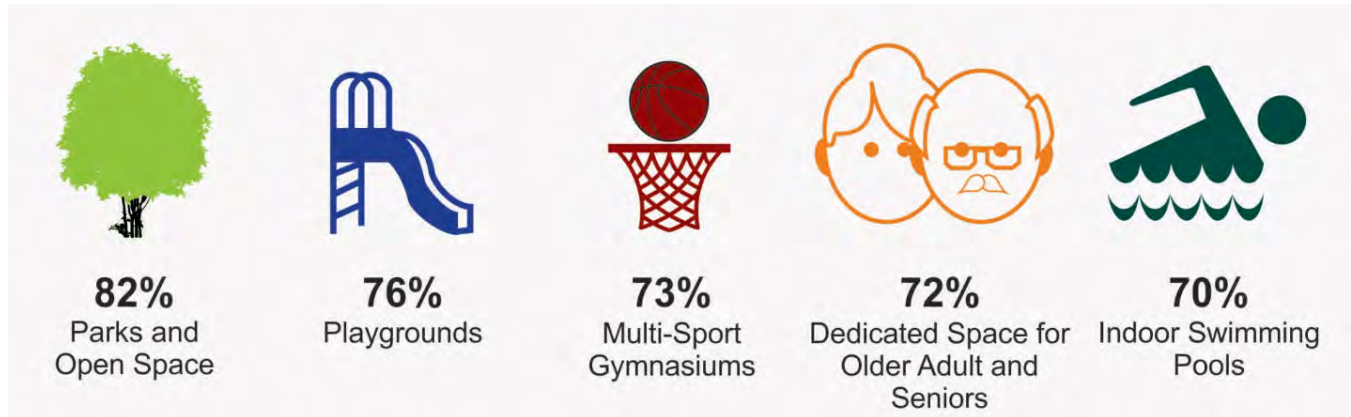
Figure 5: Top Five Recreation and Parks Activities, Past 12 Months



As with other community engagement tools, the survey findings should not be considered in isolation but instead factored within the context of other community input and assessment methodologies. Highlights from the surveys received included:

- The five most popular recreation and parks activities over the past 12 months in Pickering – illustrated in Figure 5 – were all activities that can be self-scheduled, which is consistent with the trend observed throughout the Province.
- Nearly one of three respondents were unable to participate in recreation and parks activities as often as they would like. The most common barrier reported was the lack of time or being too busy. Other barriers included health problems, lack of money, lack of desired facilities or programs, and the program not being offered at a convenient time.
- Respondents felt that passive parks that preserve natural areas and open spaces were the most important facility type (93%), followed by outdoor recreation facilities (86%), and indoor recreation facilities (81%). For each facility type, respondents reported lower levels of satisfaction, suggesting that expectations are not currently being met in relation to the importance placed on each facility.
- The highest priorities for additional public spending for recreation and parks facilities (for upgrades or new construction) is presented in Figure 6. The top five responses for additional spending are parks and open space (82%), playgrounds (76%), multi-sport gymnasiums (73%), dedicated space for older adults and seniors (72%), and indoor swimming pools (70%).

Figure 6: Top Five Facility Priorities for Additional Spending



3.4 Stakeholder Group Survey and Written Input

A self-administered online survey specific to Pickering’s stakeholder groups was distributed to collect information regarding group participation and trends, facility utilization, future needs, and more. A total of 36 surveys were completed from the groups including indoor and outdoor facility users, service clubs, and organizations. The following is a summary of key findings with additional information about each stakeholder group contained in **Appendix C**.

In addition to the Stakeholder Group Survey, other community organizations (Seniors Council, Pickering 101, Durham Region Health, and Accessibility Advisory Committee) were asked to respond to a series of questions regarding opportunities to improve recreation and parks opportunities in Pickering. A summary of key themes from the input that was collected is contained in this section, with a more fulsome transcription contained in **Appendix D**.

The comments submitted from Pickering’s stakeholders and community groups were carefully considered during the development of the Master Plan.

Key Themes from Indoor Sports Groups

- Groups expressed a desire for a number of indoor recreation spaces including pickleball courts, a 25 metre pool, a 50 metre pool, and lounge and meeting space.
- There is a desire for large storage space and dressing rooms.
- Year-round ice was requested to allow local user groups to remain in Pickering during the summer months.
- All groups indicated that they are inclusive of all residents to some degree, through welcoming members of all skills and abilities, as well as through providing financial assistance to those in need.
- Only the 1st Pickering Pickleball Club and Pickering Squash Club indicated that they are open to consider financial contributions towards improving or constructing high quality recreation and parks opportunities for the facilities that they use the most.

Key Themes from Outdoor Sports Groups

- Suggested enhancements to Pickering's sports fields included improving field drainage, repairing/replacing backstop and outfield fencing at diamonds, field lighting, washrooms, and providing appropriately-sized fields to meet mandated requirements.
- A number of new outdoor recreation facilities were requested including pickleball courts, clubhouses, hard ball diamonds, two full size rectangular fields, adult-size ball diamonds, and outdoor running track.
- Some groups expressed concerns about the high cost of renting sports facilities, particularly for non-profit groups that aim to keep costs low for their members.
- Outdoor sports groups are open to accommodate all members regardless of ability. Some groups also provide financial assistance programs.
- The desire for safe watercraft launching at Frenchman's Bay was expressed.
- A number of groups indicated that they would be open to discussing opportunities to assist with funding improvements to the facilities that they use the most.

Key Themes from Service Groups, Social Clubs, and Other Stakeholders

- Many service groups, social clubs and other community stakeholders use a number of municipal facilities including the Pickering Recreation Complex, East Shore Community Centre, Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre and George Ashe Library and Community Centre, as well as parks throughout the City.
- Suggested improvements to municipal facilities included undertaking accessibility retrofits, additional meeting/multi-purpose space, storage space, expanding the community hall at the West Shore Community Centre, and to expand the parking lot at the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre.
- Groups that were open to consider making financial contributions to improving Pickering's facilities including the Claremont and District Lions Club, Pickering Ajax Italian Social Club, and the Whitevale and District Residents' Association. It was identified that some groups already contribute funds in the form of rental fees and for ongoing maintenance.

Key Themes from Input Submitted from Other Community Groups

- A variety of recreation and parks programs are available for all age groups - references were made to the variety of programs that are available from organized sports to arts and crafts.
- Respondents indicated that each recreation facility and park location should have something for every age group. Suggested improvements to be considered included skate rentals, outdoor exercise equipment, and more aquatic programs offered at various times throughout the day. Suggestions were expressed to improve accessibility from a physical, programming, and service perspective.

- Aging recreation and parks facilities in Pickering should be updated and modernized to meet the expectations of today’s users. Specific references were made to improve multi-use program spaces, change rooms, and improving Glendale Park.
- Respondents felt that the City should continue to investigate and implement recommendations to meet accessibility requirements under the A.O.D.A. to minimize barriers to participation in recreation and parks opportunities.
- Prior to investing in new recreation and parks facilities, respondents indicated that the City should ensure that its existing infrastructure and supply are well maintained to make efficient use of resources and to ensure that recreation and parks facilities are well maintained, safe, and accessible for all users.
- Ongoing communication with residents was suggested to ensure that the public is fully engaged prior to decision making.

3.5 Staff Workshops

Three staff workshops were held on December 16, 2016 at the Pickering Recreation Complex to provide an opportunity for City staff to provide input with respect to the Recreation and Parks Master Plan. The sessions were attended by 17 participants including front line staff, administration, parks and facility operations, and managers to ensure that the Master Plan had a balanced cross section of input at all levels of local government. Discussions centered on community strengths, needs, priorities, challenges, and opportunities with respect to the delivery of parks, facilities, and recreation services. The specific details of these workshops are not presented in this document; however, the following broad themes emerged from the discussions.

Figure 7 summarizes the key terms identified by staff participants as the overarching vision for the Community Services Department.

Figure 7: Vision for the City of Pickering Community Services Department



Key themes from discussions with staff included:

- Pickering's recreation and parks spaces are highly utilized but spaces are inadequate to expand or create new leisure and sport opportunities.
- There is a high degree of collaboration and cooperation with the school boards and library.
- Staff work to reduce duplication with the libraries as they offer many services at no cost. The City works with the school boards to attract children and youth which is seen as a community good and the relationship is strong.
- There has been a slow rate of growth over the past decade and it is felt that the increase in population due to the Seaton development requires thoughtful planning to ensure that recreation and parks needs are met in an intensified environment.
- Staff are working collaboratively with diverse populations and would like to increase these relationships and understand needs to be inclusive and accessible to all residents.
- The City is currently completing an Asset Management Plan to assess the current stock of facilities and plan for repairs, replacements and refurbishment according to the current facility conditions and uses. The plan will be built over the next few years and looks to capture operational savings and efficiencies.
- There is no formalized and corporate approach to understanding resident satisfaction levels year to year. The department asks participants to complete user satisfaction feedback forms and this is completed on a voluntary basis.

3.6 Interviews with Members of Council

One-on-one interviews were held with members of Council to establish an understanding of their expectations and priorities for the Master Plan and their perspective on recreation and parks opportunities. Although interviews with Council were conducted as confidential discussions with the Consulting Team, Council's input has been considered throughout the Master Plan.

3.7 Public Open House

A Public Open House was held on November 27, 2017 at the Pickering Recreation Complex to present and receive feedback on the draft Master Plan. The draft Skateboard Park Strategy was also presented. The Public Open House was well attended as the event was held in the front lobby where foot traffic was high. Attendees had an opportunity to review key recommendations, ask questions, and provide comments. Residents that were not able to attend the event were able to review the draft Master Plan on the City's website and provide feedback by email or written submissions. Comments received were carefully considered during the finalization of the Master Plan. A summary of input received following the Public Open House can be found in **Appendix E**.

4.0 Parks System

A parks system, whether owned by a municipality or other agency (e.g., T.R.C.A.), facilitates recreation and passive activities, as well as nature enjoyment of the outdoors. Recognizing the benefits in facilitating healthy lifestyles, parks are essential land uses that bolster Pickering's quality of life for current and future generations. Parkland takes many different forms, ranging from manicured parkettes to large sports field complexes to open spaces and naturalized areas that promote the preservation and protection of natural heritage features and environmentally sensitive areas.

This section evaluates Pickering's current parkland classification system, assesses the City's current supply and distribution of parkland, and reviews existing parkland regulations and policies established under the *Ontario Planning Act* and in the City's Official Plan.

4.1 Parkland Hierarchy System

A parkland hierarchy system can be used to guide parkland development by directing usage, size, form, function, and/or level of amenity found within different types of parks. Primary considerations for the parks system includes, but are not limited to:

- planning the appropriate function and use of parks;
- achieving a satisfactory distribution of parkland to ensure that they are easily accessible and maintain the integrity of natural heritage systems by establishing an understanding of permitted and non-permitted uses within environmentally sensitive areas; and
- maintaining a high degree of walkability and connectivity among parks through active transportation infrastructure, key linkages, etc.

A parkland hierarchy allows the public to understand what amenities a park might include and position parks to be compatible with adjacent land uses. The City's existing parkland hierarchy system is contained in the previous Recreation, Parks and Cultural Services Master Plan (Table 5) and is now 15 years old. A separate parkland hierarchy specifically for the Seaton Urban Area is articulated in Section 11.13 of Official Plan Amendment No. 22, which was approved in 2014 (Table 6).

During the next Official Plan Review, it is recommended that the City adopt a single parkland hierarchy (Table 7) to guide future parkland development for all of Pickering. The revised parkland hierarchy provides greater direction with respect to locational characteristics, service catchment areas, permitted uses, and other pertinent details. This will ensure that the City has a robust classification system that offers greater clarity in terms of how parks are used and will respond to the needs of current and future residents. The recommended hierarchy introduces new parkland classes to the established South Pickering area including Trailheads, and Urban Squares. While these park types do not currently exist at present, they may be appropriate to provide in the future, particularly as established areas of Pickering undergo intensification and the City seeks strategies to provide meaningful park spaces.

Table 5: Existing Parkland Hierarchy System, City of Pickering

District Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Parks shall be developed to serve a population of approximately 40,000 to 50,000. They shall be a minimum size of 50 acres. District Parks shall be designed for specialized facilities such as stadiums, places of assembly and a variety of active and passive recreational and cultural pursuits. They shall serve the entire municipality. Because of the cost of development, a Design Master Plan and a phasing plan shall be prepared to guide the implementation of District Parks.
Community Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Parks shall be developed to serve a population of 12,000 to 15,000. They shall be a minimum size of 20 acres of usable tableland. Community Parks shall be equipped with a variety of senior level recreation facilities suitable for use by organized groups and individuals. Passive recreation areas shall also be provided. Specific facilities to be developed will be determined by the municipality according to community needs. Where possible, Community Parks shall be linked to trail systems and off-street parking shall be provided. Development of each park is to be guided by a site plan prepared by a qualified Landscape Architect.
Neighbourhood Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Parks shall be developed to serve a population of 3,000 to 4,000. They shall be a minimum of 6 to 7 acres, with 7 acres being the minimum size with a school site. Neighbourhood Parks shall be equipped with a variety of local serving recreation facilities. Specific facilities are to be identified by the municipality in consultation with local residents. Development of each park is to be guided by a site plan prepared by a qualified Landscape Architect.
Waterfront Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to the unique natural environment of the Lake Ontario Shoreline and the leisure opportunities, which are presented, a waterfront parks and trail system shall be developed by the municipality. The Waterfront Parks system shall be developed to provide a variety of passive and active recreation opportunities meeting the needs of the entire community. Existing guidelines established in the Community Plan and the Development Plan, (Frenchman's Bay and Shoreline Area) shall be further developed and site-specific design plans shall be prepared to guide phase implementation.
Urban Forest Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The municipality shall endeavor to preserve and manage Urban Forest Areas. Future areas shall be acquired by the municipality on the basis of the quality of the urban forest, potential to be used for appropriate recreation activities, relationship to residential development and other components of the open space system. Urban forests owned by the municipality will be managed using appropriate forestry techniques in order to enhance and preserve woodlot quality.

Source: Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services Master Plan (2002)

Table 6: Existing Parkland Hierarchy System, Seaton Urban Area

District Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves all residents of Seaton • Provides for a range of illuminated recreation facilities • One district park of approximately 36 hectares in the Hamlet Heritage Open Space Designation north of Green River
Community Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located near transit services • Provides for a range of illuminated and non-illuminated recreation facilities servicing adjacent residents • Seaton will have four community parks • Seaton Natural Heritage System will be an integral part of each community park providing for passive recreational areas adjacent to recreational fields • Combining community parks and recreation centres can reduce land needs through shared parking • Approximately 28 hectares for community parks and recreational centres will be required in Seaton
Neighbourhood Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible and centrally located for residents within 400 to 800 metres (5 to 10 minute walk) • Approximately 1.5 to 1.8 hectares in area • Have road frontage on a minimum of two sides • Be supported by on-street parking • Accommodate play structures and one non-illuminated mini-recreational field and possibly tennis or bocce courts, community mailboxes, and passive areas
Village Greens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 0.3 to 0.6 hectares subject to the demonstration of the functionality of the space • Easily accessible and centrally located for residents within 200 to 400 metres (3 to 5 minute walk) without having to cross arterial roads • Have road frontage on three sides, but may be less where other design alternatives are used • Intended to provide greenspace for each neighbourhood • Accommodate play structures, open informal play areas, community mailboxes, and information boards.

Trailheads

- Trailheads access the Natural Heritage trail system and shall be incorporated into parks, village greens and stormwater management ponds, wherever possible
- Where a separate trailhead is required, it shall be situated in a visible location with adequate frontage onto an adjacent local or collector road
- These additional public open space blocks shall contribute to the required parkland dedication, when the land is dedicated to the City

Urban Squares

- Intended as formal pedestrian spaces, in support of the adjacent higher density, mixed use development
- Within sole residential components of the Mixed Corridors, village greens will be provided in lieu of urban squares.
- Located within commercial and mixed use components of Community Nodes and Mixed Corridors
- Provide easy access and opportunities for rest, relaxation and visual interest
- Minimum frontage on the abutting sidewalk of 5.0 metres and a minimum depth of 5.0 metres
- On large development parcels include a single, large-scale urban square and/or a series of smaller urban squares
- Count as part of the block face in calculating the minimum block face requirement as per section 11.8 e)
- Contribute to the required parkland dedication, whether or not the land is dedicated to the City

Source: Official Plan Amendment No. 22 to the City of Pickering Official Plan, 2014



Amberlea Park

Table 7: Recommended Parkland Hierarchy, City of Pickering

City Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to service residents across the entire City of Pickering. • Vary in size depending on park use and function; parcels may have a large land area or be much smaller if, for example, a cenotaph is the main focus. • Accessible by motorized and non-motorized forms of transportation. • Serviced by hydro, water, and sanitary. • Permitted uses include lit sports fields, indoor recreation facilities, hard surface courts, playgrounds, washrooms, and other amenities. • May include unique natural heritage and physical features, naturalized greenspaces, stormwater management facilities, and support space for special events and tournaments. • A Design Master Plan and a phasing plan shall be prepared to guide the implementation of City Parks.
Community Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves multiple neighbourhoods. • Accessible by motorized or non-motorized forms of transportation. • Preferred minimum park size is 4.0 hectares, although smaller park parcels may be accepted depending on its use and function. • Permitted uses include indoor recreation facilities, single or multiple sports fields that may be lit, hard surface courts, playgrounds, trails and washrooms, and other amenities. • May include unique natural heritage and physical features, naturalized greenspaces, and stormwater management facilities.
Neighbourhood Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services local residential areas. • Generally accessible within 800 metres (10 minute walk) of residential areas, without crossing major barriers (e.g., major road, railway, etc.). • Preferred minimum park size is 1.0 hectare, although smaller park parcels may be permitted depending on its use and function. • Permitted uses include playground equipment, up to one unlit sports field, hard surface courts, and amenities scaled to a neighbourhood-level of use. • May include unique natural heritage and physical features, naturalized greenspaces, and stormwater management facilities.
Waterfront Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves the entire City of Pickering and visitors from other municipalities. • Primarily used for waterfront enjoyment, supported by active and passive facilities including boardwalk, trails, playground, and more. • Implementation of waterfront parks shall be guided by a Design Master Plan and phasing plan. • May include unique natural heritage and physical features, and naturalized greenspaces.

Urban Forest Areas

- Primarily function is for forest preservation.
- Permitted passive activities include walking, hiking, and other activities that have minimal impact on the natural environment.
- Urban forests owned by the municipality will be managed using appropriate forestry techniques in order to enhance and preserve woodlot quality.

Village Greens

- Approximately 0.3 to 0.6 hectares subject to the demonstration of the functionality of the space.
- Generally accessible within 200 to 400 metres (5 minute walk) of residential areas, without crossing major barriers (e.g., major road, railway, etc.).
- Have road frontage on three sides, but may be less where other design alternatives are used.
- Intended to provide greenspace for each neighbourhood.
- Permitted uses include playground equipment, open informal play areas, community mailboxes, and information boards.

Trail Heads

- Trailheads access the Natural Heritage trail system and shall be incorporated into parks, village greens and stormwater management facilities, wherever possible.
- Where a separate trailhead is required, it shall be situated in a visible location with adequate frontage onto an adjacent local or collector road.
- These additional public open space blocks shall contribute to the required parkland dedication, when the land is dedicated to the City.

Urban Squares

- Intended as formal pedestrian spaces, in support of the adjacent higher density, mixed use development.
- Within sole residential components of the Mixed Corridors, village greens will be provided in lieu of urban squares.
- Located within commercial and mixed use components of Community Nodes and Mixed Corridors.
- Provide easy access and opportunities for rest, relaxation and visual interest.
- Minimum frontage on the abutting sidewalk of 5.0 metres and a minimum depth of 5.0 metres.
- On large development parcels include a single, large-scale urban square and/or a series of smaller urban squares.
- Contribute to the required parkland dedication, whether or not the land is dedicated to the City.

Recommendations – Parkland Hierarchy

1. Adopt a new parkland hierarchy system as part of a future Official Plan Review or amendment, based on the framework identified in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan to provide greater clarity and accuracy towards locational characteristics, service area, permitted uses, and other details to guide the development and redevelopment of parkland in Pickering.

4.2 Parkland Supply and Distribution

Pickering’s parkland system is comprised of 274.6 hectares (678 acres) across 69 park sites. The function of these parks are largely recreational through which the City provides a range of recreation facilities including sports fields, playgrounds, seating, shade structures, and passive spaces that facilitate informal gatherings, enjoyment of the outdoors or activities. A summary of recreationally-focused parkland is contained in Table 8 and Table 9.

Over and above the 274.6 hectares of parkland, residents enjoy nearly 1,400 hectares of open spaces, woodlots, ravines, environmentally-sensitive areas, and other naturalized lands that are owned by the City and other entities including Hydro One, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (T.R.C.A.), Ontario Power Generation (O.P.G.), and school boards.

Table 8: City of Pickering Parkland Supply

	Number of Parks	Area (ha)
City Parkland (formerly known as District Parkland)	6	118.3
Community Parkland	16	86.5
Neighbourhood Parkland / Village Green	47	69.8
Total	69	274.6

Table 9: Parkland Inventory by Hierarchy

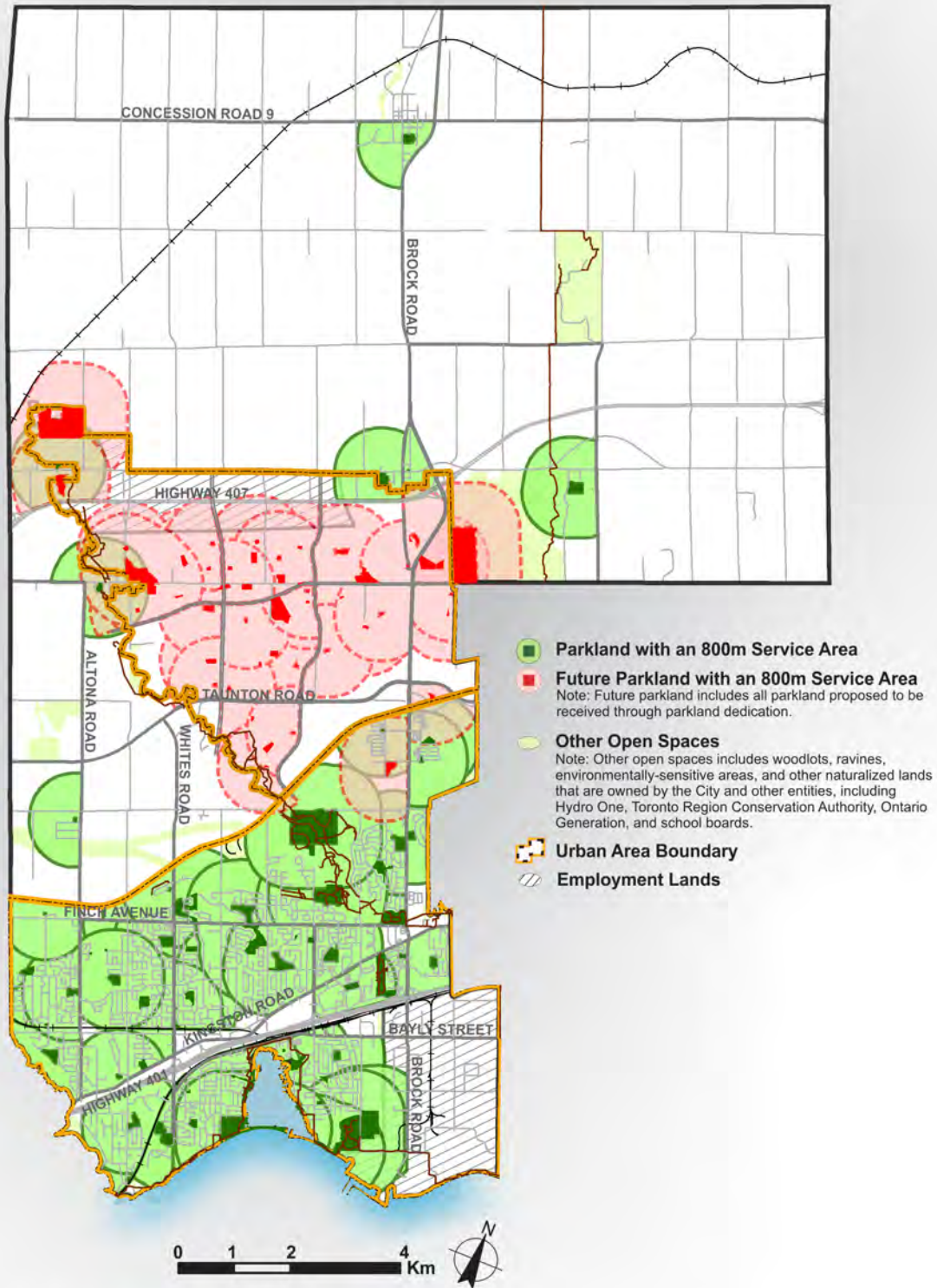
City Parkland	Area (ha)		Area (ha)
Alex Robertson Park	21.8	Grand Valley Park	46.1
Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park	15.2	Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park	29.1
Beachfront Park	3.6	The Esplanade Park	2.5
		Sub-Total	118.3

Community Parkland	Area (ha)		Area (ha)
Amberlea Park	3.7	Dunmoore Park	6.3
Beverley Morgan Park	14.0	Forestbrook Park	10.1
Brockridge Community Park	9.1	Greenwood Park	4.3
Centennial Park	3.7	Major Oaks Park	4.7

Community Parkland	Area (ha)		Area (ha)
Claremont Memorial Park	2.5	Progress Frenchman's Bay East Park	1.0
David Farr Memorial Park	4.9	S.M. Woodsmere Park	2.4
Diana, Princess of Wales Park	12.1	St. Mary Park	3.4
Don Beer Memorial Park	2.7	Whitevale Park	1.6
Sub-Total			86.5

Neighbourhood Parkland and Village Green	Area (ha)		Area (ha)
Alderwood Park	3.5	Lookout Point Park	1.9
Amaretto Park	0.1	Lynn Heights Park	4.4
Balsdon Park	1.2	Maple Ridge Park	2.4
Bayshore Tot Lot	0.4	Martin's Tot Lot	0.2
Beechlawn Park	1.5	Mitchell Park	1.3
Bidwell Tot Lot	0.4	Mulmur Tot Lot	0.3
Bonita Park	0.4	Nature Haven Park	0.1
Bruce Hanscombe Park	4.1	Parkham Parkette	1.2
Canadian Green	0.4	Pinegrove Park	2.3
Chickadee Park	0.2	Rick Hull Memorial Park	2.0
Clearside Park	0.2	Rosebank South Park	0.4
Cliffview Park	1.2	Rouge Valley Park	2.9
Creekside Park	1.9	Seguin Park	0.1
Denmar Park	0.6	Shadybrook Park	2.8
Douglas Park	4.5	Shadybrook Tot Lot	0.4
East Woodlands Park	0.4	Southcott Park	1.4
Erin Gate Park	7.8	Summer Park	0.2
Ernie L. Stroud Park	2.2	Sunbird Trail Park	0.1
Frenchman's Bay Ratepayers Memorial Park	0.6	Town Hall Park	0.1
Glen Ravine Park	3.1	Valleyview Park	0.1
Glendale Park	1.1	Village East Park	2.1
Glengrove Park	4.0	William Jackson Green	0.4
Green River Park	0.5	Woodview Tot Lot	0.3
J. McPherson Park	2.1	Sub-Total	69.8
Total			274.6

Figure 8: Distribution of Parkland



Data provided by the City of Pickering

The distribution of parkland is illustrated in Figure 8 with an 800 metre service radius, which generally equates to a 10 minute walk, adjusted for major pedestrian obstructions such as highways, arterial roads, railways, and watercourses. For the most part, South Pickering (urban areas located south of the Canadian Pacific railway line) are very well serviced geographically while planned parkland in the Seaton community will also result in strong coverage. Parkland in rural areas is largely relegated to hamlet communities which is typical in such municipalities given much lower population densities and more limited land development potential due to provincial legislation.

4.3 Parkland Needs

Based on a parkland supply of 274.6 hectares and an estimated 2017 population of 96,000, Pickering is achieving an overall parkland service level of 2.9 hectares per 1,000 residents. This level of service is slightly lower compared to parkland service levels provided in other municipalities across the Province, where targets typically range between 3.0 to 4.0 hectares per 1,000 persons (excluding woodlots, ravines, etc.). That said, the City has access to a considerable quantum of passive and naturalized outdoor space, as well as non-municipal lands that can be used for recreational enjoyment, which augments Pickering’s parkland supply.

Pickering is expected to add nearly 40,000 new residents over the course of the master planning period, the majority of whom are expected to be accommodated in Seaton through new residential development. By 2026, the City expects to add approximately 34.8 hectares of parkland through parkland dedication (Table 10). The locations of parkland the City is expected to receive through residential development is illustrated in Figure 8. Beyond the master planning period (2027+), an additional 50 hectares of parkland is expected to be developed in Seaton by buildout based upon approved Neighbourhood Plans and draft plans of subdivision, resulting in a total municipal parkland supply of 90 hectares by build out.

Table 10: Existing and Future Parkland, 2017 – 2026 City of Pickering

	Existing Supply	Future Seaton Parkland (2017 – 2026)	Total Parkland by 2026
City Parkland	118.3	-	118.3
Community Parkland	86.5	15.2*	101.7
Neighbourhood Parkland / Village Green	69.8	19.6	89.4
Total	274.6	34.8	309.4

*Community Park site area includes land for future indoor recreation facility and associated spaces (e.g., parking).

Note: An additional 50 hectares of parkland is expected to be developed/received through parkland dedication beyond 2027. Greenwood Conservation Lands excluded.

Assuming that the projected population growth is realized and future parkland acquisition is achieved through parkland dedication, Pickering would achieve a parkland service level of 2.3 hectares per 1,000 residents by 2026. This implies that parkland acquisition will not keep pace with population growth in terms of maintaining present-day parkland service levels. If the City were to continue to provide parkland at its current rate (e.g., 2.9 hectares per 1,000 residents), it would need to acquire an additional 70 hectares of parkland – over and above identified planned acquisitions in Seaton - by the year 2026. Obtaining the full 70 hectares of parkland to

retain the current City-wide parkland service level would be challenging as the majority of future parkland in Seaton has already been negotiated by way of the Neighbourhood Plans and the cost to acquire additional lands could prove to be substantial.

While the planned acquisitions will not maintain the current level of service, it is expected that they will be sufficient to accommodate the active indoor and outdoor recreation facilities recommended through the Master Plan over its planning period. What this means, however, is that there is a strong possibility that less park space will be able to be devoted to unstructured or passive recreational areas in parks (such as open fields, areas for integrated naturalization initiatives, internal pathways, buffers and setback areas, etc.) and/or more intensified use of parkland will be required (such as artificial turf fields, stratified park areas). Pickering's parkland supply will also continue to be augmented by non-municipal open spaces provided by Hydro One, O.P.G., T.R.C.A., and school boards to serve residents over the planning period.

Nevertheless, as opportunities become available, the City should continue strive to acquire additional parkland in areas under growth pressures or gaps to continue providing high quality parkland experiences. As future parkland development occurs, the City should ensure that relevant stakeholders (e.g., T.R.C.A., sports groups, etc.) are engaged, as necessary, through the process to ensure that their needs are heard. While it is unlikely that the City will be able to secure a considerable amount of additional parkland to maintain its current level of service, it is recommended that the City augment parkland dedication practices with the alternative parkland acquisition strategies articulated in this Master Plan, which is discussed in the next section.

In addition to future parkland acquisition, parkland redevelopment will play a key role in enhancing the use of existing parks, particularly in established areas of Pickering. For example, the City continues to undertake improvements to the waterfront, which is being guided by the 2017 Update to the Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park Master Plan. This Master Plan is a long-term strategy to enhance Pickering's waterfront to support a range of water-based activities (e.g., canoeing and kiteboarding) and passive recreation activities (e.g., walking, nature enjoyment, picnicking, etc.) that take place in this area. Through the Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park Master Plan, several recommendations were made including, but not limited to, an upgraded promenade, improving parking and circulation areas, enhancing naturalized areas, trail realignment, a watercraft launch, a potential canoe club / parks facility building, and more. Redevelopment of the waterfront and other major parks should continue to be guided by area-specific master plans and/or input from the public and relevant stakeholders (e.g., T.R.C.A.), where necessary.

Recommendations – Future Parkland Needs

2. On an opportunity basis, pursue opportunities to acquire parkland over and above the 34.8 hectares planned for acquisition by the year 2026 to address the needs of areas under growth pressures and service gaps, through use of parkland development strategies identified in this Master Plan. The acquisition and development of future parkland shall have regard for the natural heritage system and as necessary, consultation with the T.R.C.A. is encouraged.

4.4 Parkland Acquisition Policies and Guidelines

There are a number of provincial and municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines governing the acquisition and location of parkland, with the *Ontario Planning Act* and the City of Pickering Official Plan being the primary tools.

Ontario Planning Act (R.S.O. 1990) and Bill 73

The *Planning Act* (R.S.O.) outlines a framework for parkland dedication in Section 42 and 51.1, which allow approval authorities to enforce parkland dedication requirements as a condition of land development or plan of subdivision. These sections establish that 2% of commercial and industrial land development and 5% of all other land development be conveyed to the municipality for parkland or other public recreational purposes. In certain cases, where the approval authority has established specific policies regarding parkland dedication, the *Planning Act* allows a municipality to require an alternative rate of one hectare per 300 dwelling units, if land for parks is being provided. If no dedicated land is proposed for parkland through development, then approval authority may accept cash-in-lieu thereof. Through Bill 73 - the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act* - the *Planning Act* was amended to permit a municipality applying the alternative rate to accept cash-in-lieu of parkland at a rate of one hectare per 500 dwelling units thereby creating an incentive for a municipality to take physical land instead of cash.



Valleyview Park

Additionally, Section 37 of the *Planning Act* may be utilized to authorize increased height or density of development otherwise permitted by by-law in exchange for the provision of facilities or services. This may include publicly accessible land or space within the proposed development such as public common areas, seating areas, landscape features, public art, etc.



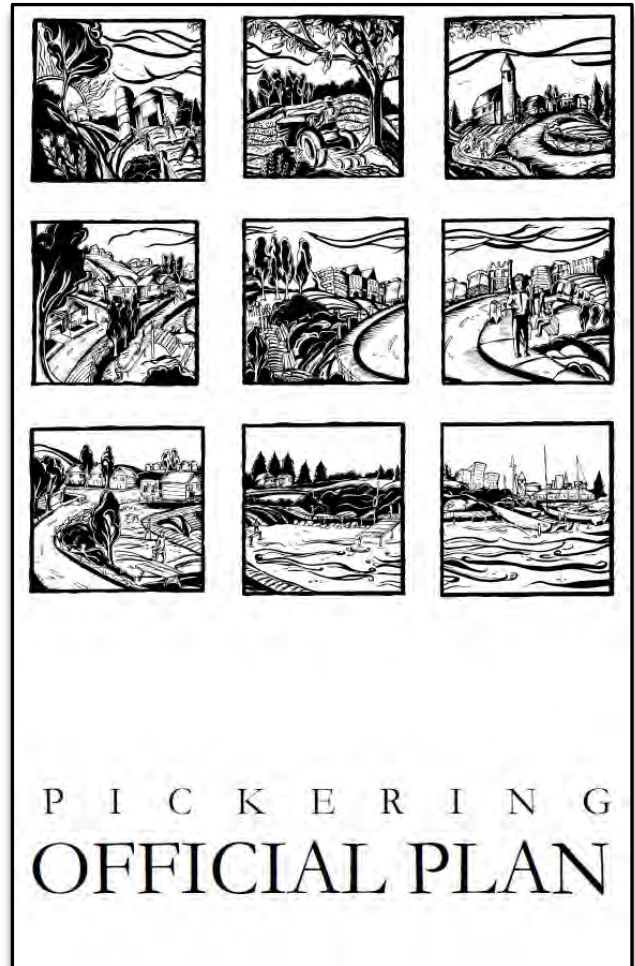
Lookout Point Park

City of Pickering Official Plan

The City of Pickering Official Plan¹² provides direction pertaining to the dedication of land for parkland through development. Specifically, Section 15.28 of the Official Plan policies outline the amount of parkland the City may receive, as well as alternative dedication methods:

15.28 – City Council

- a) shall as a condition of residential development, and may as a condition of other development, except for the uses described in (b),
 - I. require the conveyance of land to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes in an amount not exceeding 5% of the proposed land to be developed;
 - II. may, as an alternative to requiring conveyance of land as provided for in (i) above, in the High Density Residential Areas and Mixed use Areas, require land to be conveyed for park or other public recreational purposes at a rate of up to one hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed, whichever is greater; and
 - III. may, in lieu or a portion or all of the land conveyance stipulated by (i) or (ii) above, require the payment of money to the value of the land that would otherwise be required to be conveyed for park purposes;
- b) may, as a condition of commercial or industrial development,
 - I. require the conveyance of land to the municipality for park or other public recreational purposes in an amount not exceeding 2% of the proposed land to be developed; and
 - II. may, in lieu of a portion of all the land conveyance stipulated by (i) above, require the payment of money to the value of land that would otherwise be required to be conveyed for park purposes; and,



¹² City of Pickering Official Plan. 1997 (February 2010 Consolidation Edition 6).

- c) shall not accept as parkland conveyance lands required for drainage; valley and stream corridor or shoreline protection purposes; lands susceptible to flooding; steep valley slopes; hazard lands; lands required to be conveyed to a public agency other than the City of Pickering; and other lands unsustainable for park development.

Amendment No. 22 to the City's Official Plan contains policies to guide the development within Seaton. Policies regarding parkland development and dedication are limited, although Section 11.49 states that cash-in-lieu of parkland may be waived as a development incentive for new affordable housing providers.

The City's Official Plan Amendment No. 26, which creates new and amended policies specific to the redevelopment and intensification of Pickering's City Centre, also contains policies that address parkland needs. Specifically, Section 11.10 speaks to the public realm and articulates that City Council:

1. may accept privately constructed squares and publically accessible open spaces as part of a development as fulfilling in whole or in part, the parkland conveyance requirements if all of the following conditions are met:
 - I. the square or publically accessible open space is designed and maintained to the standards of the City;
 - II. the square or publically accessible open space is visible, open and accessible to the public at all times; and
 - III. the owner enters into an agreement with the City to ensure that the previous conditions are met, to the satisfaction of the City.

A review of these policies suggests that there is an opportunity to bolster park policies to maximize parkland requirements articulated in the *Planning Act* in order to continue to provide high quality park experiences. During the next Official Plan Review, it is recommended that consideration be given to the implications of the amended *Planning Act* as a result of Bill 73, particularly as it relates to the reduced rate of cash-in-lieu of parkland municipalities may require.

Given that the amount of parkland that can be required through new subdivision development is finite, the City must be creative in how it augments its parkland acquisition strategies. Alternative acquisition strategies should be considered to secure additional parkland to address shortages such as in established residential neighbourhoods or intensification areas. There are a number of alternative acquisition strategies that should be utilized in order to ensure that sufficient parkland is available to support active and passive recreational uses. For example, the City is presently working with the T.R.C.A. to potentially develop approximately 20 hectares of parkland (T.R.C.A. owned), which forms part of the Greenwood Conservation Lands; negotiations with respect to the roles and responsibilities of each party is ongoing. Other acquisition strategies that should be considered include:

- Municipal land purchase or lease (e.g., school closure, sale of brownfield lands, etc.).

- Land exchange or swaps, particularly if development is to occur in natural areas highly valued by the community.
- Establishment of a Parks Foundation (e.g., community, corporate, or municipal donations towards parkland acquisition).
- Reallocating surplus municipal lands to park use.
- Partnership / joint provision of parkland with local partners (e.g., T.R.C.A., school board, Hydro One, etc.).

Recommendations – Parkland Acquisition Policies and Guidelines

3. During the next Official Plan Review, consider the City’s parkland dedication policies to ensure that they are consistent with the amended *Planning Act* as a result of Bill 73.
4. To supplement parkland dedications, utilize alternative parkland acquisition tools to enhance future parkland opportunities. Potential strategies include partnerships (e.g., T.R.C.A., school board, Hydro One, etc.), land purchase, or other methods described in this Master Plan. Emphasis should be placed on securing suitably sized and quality parkland parcels oriented towards recreational uses.



Bruce Hanscombe Park

4.5 Community Gardens

Supply

The City's only community garden is located at Diana, Princess of Wales Park and is known as the Valley Plentiful Community Garden, made possible through a partnership between the City, Hydro One, and the Valley Plentiful Community Gardeners. There are 103 plots within the community garden, some of which are raised with a rubber pathway to accommodate persons with disabilities.

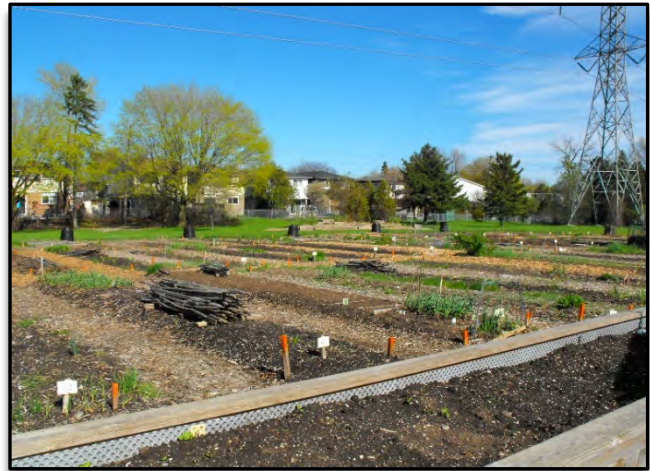
Pickering's community garden results in a service level of one community garden per 96,000 residents, which is above average compared to benchmarked municipalities. Non-municipal community gardens are excluded.

Table 11: Service Level Comparison, Community Gardens

Municipality	Population Estimate	Community Gardens	Service Level
Oshawa	165,000	3	1 : 55,000
Aurora	57,000	1	1 : 57,000
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Ajax	128,000	1	1 : 128,000
St. Catharines	135,000	1	1 : 135,000
Richmond Hill	198,000	1	1 : 198,000
Whitby	138,000	n/a	n/a
Average	131,000	2	1 : 111,500
Median	135,000	1	1 : 112,000

Market Trends

A community garden can be administered by a municipality, local organization, religious institution or community group free of charge or for a nominal fee. The popularity and interest in community gardens is on the rise driven by a number of factors such as the emphasis on social justice and food security, healthy eating, increasing physical activity, and providing a sustainable and affordable food source. Research conducted in culturally diverse communities reveal that community gardens allow residents to cultivate, preserve, and prepare culturally appropriate produce.¹³ Moreover, social interaction and horticultural education are part of the appeal of community gardens.



Diana, Princess of Wales Park

Pickering's community garden has proven to be a success since its inception in 2008. What started as a small project of eight garden plots now encompasses over 100 plots in response to strong community interest. The success of this project is driven by residents' dedication to food

¹³ Baker, L. (2004). Tending cultural landscapes and food citizenship in Toronto's community gardens. *Geographical Review* 94, no. 3:305-325.

sustainability and passion for gardening, particularly for those with limited or no private backyard space for such activities.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey found that gardening was the most popular activity among households. Two-thirds (65%) of households supported additional investment in community vegetable gardens, which ranked 8th out of 24 facility types and suggests that community gardens are a moderately high priority in the community.

Needs Assessment

It is clear that Pickering's community garden is a success, which is attributed to the City's strong sense of community and its prominent location along Kingston Road, captivating the interest of passing motorists. It can be expected that community gardening at this location will experience pressures given the presence of residential development immediately to the west. Based on these factors, together with the public input received through this process, the City should continue to monitor use of the community garden at this site and evaluate opportunities to provide additional garden plots at Diana, Princess of Wales Park in coordination with the Valley Plentiful Community Gardeners. A high level review of the park site suggests that there is space to accommodate additional garden plots. In order to improve the user experience of these community gardens, the City should also investigate the potential to provide convenient parking and improved accessibility.

There is merit in considering a second location to enhance the geographic distribution of community gardens given the popularity of this activity in Pickering. During the planning period, the City expects to add over 33,000 residents in Seaton and while the population make-up is unknown, it can be expected that residents will comprise of a mixture of cultural backgrounds and age groups. Research suggests that community gardeners do not fit one typical profile and given the likelihood of a diverse population in Seaton, some level of demand for community gardening can be expected. Moreover, the City's Official Plan Amendment No. 22 indicates that residential land uses will consist of a mixture of low, medium, and high density neighbourhoods. As residential development trends have led to smaller lot sizes, and therefore, limited private gardening opportunities, support for community gardens is further strengthened. On this basis, the City should consider the provision of a community garden in Seaton.

There are a number of future park locations in Seaton that may be suitable for a community garden location. As residential development becomes more established, the City should work with residents and community stakeholders to evaluate and identify a community garden location with consideration given to the following site selection criteria:

- Centrally located in the Seaton community, preferably along an arterial that is accessible via public transportation;
- Co-located with other recreation and park facilities including, but not limited to, community centres, schools, trails, playgrounds, and more;

- Available amenities including water source, parking, seating, shade, natural heritage features, and other ancillaries; and
- Other site criteria identified by the City.

Consistent with the operating model utilized at the existing community garden, as well as best practices in other communities, a community development model is recommended for the provision of the second community garden. The provision of a second community garden location should be contingent on the commitment of an established community group to contribute resources towards general maintenance and operation of the community garden, with support from the City.

Recommendations – Community Gardens

5. Continue to monitor the use and evaluate opportunities to expand the number of garden plots available at Diana, Princess of Wales Park as surrounding areas intensify residential lands. Any expansion of the community garden should be undertaken in conjunction with the Valley Plentiful Community Gardeners. The City should also investigate the potential to provide convenient parking and improved accessibility.
6. Establish a second community garden in Seaton contingent on seeking a willing community organization that will commit human and/or financial resources towards general maintenance and operation of the community garden. In consultation with residents and community stakeholders, a suitable site in Seaton should be selected, with consideration given to being centrally located, co-located with other recreation and park facilities, available amenities (e.g., water), and other site criteria identified by the City.

4.6 Leash Free Areas

Supply

Grand Valley Park's Leash Free Area contains a primary leash free area and a second separated area that is accessible for persons with disabilities and is intended for smaller dogs. Pickering's leash free area results in a service level of one leash free area per 96,000 residents, which is on the lower end of the spectrum compared to benchmarked municipalities.

Market Trends

Leash free areas have become much more common in urban municipalities over the past decade. The demand for these facilities is driven in part by intensification and shrinking private outdoor areas. With municipal by-laws regulating the use of leashes, leash free areas provide pet owners with the opportunity to exercise and socialize with their dogs in a controlled area. However, leash free areas should not be viewed as being facilities strictly for pets as observations suggest that they are also beneficial for residents and community interaction, and assisting people who would otherwise be living in isolation.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey found that 42% of households supported additional investment to improve or develop new leash free areas, ranking 18th out of 24 facility types, which suggests that investment in leash free areas is a lower priority among households.

Needs Assessment

There is no standard service level for the provision of leash free areas as best practices suggests that these facilities are primarily provided based on a case-by-case basis to respond to community pressures. Through the preparation of this Master Plan, limited requests were received for additional off-leash dog areas and as previously identified, the random household telephone survey revealed that investment in these facilities was a lower priority.

Table 12: Service Level Comparison, Leash Free Areas

Municipality	Population Estimate	Leash Free Area	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	1	1 : 57,000
Ajax	128,000	2	1 : 64,000
St. Catharines	135,000	2	1 : 67,500
Whitby	138,000	2	1 : 69,000
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Richmond Hill	198,000	2	1 : 99,000
Oshawa	165,000	1	1 : 165,000
Average	131,000	2	1 : 88,214
Median	135,000	2	1 : 69,000

The leash free area at Grand Valley Park is located along the boundary of the South Pickering Urban Area and the Central Pickering Development Plan area to the north. As Seaton continues to develop, the existing leash free area will generally be centrally located for all Pickering residents to access by vehicle (dog parks are considered to be drive to destinations, though many are strategically located near trail routes). As a result, it is expected that the existing location is sufficient to serve current and future residents during the planning period.

It should be recognized; however, that the City may receive future requests from future residents for leash free areas as the community continues to develop given certain types of residential development expected (e.g., smaller lots and high density residential development) have limited or no backyard space. A second leash free area in Pickering would become appropriate when significant requests and supporting study determines that the carrying capacity of Grand Valley Park has been met from an ecological and volume of use perspective, something that is not anticipated based upon present day observations of the park's use.

Recommendations – Leash Free Areas

7. Monitor the usage and carrying capacity of the Grand Valley Park leash free area. Should the City receive significant requests and supporting study determines the need for additional leash free area, investigate appropriate locations and potential partnerships at that time.

4.7 Advancing Active Transportation

Active transportation is defined as any means of travel using non-motorized modes such as walking and cycling. While the provision of active transportation infrastructure in Pickering is beyond the scope of the Master Plan, its importance in Pickering is worth highlighting as it was clear throughout the initial phase of this process that trails and related active transportation infrastructure are highly desired amenities as they facilitate recreation activities that all residents can enjoy.

Pickering has a strong active transportation network that connects residents and visitors to key destinations throughout the City. Pickering’s trail system spans over 40 kilometres, which excludes any future trail alignment or construction projects. Notable trails including the Seaton trail, Trans Canada Trail, Waterfront Trail, and West Duffins Trail (Table 13). In addition, residents have access to sidewalks, cycling routes, and park pathways.

Table 13: Existing Trail Inventory

Trail Name	Length (kilometres)
Seaton Trail	11.5
Trans Canada Trail	12.7
Waterfront Trail	12.0
West Duffins Trail	3.9
Total	40.1

Source: City of Pickering. Note: Inventory excludes future trail alignment or construction projects.

The City is currently undertaking an Integrated Transportation Master Plan (I.T.M.P.) that will explore opportunities to enhance cycling infrastructure and trails in Pickering. The preparation of the I.T.M.P. provides an excellent opportunity to identify areas for improvement and to connect residents with new areas of Pickering. With future residential development expected to occur in Seaton, the preparation of the Integrated Transportation Master Plan provides the City, developers, and the public with a guide for the development of active transportation infrastructure. As the City moves forward in preparing its Integrated Transportation Master Plan, several aspects related to the provision of active transportation should be explored to ensure that they are sufficient to meet the needs of current and future residents. Among other considerations by staff, the Integrated Transportation Master Plan should speak to:

- Enhancing existing recreational and utilitarian connections.
- Linking future parks with the existing trail network.
- Active transportation design guidelines, maintenance, and accessibility.
- Strengthening Official Plan policies with respect to active transportation (e.g., land dedication for trails and active transportation routes).
- Funding for the construction and maintenance of active transportation routes.

It is also recognized that the T.R.C.A. is currently in the process of developing a Trails Strategy to guide G.T.A. communities towards establishing a connected trails system. Aligning Pickering’s I.T.M.P. with T.R.C.A.’s Trails Strategy is encouraged.

Recommendations – Enhancing Active Transportation Policies

8. With respect to the planning of active transportation infrastructure, Pickering's Integrated Transportation Master Plan should enhance existing recreational and utilitarian connections, linking future parks with the existing network, active transportation design, supporting amenities, maintenance, accessibility, and other relevant land uses/destinations as identified by the City. Alignment with T.R.C.A.'s Trails Strategy (which is currently being completed) is also encouraged.



Glendale Park

5.0 Recreation System

This section explores Pickering’s existing recreation portfolio and the implications that may influence the future provision of facilities, services, and programs. An inventory of the City’s recreation facilities is contained in this section and where appropriate, supporting mapping is provided to illustrate the distribution of facilities. General facility observations are articulated, together with broad market trends and public input.

5.1 Summary of Recreation Facilities

Table 14 and Table 15 summarize the indoor and outdoor recreation facilities that are owned (or permitted) by the City of Pickering. Recreation facilities provided by non-municipal organizations are excluded, although they are recognized for their contributions to the local recreation system and are referenced where applicable.

Table 14: Summary of Indoor Recreation Facilities

Facility Type	Supply	Location(s)
Ice Pads	5	Don Beer Arena (3), Pickering Recreation Complex (2)
Indoor Pools	2	Dunbarton Indoor Pool, Pickering Recreation Complex
Fitness Spaces	1	Pickering Recreation Complex
Indoor Hard Surface Courts	14	Pickering Recreation Complex
Racquetball Courts	2	
Squash Courts	8	
Tennis Courts	4	
Gymnasiums	1	East Shore Community Centre
Multi-Purpose Rooms	19	
Multi-Purpose Rooms	9	Multi-Purpose Rooms – East Shore Community Centre (2), George Ashe Library and Community Centre (2), Pickering Recreation Complex (5)
Large Multi-Purpose Rooms	5	Large Multi-Purpose Rooms – Don Beer Arena, East Shore Community Centre, Pickering Recreation Complex (2), West Shore Community Centre
Hamlet Community Centres	5	Hamlet Community Centres - Brougham Community Centre, Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre, Greenwood Community Centre, Mount Zion Community Centre, Whitevale Community Centre
Youth Space	2	East Shore Community Centre, George Ashe Library and Community Centre
Older Adult Space	3	Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre, East Shore Community Centre, George Ashe Library and Community Centre

Source: City of Pickering Community Services Department, 2017

Table 15: Summary of Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Facility Type	Supply	Location(s)
Soccer Fields	41 (44 unlit equivalent)	
Artificial Full (Lit)	1	Artificial Full (Lit): Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park
Full (Lit)	4	Full (Lit): Dunmoore Park, Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park (3)
Full (Unlit)	9	Full (Unlit): Amberlea Park, Beverley Morgan Park (2), Creekside Park, Glengrove Park, Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park, Diana, Princess of Wales Park, St. Mary Park (2)
Intermediate	13	Intermediate (Unlit): Brockridge Community Park (2), Chris Graham Fields (Village East Park) (3), Douglas Park, Fairport Public School, Jean McPherson Park, Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park (2), Maple Ridge Park, Shadybrook Park (2)
Mini / Micro	14	Micro / Mini (Unlit): Amberlea Park, Glengrove Park, Diana, Princess of Wales Park (3), Rick Hull Memorial Park (2), Whitevale Park, Woodlands (Dunbarton High School) (6)
Ball Diamonds	32 (38 unlit equivalent)	
Hardball (Lit / Unlit)	3 / 1	Hardball (Lit): Amberlea Park, Brockridge Community Park, Don Beer Memorial Park Hardball (Unlit): S.M. Woodsmere Park
Softball (Lit / Unlit)	9 / 19	Softball (Lit): Claremont Memorial Park, Centennial Park, Dunmoore Park (2), Greenwood Park, Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park (4) Softball (Unlit): Amberlea Park, Balsdon Park, Beverley Morgan Park, Brockridge Community Park (2), Dunmoore Park, Fairport Beach Public School (2), Forestbrook Park (2), Glengrove Park, Jean McPherson Park, Lookout Point Park, Major Oaks Park (2), Maple Ridge Park, Rick Hull Memorial Park, Southcott Park, Valleyview Park
Other Rectangular and Multi-Use Fields	3	Artificial (Lit): Beverley Morgan Field (multi-use field for football, soccer, and rugby) Full (Unlit): Beverley Morgan Park (multi-use field for football and soccer) (2)
Cricket Pitches	1	Alex Robertson Park

Facility Type	Supply	Location(s)
Outdoor Tennis	24	Lit Tennis: Claremont Memorial Park (2), David Farr Memorial Park (4), Dunmoore Park (4), Greenwood Park (2), Kinsmen Park (4), Maple Ridge Park (2), Rick Hull Memorial Park (2), Shadybrook Park (2), Village East Park (2)
Pickleball Courts	2	Village East Park (2)
Basketball Courts	12	Beverley Morgan Park, Diana, Princess of Wales Park, Don Beer Memorial Park, Frenchman's Bay Ratepayers Memorial Park, Glengrove Park (2), Major Oaks Park, Rick Hull Memorial Park, Rouge Valley Park, St. Mary Park (2), Valleyview Park
Outdoor Ice Rinks	2	Claremont Memorial Park, Whitevale Park
Skateboard Parks	1	Diana, Princess of Wales Park
Splash Pads	2	Amberlea Park, Beachfront Park
Playgrounds	58	See Figure 25 for locations
Community Gardens	1	Diana, Princess of Wales Park
Leash Free Area	1	Grand Valley Park
Outdoor Running Tracks	2	Beverley Morgan Park, St. Mary Park

Source: City of Pickering Community Services Department, 2017



Lookout Point Park

5.2 The Need for New Recreation Facilities

Through assessments in the pages that follow, the Master Plan identifies a need for two new recreation facilities. These directions are a result of an analysis based on facility service levels and utilization rates, targeted consultations with user groups and the public, in addition to trends and best practices in facility provision.

The following recreation facility components are recommended for specific recreation facilities. While high level design considerations are advanced in this Master Plan, detailed design processes should take place through future planning stages with an architect and in consultation with stakeholders and the public to confirm space needs and identify desired amenities.

Multi-Use Recreation Facility in Seaton

A multi-use recreation facility should be constructed in Seaton to ensure that future residents in this area have access to quality indoor recreation space. Official Plan Amendment No. 22 designates lands for a recreation facility at the southwest corner of Whitevale Road and Sideline 24. This site is accessible through public transportation and encourages walkability and pedestrian access to a future community centre. This Master Plan proposes a target construction timeframe around the year 2021 when the population is expected to reach approximately 120,000 persons. The future multi-use facility in Seaton should contain the following recreation components:

- 25 metre, 6 lane indoor pool with a separate warm water leisure tank
- Fitness centre with a group fitness studio
- Full size double gymnasium
- Walking track (elevated over the gymnasiums or integrated within the fitness centre)
- Dedicated youth space
- Multi-purpose spaces (to be designed with the potential to be re-purposed one multi-purpose space to dedicated older adult space, should long-term demand necessitate, as it is not required at present – see Recommendation #22).

Seaton's new multi-use recreation facility should be designed in a manner that could be expanded to add a multi-pad arena (subject to a future arena assessment) as well as dedicated space for older adults, should longer-term demand necessitate. The facility should be positioned to accommodate both community uses and the local sport tourism market to attract indoor sports tournaments. As a result, consideration should be given to a range of sport friendly design elements where possible including, but not limited to, parking, accessibility features, circulation and gathering areas, spectator seating, electronic score clocks and timers, sufficiently-sized change rooms, storage areas, viewing areas, and other amenities determined through future planning processes.

Pickering Seniors' and Youth Community Centre

The City of Pickering has established a vision for a new Seniors' and Youth Community Centre proposed to be located adjacent to the Pickering Civic Centre and Library. The new facility is proposed to serve as a replacement for the 70 year old **East Shore Community Centre** given

that a 2016 building audit identified the community centre to be in poor condition. In addition to its age and structural/mechanical deficiencies, the existing community centre has functional limitations as its size and layout is insufficient to support desired community programming. As a result of these limitations, the facility is generally underutilized as users are seeking higher quality facilities with modern amenities. Expansion of the East Shore Community Centre is not recommended given the building's advanced age and deteriorating condition, as well as limited parking available on site.

Based on an evaluation of recreation space needs, this Master Plan supports the provision of a new Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in Pickering's City Centre to replace the East Shore Community Centre. The adjacency of the proposed facility to the Central Library should also provide unique and supportive programming opportunities to the benefit of youth and seniors. Timing for construction should take place over the short term (next five years) given the East Shore facility's condition and community programming demands. The Seniors' and Youth Community Centre should include the following recreational components:

- One full size gymnasium with an elevated walking track
- Dedicated spaces for older adults and youth
- Multi-purpose spaces

Once the new community centre is constructed, all indoor programming from the East Shore Community Centre should be shifted to the new community centre following its construction. The relocation of the Lawn Bowling Club is currently not determined and may remain on site. The City should investigate options to repurpose or decommission the East Shore Community Centre.



Pickering Recreation Complex

Recommendations – New Recreation Facilities

9. Detailed design of future indoor recreation facilities should be undertaken with an architect and in consultation with stakeholders and the public to define the allocation of space by component, confirm space needs, and to identify required supporting amenities (including sport-friendly features).
10. Construct a new multi-use recreation facility in Seaton as Pickering’s population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after 2021), which should include a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular indoor pool and separate warm water leisure pool, fitness centre and studio, full size double gymnasium, walking track, dedicated youth space, and multi-purpose spaces.
11. Construct a Seniors’ and Youth Community Centre in Pickering’s City Centre within the next five years to replace the aging East Shore Community Centre. The new Community Centre should include a full size gymnasium with an elevated walking track, dedicated spaces for older adults and youth, and multi-purpose spaces.
12. Contingent upon the construction of the Seniors’ and Youth Community Centre in Pickering’s City Centre, investigate options to repurpose or decommission the East Shore Community Centre due to its advanced age and deteriorating condition, which has limited the functionality to program space optimally to meet the needs of residents.

5.3 Ice Pads

Supply

Pickering provides five ice pads at two arenas. The Pickering Recreation Complex was constructed in 1983 and provides two ice pads, each measuring 190 feet by 85 feet. Amenities include change rooms, storage, referee and coach rooms, concessions, and spectator seating. During the summer, the dry floor is used for ball hockey.

Don Beer Arena provides three ice pads that are each 185 feet by 85 feet. Originally built as a single pad arena in 1969, the second and third ice

Table 16: Service Level Comparison, Ice Pads

Municipality	Population Estimate	Ice Pads	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	5	1 : 11,400
Whitby	138,000	10	1 : 13,800
Oshawa	165,000	10.6*	1 : 15,600
St. Catharines	135,000	8.5*	1 : 15,900
Pickering	96,000	5	1 : 19,200
Ajax	128,000	5	1 : 25,600
Richmond Hill	198,000	7	1 : 28,300
Average	131,000	7	1 : 18,500
Median	135,000	7	1 : 15,900

* reflects ‘effective’ capacity that is adjusted to account for special event arenas in Oshawa and St. Catharines; non-municipal rinks excluded.

pads were added in 1972 and 2003, respectively. Each ice pad is supported by associated amenities including change rooms, referee/coach rooms, storage, spectator seating, and concessions. During the summer months and the dry floor is used for lacrosse.

Pickering's supply translates into a service level of one ice pad per 19,200 residents, which is on the lower end up of the spectrum in relation to benchmarked municipalities. Pickering's arena supply has historically been augmented by the Art Thompson Iceplex, a privately owned and operated double pad arena located in southeast Pickering. However, this private arena has recently been sold with the understanding that arena operations will cease in the near future. The City also has two outdoor ice skating rinks that are discussed in Section 5.18.

Market Trends

Ice sports such as hockey and figure skating have been Canadian pastimes for decades; however, data from Hockey Canada indicates that participation in minor hockey has been steadily declining. Over the past five ice seasons, participation in minor hockey at the national and provincial level declined by 4% and 7%, respectively.¹⁴ Figure skating has experienced similar challenges in attracting new skaters and coaches.

The decline in hockey participation is driven by a number of factors such as concerns over player safety, escalating costs of equipment and travel, the increasing cost of renting ice, and an increasing immigrant population from countries that do not play ice hockey. Declining participation figures have resulted in surplus arena capacity in many communities, particularly on weekends and during shoulder hours that fall just outside of prime time. Municipalities have implemented strategies to cope with shifting arena needs including amending ice allocation practices, enhancing program opportunities to promote learn-to-skate, learn-to-hockey and sport safety, equipment rentals, and subsidies to reduce the cost to participate. Aging and underutilized ice pads have also been decommissioned or repurposed to other indoor recreation facility uses such as gymnasiums or indoor field houses.



Pickering Recreation Complex, Delaney Rink

Generally speaking, sports organizations across the Province have reported a narrowing gender gap in participation due to increase female sport participation. This is driven by a number of factors including growth in minor and international sport opportunities (such as ringette, women's hockey, and figure skating), changing lifestyles and personal commitments, efforts to break stereotypical gender roles, and to minimize participation barriers for females. Locally, input from arena user groups and participation estimates from the City suggests that there were 2,372

¹⁴ Hockey Canada. Annual General Meeting Reports.

participants registered with groups using Pickering's arenas in 2016, approximately half of whom are female participants. As a result, female and male sports groups are making use of local ice time and it is anticipated that this trend will continue over the foreseeable future.

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey revealed that 28% of households participated in recreational skating and 25% participated in hockey or figure skating over the past 12 months. These pursuits ranked 10th and 14th among 31 different activities, suggesting that ice sports are moderately popular in the community. That said, hockey/figure skating was the second most popular organized sport after outdoor soccer. Nearly two-thirds of households supported improving or building new arenas, ranking 12th out of 24 facility types and suggesting there are other pressing facility priorities.

Arena user groups that submitted a group survey commonly used the Pickering Recreation Complex and Don Beer Arena. Suggested improvements for those arenas included storage space and larger dressing rooms at Don Beer Arena, and an on-site restaurant at one of the arenas. Year-round ice was also suggested to accommodate usage during the summer.

Usage Profile

The City's Ice Allocation Procedure aims to allocate ice times to user groups in an equitable, transparent, and consistent manner that also accounts for changing needs on an annual basis. Priority rentals are given to City programs (e.g., public skate), followed by organized minor and adult users, Junior A teams, schools, and other users.

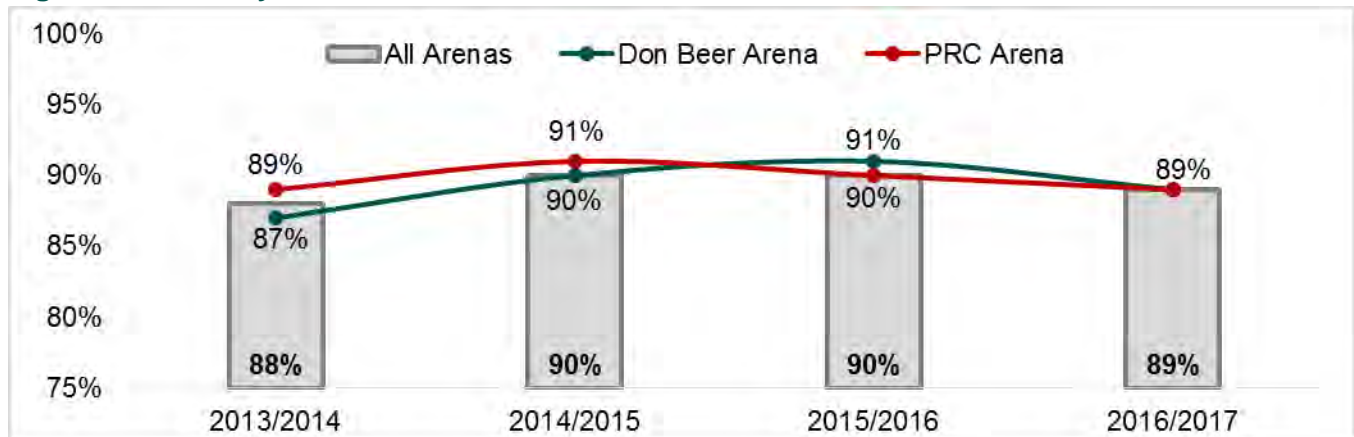
Ice pad usage during November and February, when arena use should be strongest, shows that overall weekly utilization during prime time¹⁵ over the past four ice seasons has remained stable at 89%, and is indicative of a relatively strong level of use. Based on the data provided, other trends were noted:

- Weekday prime time usage in the two peak months declined by 4% - from 92% to 88% between the 2013/14 and 2016/17 season - representing approximately 170 fewer hours booked.
- Weekend prime time usage increased by 6% - from 84% to 90% between the 2013/14 and 2016/17 season. This increase in utilization is due to a combination of the City reducing the number of available hours available to rent by 130 hours and an uptake in rentals by 100 hours.
- During the 2016/17 ice season, Pickering's ice pads were booked for a total of 7,430 prime-time hours, translating into an average of 1,486 hours per pad. This is a decline of 2% compared to the 2013/14 season when the City averaged bookings of 1,518 prime time hours per pad.

¹⁵ Prime time hours include 5 pm to 11 pm during the week and 8 am to 9 pm during the weekend.

- For the 2016/17 ice season, there were 818 hours of surplus prime time ice across the City, which equates to approximately one-half of an ice pad worth of bookable time.

Figure 9: Summary of Prime-Time Arena Utilization, 2013 - 2017



Source: City of Pickering. Utilization includes prime time only during November and February.

In addition to regular prime time rentals, the Community Services Department provides a number of registered and drop-in skating programs that primarily take place during non-prime time hours when the ice is generally not booked for rentals. Registration data indicates that there are skating programs available for pre-school, children, and adult residents (Table 17). Registration in pre-school and children’ skating programs are moderately attended, while participation in adult skating programs is generally low. The Department is beginning to offer some drop-in programs during prime time with the hopes of increasing its program registration and as population growth occurs (particularly in Seaton), the City will need to monitor program participation and potentially demand for learn-to-skate and learn-to-hockey programs.

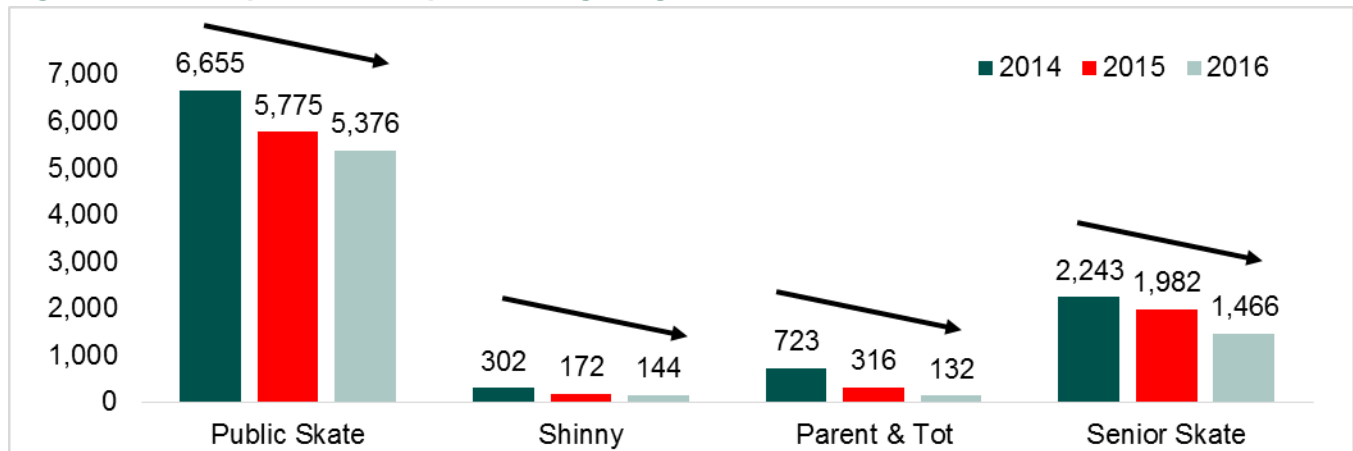
Table 17: Participation in Registered Skating Programs

	2014		2015		2016	
	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate
Pre-School	39	41%	56	58%	86	90%
Children	10	11%	45	49%	73	79%
Adult	9	28%	4	8%	0	-
Total	58	26%	105	48%	159	72%

Source: City of Pickering.

The City offers four types of drop-in skating programs with participation levels summarized in Figure 10. Over the past three years, participation has declined in each drop-in skating program. This is contrary to broader participation trends as a number of G.T.A. municipalities have experienced increasing participation in drop-in skating due to gaining preference for self-scheduled recreation activities. Declining participation figures are primarily attributed to Pickering’s increasingly diverse population and a growing number of residents that have little interest or skills in ice sports.

Figure 10: Participation in Drop-in Skating Programs



Source: City of Pickering.

For many years, the privately run Art Thompson Iceplex has addressed demands from local and regional adult organizations and pickup leagues. While operating data is not usually available for privately-owned arenas, a review of the schedule found on the arena operator’s website confirms that adults are the primary users with approximately 50 teams playing five nights per week. In addition, some youth programming is also offered by private organizations. With the Art Thompson Iceplex expected to cease operation in the near future, a portion of displaced users from that facility will seek ice time at City of Pickering arenas. As that transition occurs, Pickering’s Ice Allocation Policy would presumably continue to prioritize ice allocation to minor sports and would most likely result in increased adult usage during the shoulder hours, and has the potential to slow – or reverse – some of the declining prime time usage trends being experienced at the Pickering Recreation Complex and Don Beer Arenas in recent years. That said, there will be users from Art Thompson Iceplex that will seek out public and private arenas in other municipalities where ice times are more convenient.

Needs Assessment

Pickering’s 2002 Master Plan utilized a service target of one ice pad per 18,000 total population to determine future needs. Since arenas have a specific user profile and not all segments of the population are regular arena users (i.e. residents that do not have an interest or ability to play ice sports), a population-based target can be problematic. As an example, application of a 1:18,000 standard to the current population estimate would suggest Pickering has a deficit equivalent to one-third of an ice pad, which is inconsistent with the analysis of utilization rates that shows surplus capacity equivalent to over one half of an ice pad. As a result of these considerations, a population-based service target is not used for this current Master Plan.

Use of a participant-based service target better reflects arena needs as it considers participation levels and trends among different age groups, generally accepted standards of play, and potential implications of population growth. Given that the majority of Pickering’s arena users are minor sport organizations, it is expected that these groups utilize the majority of prime time hours. A service target of one ice pad per 400 to 500 minor participants is typically used in comparable municipalities. A more conservative service target of one ice pad per 500 minor participants is recommended for Pickering given its highly multicultural population base,

declining ice sport participation levels, and the scarcity of developable land that will become apparent once the Seaton community builds out.

The estimated 2,131 minor participants registered with minor arena organizations in 2016 represents a capture rate of 12% of children and youth between 5 and 19 years of age. Applying the same capture rate to the estimated children/youth population at the end of the master planning period results in nearly 3,000 ice sport participants at that time (although this requires a number of key assumptions). Pickering would thus require 6 ice pads by the year 2026 based upon a 1:500 player target, a net addition of one new ice pad to the supply.

However, without the benefit of detailed population projections by age group, this estimate will need to be revisited over time or when the data becomes available.

Table 18: Projected Ice Pad Requirements

	2017	2026
Children/Youth Population (Age 5 – 19) Estimated population based on a proportion of 18% from the 2016 Census Population	17,000	24,000
Ice Sport Participants Based on a children/youth market penetration rate of 12%	2,131	2,939
Required Number of Ice Pads Based on a service target of one ice pad per 500 participants	4.3	5.9
Surplus (Deficit)	0.7	(0.9)

Unfortunately there is no cost-effective way in which to expand the Pickering Recreation Complex or Don Beer Arenas and construction of single pad arenas are strongly discouraged due to financial, operational and functional inefficiencies relative to their multi-pad counterparts. Construction of a twin pad arena is a possibility but brings about the following points of consideration:

- Need for a second ice pad – calculated on the basis that local ice sport participation rates do not continue to decline as they have in recent years – would emerge after the year 2026.
- The City could be overbuilding its supply if constructing a twin pad arena in the next ten years, particularly if ice sport participation rates continue their downward trend and given the City’s contraction of weekend operating hours demonstrates capacity to accommodate more use in the existing arenas if participation trends revert to a growth scenario.
- The absence of age-cohort population forecasts for Pickering has led to an assumption in the projection model based on 2016 Census data, and any substantial deviation from that assumed market for children and youth could increase or decrease stated needs for ice pads. As such, the projection model will need to be revisited when the City or Region prepare population forecasts by age group.

- Comments received from arena user groups through the master planning emphasized quality of arenas to a greater extent than expanding the supply (beyond recognition of the need to keep pace with future population growth). Combined with demonstrated – albeit limited – surplus capacity in the arena system, it would not appear that the City is under immediate pressure to expand its supply in the short to medium term.
- There are a number of unknown impacts that could increase or decrease the demand for ice in Pickering including (but not limited to) the impact of the Art Thomson Iceplex closing on local arenas and the socio-demographic profile residents that will ultimately live in Seaton where the majority of new growth will occur.

Given that arenas are multi-million dollar investments that often run at a net operating deficit position for 40+ years, it is imperative that the City minimize the chance of overbuilding its supply. On this basis, it is recommended that the City approach its arena provision strategy in the following way:

- Design the multi-use recreation facility recommended in the Seaton area using a two-phased construction approach whereby a twin-pad arena would be a candidate for the second phase of construction. That is, design Seaton's multi-use recreation facility in a manner that would readily allow integration of a twin-pad arena as part of a phased expansion.
- Re-evaluate the need for ice pads by way of a specific Arena Provision Strategy, or as part of a scheduled 5-year Update to this Recreation and Parks Master Plan, to determine whether prevailing market forces in Seaton and the rest of Pickering can support a net expansion to the City's supply of ice pads.

The future arena assessment should contemplate the following considerations at a minimum:

- Confirmation of this Master Plan's targeted supply of 6 ice pads based on the number of players/skaters in Pickering, utilization rates, and operating performance of the Pickering Recreation Complex and Don Beer Arenas at that time.
- The impact that the closure of the Art Thomson Iceplex has on the Pickering Recreation Complex and Don Beer Arenas, and whether displaced users could reasonably be attracted to make use in Seaton under the Ice Allocation Policy.
- The number of ice pads and arenas that will be required in Seaton upon its build-out based upon a better understanding of its housing mix, demographics of the population, and other parks and recreational needs given the City has a finite amount of land allocated to such uses.
- Relocation of an ice pad(s) at the Pickering Recreation Complex and/or Don Beer Arenas as a means to:
 - justify a multi-pad arena in Seaton as relocation of at least one existing ice pad would be required to support a multi-pad arena in Seaton while retaining a targeted supply of 6 ice pads for the long-term;

- attain cost-savings related to lifecycle renewal of aging infrastructure, non-reliance on leased land from Hydro One, etc.; and
- adaptively re-use an ice pad(s) given future intensification-related growth may generate the need for new facilities in an established area where it will be difficult for the City to cost-effectively secure new lands.

Recommendations – Ice Pads

13. Design the recommended multi-use recreation facility in the Seaton area in a manner that allows it to be expanded to include a multi-pad arena through a second construction phase, contingent upon findings of a comprehensive arena provision strategy (Recommendation #14) undertaken at a future time.
14. Prepare an Arena Provision Strategy, or a comprehensive arena assessment as part of the scheduled 5-Year Update to the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, to determine whether a net expansion to the City's supply of ice pads and/or relocation of an existing ice pad(s) is warranted based on prevailing market forces and arena operating conditions.



Don Beer Arena

5.4 Indoor Pools

Supply

Two indoor swimming pools are available in the City of Pickering. The Pickering Recreation Complex contains a 25 metre rectangular swimming tank with eight lanes and a diving board, in addition to a smaller, separate training tank. The Dunbarton Indoor Pool contains a City-owned 25 metre, six lane rectangular tank that is adjoined to a high school which accesses the pool during school hours through a reciprocal agreement.

Pickering's service level amounts to one pool per 48,000 residents, which is lower compared to benchmarked median.

Table 19: Service Level Comparison, Indoor Pools

Municipality	Population Estimate	Indoor Pools	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	2	1 : 28,500
Richmond Hill	198,000	6	1 : 33,000
Oshawa	165,000	4	1 : 41,200
Ajax	128,000	3	1 : 42,700
Pickering	96,000	2	1 : 48,000
Whitby	138,000	2	1 : 69,000
St. Catharines	135,000	1	1 : 135,000
Average	131,000	3	1 : 56,800
Median	135,000	2	1 : 42,700

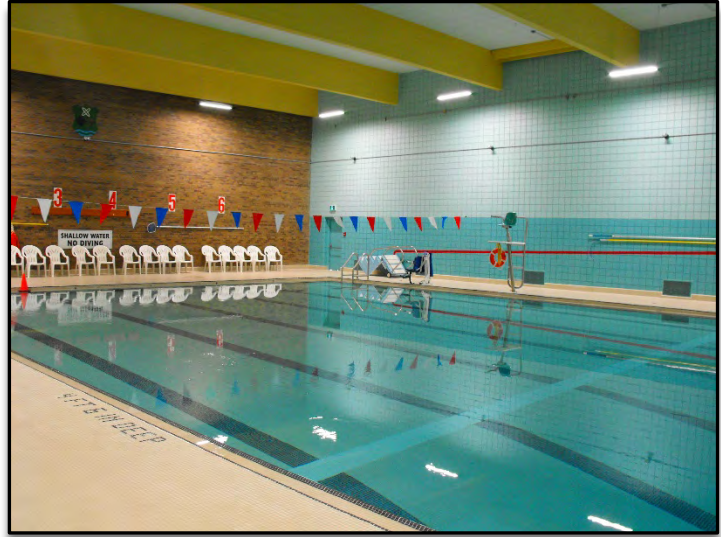
Note: Excludes non-municipal pools.

Market Trends

Indoor pools are among the most sought after public facilities due to their ability to accommodate a wide range of programs, age groups, interests, and abilities. While private backyard pools provide similar recreation experiences, public pools deliver aquatic programming and, like many other recreation facilities, they serve as a venue for residents to form community ties. Notwithstanding such benefits, municipal pools are among the most operationally expensive recreational facilities and can challenge the ability of communities to fund ongoing operation.

The traditional design template for indoor municipal pools consists of a 25 metre rectangular tank with six swimming lanes. Trends in pool construction and retrofitting have seen an evolution in public pool design that offers more variety and that accommodates a growing diversity of users, thereby raising the bar in facility quality. Municipalities across the Province are responding to demands for modern amenities including, but not limited to, family or gender neutral change rooms, warmer pool temperatures, spray features, updated viewing galleries, and universal design elements. Smaller secondary pool tanks are sometimes incorporated into facility design to support warm water therapy, training, and lessons for young children, older adults, or persons with disabilities. Co-locating indoor municipal pools with other indoor recreation facilities such as a gymnasium and/or fitness space can bolster overall facility usage through cross-programming and dry-land training opportunities while creating a holistic, one-stop experience for patrons.

With the advent of the leisure pool has come a new class of aquatic user – those that use a pool for entertainment, not just lessons, programs, or fitness. Usage trends suggest that while pool use peaks during the winter months (although this may vary by community and programming), the emergence of leisure pools have helped to increase the use of aquatic facilities year-round. There is no design standard when it comes to leisure pools as they can be provided in a variety of configurations. The chief attribute of the leisure pool concept is the ability to accommodate a larger number and range of bathers than a rectangular tank. The leisure pool suits recreational swimming and learn to swim programs, but are not favourable among competitive and aquatic clubs.



Dunbarton Pool

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey revealed that 44% of residents participated in leisure swimming in the past 12 months, which was the fourth most popular recreational activity, while one in five respondents reported participation in lane swimming. Certain respondents made requests for a new indoor pool, including a warm water pool, 25 metre pool, and 50 metre pool. In addition to these requests, more swimming programs (e.g., public swim, lane swim, swim classes) were suggested. 70% of households supported additional investment in improving or building new indoor pools, which was the fifth most popular facility type, suggesting that this is a priority among residents.

A stakeholder group survey was submitted by the Pickering Swim Club, which uses both the Pickering Recreation Complex and the Dunbarton Indoor Pool. The Club reported 250 participants and indicated that they are unable to accommodate more participants due to limited pool time. In order to accommodate current membership levels, the Club uses indoor pools in adjacent municipalities, although specific locations were not mentioned. Requests were made by the Club for a new 25 metre or 50 metre pool.

Usage Profile

The City provides a broad range of registered swim programs at the Pickering Recreation Complex from Learn-to-Swim to aquatic leadership. Programs are structured to appeal to all ages of the community. Participation data provided by the City indicates that the City concentrates its aquatic program offering towards pre-school and children and in the past three years, registration in these programs has remained strong (Table 20). Overall, the fill rate among all registered aquatic programs increased from 88% in 2014 to 94% in 2016. This is largely due

to the City reducing programming capacities to respond to a modest decline in participation over the past three years (-240 registrants) and in turn has yielded greater operating efficiencies.

Table 20: Participation in Registered Aquatic Swim Programs

	2014		2015		2016	
	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate
Pre-school	2,860	90%	2,911	92%	3,172	109%
Children	3,217	89%	3,245	90%	2,926	88%
Youth	633	84%	501	79%	487	83%
Adult	482	78%	395	75%	360	71%
Older Adult	332	87%	344	95%	340	92%
Total	7,524	88%	7,396	89%	7,285	94%

Source: City of Pickering.

The City offers public swim programs to accommodate residents and users that have a preference for swimming on their own schedule. Participation data provided by the City indicates that attendance in public swim programs declined by approximately 2,700 participants since 2014 though this is partially attributable to Dunbarton Indoor Pool being closed for five months in 2016. Despite this reduction, public swims are popular activities compared to registered aquatic programs, aligning with broader national trends that suggest that there is a greater desire for unstructured, drop-in programs for people with increasingly busy lifestyles who are unable to commit to regularly scheduled programs. Population growth will largely define future needs and directions associated with indoor aquatics facilities.

Table 21: Drop-in Participation in Public Swim, 2014 – 2016

	2014	2015	2016
Public Swim	25,444	26,628	22,731

Notes: Public swim includes lane, open, seniors/special needs, female only, and parent and tot programs. Dunbarton Pool was closed for five months in 2016.

Source: City of Pickering.

Needs Assessment

Pickering’s 2002 Master Plan utilized a service level of one pool per 35,000 residents, which is on the higher end compared to benchmarked municipalities that use a target of one pool per 35,000 to 50,000 residents. A reduced service level can now be justified in Pickering as the City has a reasonable geographic distribution of indoor pools, its population in established areas is aging as a whole, and there is modest softening in registered program and drop-in participation. As a result of these considerations, a revised service level target of one indoor pool per 40,000 residents is recommended through which a third indoor pool will be required in Pickering when its population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after the year 2021).

A look at Pickering’s population growth patterns and geographic distribution of existing facilities provides support for identifying a locating for the new indoor pool. The majority of planned population growth is expected to occur in Seaton where 33,000 residents are forecasted to be

living over the next ten years and will be home to approximately 70,000 residents by buildout. With a planned multi-use recreation facility identified in Seaton along with a sizeable forecasted population base (many of whom will be in the target market for aquatic programming), the provision of a third indoor pool at this site is a logical solution.

The proposed aquatic centre in Seaton should contain a 25 metre rectangular tank, which is suitable for accommodating most aquatic programming and user needs. A separate warm water leisure tank should be included in order to bolster program delivery oriented to instruction, aquafit, therapy, and more. Other design features that should be considered include, but are not limited to, accessibility features, sufficiently-sized change rooms, viewing galleries, beach entry, spray features, appropriate depth, and more. The provision of the new indoor pool is subject to an architectural design of the future recreation facility as a whole, in consultation with the public and user groups. While there was a request for a competitive 50 metre pool with eight lanes, a tank of this size is not recommended in Pickering given the cost associated with construction and operations as well as the fact that the competitive swim market is served with over a dozen municipal 50 metre pools throughout the GTA, including nearby in Markham and Scarborough that can be accessed within a 15 and 30 minute drive, respectively.



Indoor Aquatic Centre at the Pickering Recreation Complex

A supply of three aquatic facilities results in a service level of one pool per 45,000 residents by 2026, which is consistent with the level of service in other benchmarked municipalities. However, it is recognized that the Dunbarton Indoor Pool is an aging facility. As such, over the long term, the City should evaluate the role of the Dunbarton Indoor Pool and the population it serves once Pickering's third aquatic centre is fully operational in Seaton after 2021 to be better positioned to make a decision on the future need and role of this facility.

Recommendations – Indoor Pools

15. Construct one indoor pool as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton as the population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after the year 2021). The indoor pool should contain a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular pool and a separate warm water leisure tank to support swimming instruction, aquafit, therapy, and more. Supporting amenities should include accessible features, sufficiently-sized change rooms, viewing galleries, beach entry, spray features, appropriate depth, etc.

5.5 Gymnasiums

Supply

The City of Pickering operates one undersized gymnasium at the East Shore Community Centre, and augments access to gyms through reciprocal agreements with the Durham District School Board and the Durham Catholic School Board. The City delivers active indoor recreation programs at gyms within Dunbarton High School, Highbush Public School, Pine Ridge Secondary School, and St. Mary Catholic Secondary School.

The City’s gymnasium translates into a service level of one gymnasium per 96,000 residents, which is on the lower end of the spectrum compared to benchmarked municipalities. This comparison should be interpreted with caution given that some municipalities – such as Pickering – may have good reciprocal agreements with school boards. Like Pickering, Whitby provides one gymnasium, which is augmented by access to 12 school gymnasiums. By contrast, the Town of Richmond Hill is required to provide a higher level of service as it has access to fewer school gymnasiums.

Table 22: Service Level Comparison, Gymnasiums

Municipality	Population Estimate	Gymnasiums	Service Level
Richmond Hill	198,000	6	1 : 24,700
Oshawa	165,000	3	1 : 55,000
Aurora	57,000	1	1 : 57,000
Ajax	128,000	2	1 : 64,000
St. Catharines	135,000	2	1 : 67,500
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Whitby	138,000	1	1 : 138,000
Average	131,000	3	1 : 71,800
Median	135,000	2	1 : 64,000

Note: Excludes access to school gymnasiums.

Market Trends

Gymnasiums facilitate a wide variety of indoor sports and recreation opportunities that require a hard surface and a large open space. Gymnasiums support both organized and drop-in activities including basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, general fitness, and other active programs. While a variety of other activities may take place in these facilities such as trade shows, large gatherings, and other events, these non-recreational rentals are generally discouraged to ensure that gymnasiums are utilized for high demand recreation uses and to maintain floor finishes.

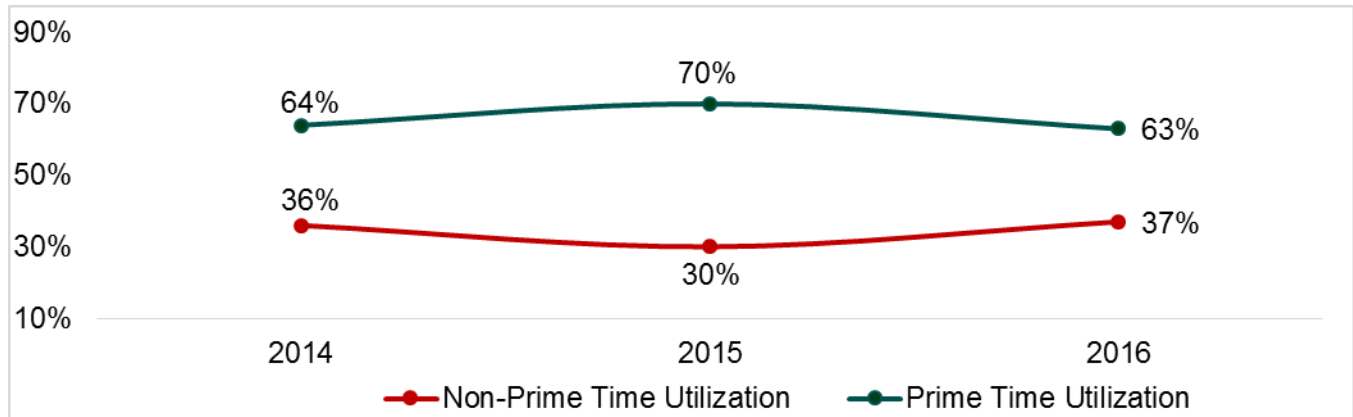
Community Engagement

Household telephone survey respondents participated in a variety of activities that often take place in a gymnasium including fitness programs (52%), basketball (20%), badminton (11%), and pickleball (3%). The provision of gymnasiums was identified as the third highest priority with 73% of households supporting investments in this type of facility.

Usage Profile

The majority of Pickering's gymnasium usage consists of private rentals, although there are some municipal programs that are held. Over the past three years, prime and non-prime time gymnasium usage has remained relatively stable with utilization levels at 63% and 37%, respectively (Figure 11). While this suggests that there is capacity to accommodate additional usage, the East Shore Community Centre's age, location, and limited on-site parking are constraints to enabling greater use of its gymnasium. As a result of these factors, potential gymnasium renters have been more inclined to book other large municipal spaces located at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre or the Pickering Recreation Complex.

Figure 11: Summary of East Shore Community Centre Gymnasium Utilization, 2014 – 2016



Source: City of Pickering.

Needs Assessment

There is no common service target among municipalities for gymnasiums given varying degrees of school access, which impacts gymnasium provision. Pickering's gymnasium at the East Shore Community Centre is bolstered by the use of school board gymnasiums during the evenings hours and weekends; however, school gymnasiums often have time and usage restrictions and as a result, scheduling and programming indoor activities is challenging. Given that residents identified gymnasiums as a priority through the consultation process, there is a need to ensure that Pickering provides access to gymnasiums to serve as flexible spaces and to accommodate a range of indoor programs.

The provision of gymnasiums should be considered when developing new major indoor multi-use recreation facilities to facilitate cross-programming opportunities and to support a variety of activities. The City plans to replace the East Shore Community Centre with a new Seniors' and Youth Centre that contains a gymnasium. This new facility's proposed location in the City Centre – adjacent to the Pickering Civic Centre and the Public Library, and within walking distance to the Pickering Recreation Complex – make it an opportune, centralized location that will capture more users than the East Shore Community Centre gym especially considering the existing gym's functional limitations and the fact that population growth could accelerate in the surrounding area with anticipated intensification and infill developments. A new gymnasium will also be an optimal complement to the proposed youth and seniors' spaces, allowing the City and community groups to deliver a greater range of indoor sports and activities. For instance, this new gymnasium space would be suitable to be programmed for year-round indoor pickleball.

Given these considerations, a gymnasium at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Centre is supported. The gymnasium should be designed with community-based sport features including paint markings and net provisions for indoor sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, pickleball, etc.) and other amenities as appropriate.

With the development of a new indoor multi-use recreation facility in Seaton (2021), which is proposed to include a number of major recreation components such as an ice pad, indoor pool, and fitness centre, a gymnasium should also be incorporated into the design to address gymnasium needs in this emerging area of Pickering. Given that long term growth of Seaton, which is expected to be home to 70,000 residents by built out, the provision of two full gymnasiums at the multi-use recreation facility site is recommended. Not only will this



Gymnasium at the East Shore Community Centre

approach achieve economies in construction, the provision of a double gymnasium positions the City to offer simultaneous programming, attract indoor tournaments at a local or regional level, or utilize the gymnasiums space for other activities requiring a large indoor space. Consistent with Recommendation #18, an elevated indoor walking track may also be incorporated into the design.

The Seaton gymnasiums should be designed with sport friendly features in mind to support the City's ability to host indoor sports tournaments. This may include, but not be limited to, high ceilings, hardwood floors, paint markings and net provisions for indoor sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, etc.), partition walls, score clocks, announcer's booth, spectator seating, run off/buffer zones around the perimeter of the gymnasium, and other amenities deemed necessary.

Recommendations – Gymnasiums

16. Develop a full size gymnasium as a part of the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and a full size double gymnasium as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. Both gymnasium locations should be designed with sport friendly features in mind.

5.6 Fitness Centres, Spaces and Walking Tracks

Supply

The health club located at the Pickering Recreation Complex provides a full range of fitness services from weight-training and cardiovascular equipment with a three-lane walking track to fitness studios for registered and drop-in group fitness classes. Several group fitness classes also take place at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre and East Shore Community Centre.

The City's service level is one equipment-based fitness centre per 96,000 residents, which is the second lowest benchmarked service level after Whitby. Private-sector fitness centres are excluded from this comparison as

the supply and offerings from these competitors vary in each community. A comparison of studio-based fitness spaces was not conducted between municipalities given that these spaces may take place in a broad range of spaces and the results would not yield any meaningful findings.

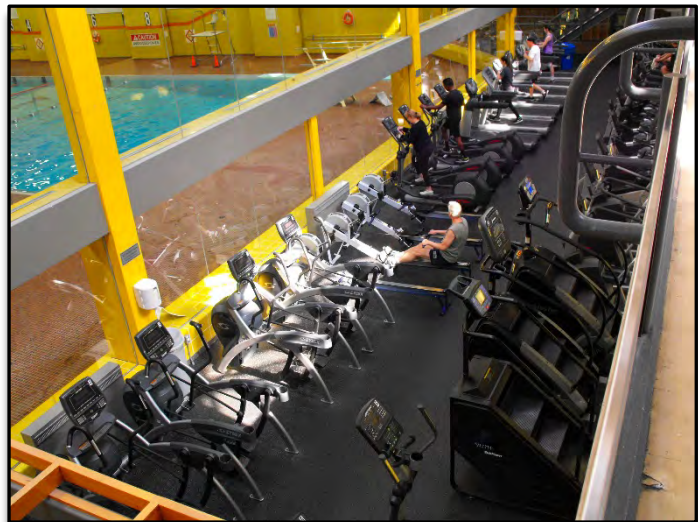
Market Trends

Physical fitness and individual wellness are top of mind issues among many Canadians, resulting in greater emphasis being placed on personal health. This has translated into increasing use of private and public sector fitness services, including active living programming centered on general health and wellness, weight-training, cardiovascular training, and stretching activities (e.g., yoga and pilates). Group fitness programming is one of the fastest growing segments of the fitness sector, more so than traditional weight-training, with these programs designed to be fun, social activities (e.g., Zumba).

Table 23: Service Level Comparison, Equipment-Based Fitness Centres

Municipality	Population Estimate	Equipment-Based Fitness Centres	Service Level
Richmond Hill	198,000	4	1 : 49,500
Oshawa	165,000	3	1 : 55,000
Aurora	57,000	1	1 : 57,000
Ajax	128,000	2	1 : 64,000
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Whitby	138,000	1	1 : 138,000
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	2	1 : 76,600
Median	135,000	1	1 : 60,500

Note: Excludes private-sector fitness centres.



Fitness Equipment at the Pickering Recreation Complex

There are generally three forms of municipal fitness spaces, which are described below. They can be provided separately or in combination within other indoor recreation facilities. To enhance the user experience, fitness centres and studios can be complemented with other indoor recreation facility components such as a walking track, gymnasium, and/or indoor pool.

Full Service Fitness Clubs/Centres provide cardio and weight training equipment, fitness studios, certified fitness staff, personal trainers, and more. Municipal fitness clubs provide members with a high quality services that can rival private-sector fitness clubs, although competition in this sector is fierce given that the fitness services industry is robust and can often expend greater resources to provide an enhanced level of service to its members. Full-service fitness clubs are commonly provided by a number of municipalities in Durham Region as well as in other areas of the G.T.A.

Entry-Level Fitness Centres offer users basic or a limited range of fitness equipment for members that are seeking an affordable alternative to private sector fitness clubs.

Fitness Studios are commonly offered by municipalities as they are low cost and are easily integrated within indoor recreation facilities. These spaces can be programmed for a variety of activities, including group fitness programs and dry-land training, and other non-active uses such as meetings and other gatherings.

According to recreation surveys across the Province, walking is typically identified as the most popular recreation pursuit given that it is a self-structured activity that residents can engage in at ones' leisure. This is one reason, among many, that has resulted in the growing popularity of indoor walking tracks as they offer several benefits such as year-round training for sport organizations and providing a safe and controlled environment for walking. Canada's varied climate conditions provides further support for walking tracks within community centres. Intangible benefits are also achieved as walking tracks promotes physical health and activity as well as being attractive for older adults/seniors and caregivers (with strollers) during the winter months. Indoor tracks may also support training regimens for sports groups; however, they are generally not designed for competitive running/training purposes.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey reported that 52% of households participated in fitness programs or classes in the past 12 months, which was the third most popular activity. Approximately one-third (32%) of respondents reported participating in weight-training during the same time period. When respondents were asked what new or expanded recreation programs should be provided in Pickering, additional fitness and yoga classes was frequently mentioned. Two out of three households supported investment in upgrading or building new fitness centres, which ranked seventh out of 24 facility types, suggesting that this may be a priority among respondents.

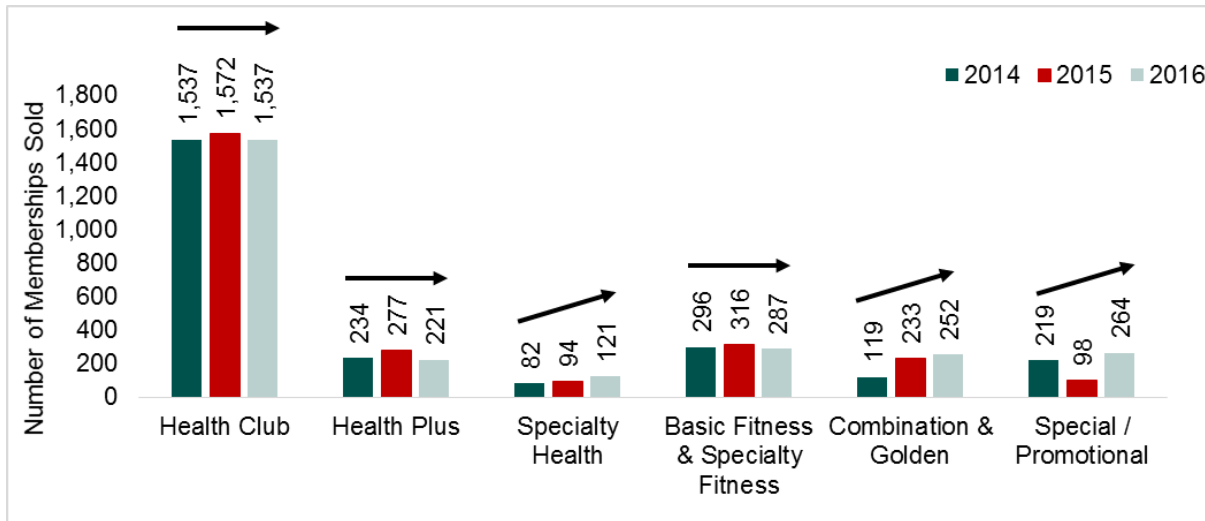
Usage Profile

The City's offers a membership system that residents may purchase to access an unlimited number of fitness programs and services, including cardio workouts, Zumba, yoga, pilates, stretching and strength training, cycling, and more. Different membership packages are available

for residents seeking basic, specialty, or premium fitness activities. Figure 12 contains a summary of membership packages sold over the past three years.

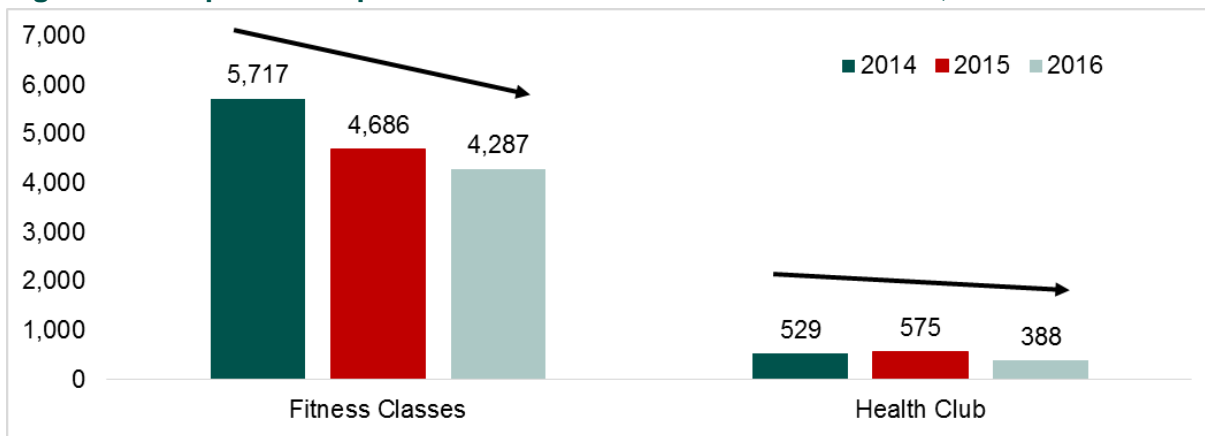
Non-members may drop-in to access the fitness centre or to participate in a fitness class on a pay-as-you-go basis. The number of drop-in participants is contained in Figure 13 and indicates decreasing participation in both fitness classes and the fitness centre on a drop-in basis. Discussions with City staff suggest that the decline in drop-in participants may be due to the fact that some users may have elected to purchase a fitness membership, particularly given that the cost of a fitness membership is equal to the cost of a few drop-in programs.

Figure 12: Fitness Memberships Sold, 2014 – 2016



Source: City of Pickering.

Figure 13: Drop-in Participation in Fitness Classes and Health Club, 2014 – 2016



Source: City of Pickering.

Aside from Health Club memberships, the City offers registered active fitness programs, which are general recreation activities aimed at promoting and encouraging physical activity levels through programs such as gymnasium and outdoor field sports, karate, yoga, Zumba and more. Due to the variety of active fitness programs that are offered, these activities take place in a number of Pickering’s indoor and outdoor facilities. Participation in these programs is

summarized in Table 24. Over the past three years, the fill rate increased by 13% from 64% in 2014 to 77% in 2016 due to a 32% increase in the number of registrants. Programming capacity also increased to ensure program variability and/or availability.

Table 24: Participation in Registered Active Fitness Programs, 2014 – 2016

	2014		2015		2016	
	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate	Registration	Fill Rate
Active Fitness	1,792	64%	2,196	69%	2,358	77%

Includes fitness programs for age groups. Source: City of Pickering.

Needs Assessment

Fitness Centres

Pickering has done an excellent job in facilitating health and wellness opportunities through the operation of its fitness spaces, which is evidenced by growing participation levels as well as requests for more municipal fitness opportunities. While it is clear that there is competition in the fitness market from the private sector, the City has made a conscious decision to compete directly in this industry. In order to remain competitive in the marketplace, the City invests approximately \$45,000 each year to replace fitness equipment to ensure that its members continue to have a high quality experience.

Given the success and longevity of the full-service fitness centre at the Pickering Recreation Complex, together with the City’s commitment in promoting and facilitating health and wellness opportunities for its residents, the provision of a second fitness centre is recommended as a part of the future multi-use recreation facility in Seaton. A fitness centre is a natural complement with an arena, indoor pool, and gymnasium components that are being recommended for the new multi-use recreation facility. A group fitness studio(s) should also be considered to round out program delivery. A range of supporting amenities should be considered to ensure users have a high quality experience. This will include, but not be limited to, consideration of flooring types, mirror walls, drinking fountain station, and storage space. Opportunities to integrate digital media systems and the latest technologies to enhance the health and wellness experience for users should also be contemplated, including the infrastructure space required to adapt to new technologies.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Many municipalities have been integrating outdoor fitness equipment within parks, which is a growing trend throughout North America. While outdoor fitness equipment has existed in Europe and parts of the United States, Canadian municipalities have recently begun introducing outdoor fitness equipment within parks that are designed to withstand extreme weather conditions. Regionally, municipalities such as Oshawa and Whitby have integrated outdoor fitness equipment within parks to offer no cost outdoor fitness activities and to engage people in the public realm. The provision of outdoor fitness equipment is more affordable to provide compared to traditional indoor equipment-based fitness centres. Recognizing these benefits, it is recommended that the City integrate outdoor fitness equipment at existing or future parks. Potential locations that should be considered include parks with other complementary active recreation facilities, along walking trails and/or the waterfront, and in neighbourhoods with concentrations of lower income households and/or older adults.

Indoor Walking Tracks

Many modern recreation facilities incorporate a walking track in some shape or fashion. The most common forms of provision is an elevated walking track encircling an arena or gymnasium, or one that is integrated with circulation areas (e.g., walkways, fitness centres, etc.). These tracks are generally two to four lanes wide and are composed of rubber surfacing; the length varies by design. While indoor walking tracks generally do not generate revenue, some municipalities may impose a nominal fee for their use. In municipalities that offer indoor walking tracks, a steady volume of use is viewed as an achievement in of promoting physical activity, while increasing the foot traffic of a community as a whole.

With two new multi-use community centres in Seaton and in Pickering's City Centre having been advanced through this Master Plan, there is merit in incorporating an indoor walking track within the design of each. Ideally, an elevated walking track should be positioned over a gymnasium, though for the Seaton facility the option also exists to integrate the walking track within the arena or as part of the fitness centre. Outdoor running tracks are discussed in Section 5.22.

Recommendations – Fitness Centres, Spaces, and Walking Tracks

17. Construct a fitness centre as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. A group fitness studio(s) should be included to support the delivery of health and wellness programming. Supporting amenities should be considered including, but not limited to, flooring types, mirror walls, drinking fountain stations, storage space, and opportunities to integrate digital media systems and the latest technologies to enhance the health and wellness experience for users (including the provision of infrastructure space).
18. Integrate outdoor fitness equipment in existing or future parks. Potential locations include active parks, along trail routes and/or the waterfront, and in neighbourhoods with concentrations of lower income households and/or older adults.
19. Incorporate an indoor walking track as a part of the proposed multi-use recreation facility in Seaton and at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering.

5.7 Dedicated Children and Youth Space

Supply

Pickering offers two dedicated youth centres, located at the East Shore Community Centre and the George Ashe Library and Community Centre. These spaces are programed specifically for children between age 6 and 12 and youth between 13 and 19, providing a place for them to drop-in to participate in a number of activities, do homework and/or socialize in a safe setting.

Table 25: Service Level Comparison, Dedicated Children and Youth Space

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 5-19)	Youth Spaces	Service Level
Pickering	17,000	2	1 : 8,700
Ajax	27,000	3	1 : 8,900
Aurora	12,000	1	1 : 11,700
Oshawa	28,000	2	1 : 14,000
Whitby	29,000	2	1 : 14,700
Richmond Hill	38,000	1	1 : 38,100
St. Catharines	20,000	-	n/a
Average	24,000	2	1 : 16,000
Median	27,000	2	1 : 12,800

The two dedicated children and youth spaces in Pickering result in a service level of one space for per 8,700 children and youth between the age of 5 and 19.

Market Trends

The provision of dedicated children and youth space offers several benefits. These age groups have specific needs and desires, resulting in the need to ensure that dedicated spaces are flexibly designed to accommodate a broad spectrum of interests. Research shows a growing preference for unorganized and self-structured activities, prompting the emergence of casual drop-in spaces that allow users to engage in their desired activities on their own schedule. These spaces can function as a safe environment to facilitate positive reinforcement to combat concerns surrounding mental and physical health among youth.

With approximately 17,000 children and youth in Pickering, the Master Plan estimates that this segment of the population could reach nearly 25,000 by 2026.¹⁶ This level of growth emphasizes the need to ensure that these age groups are appropriately engaged, while recognizing that the interests of children are very different compared to youth. In addition to the City's dedicated children and youth spaces, drop-in programs and activities are offered at other municipal recreation facilities and schools ensuring that access to programs is available at a variety of locations. Pickering has also made efforts to encourage youth participation by removing financial costs through the "Free Teen" program, which provides youth with no-cost municipal recreation drop-in programs including squash, shinny, basketball, breakdancing, sewing, swimming, and more. Over the past three years, between 3,000 and 4,000 youth participated in the programs.

¹⁶ Estimated by the consultants through applying the proportion of children and youth (age 5-19) reported in the 2016 Census (18%) to the 2026 population forecast contained in the City of Pickering's Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast (2016), and rounded to the nearest 1,000 persons.

In recognition for Pickering's commitment to maximizing opportunities for youth to get involved in recreation activities, as well as in other community sectors such as volunteerism and civic engagement, the City was recognized as a platinum-level Youth Friendly Community in 2017. The youth friendly designation was awarded to the City by Play Works, an organization that acknowledges communities to ensure that municipalities provide an enhanced level of access to opportunities to play.¹⁷

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey reported moderate participation levels for youth-oriented activities, although not all activities take place within dedicated youth space. In the past 12 months, 20% of households participated in basketball and 16% participated in organized teen programs. 67% of respondents supporting additional investment for the provision of improved or new dedicated children/youth space, ranking sixth out of 24 facilities.

Needs Assessment

Pickering is committed to engaging youth through registered and drop-in recreation opportunities, which is evidenced through the City's successful Free Teen Program and platinum designation as a Youth Friendly Community. The consultation process revealed that the need for drop-in children and youth spaces is a high priority, suggesting that residents recognize the importance of these spaces in ensuring the healthy development of local youth.

There are no specific service targets for the development of dedicated youth space as the need for these spaces are generally based on the ability to be co-located with other complementary facilities to leverage potential cross-programming opportunities, and complement available services that are offered in the area. With this in mind, dedicated children and youth space would be ideally suited at a future indoor recreation facility in Seaton to serve residents in this community, particularly as it is anticipated that this area of Pickering will be home to a number of young families.

With respect to existing spaces, the youth space at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre is in good condition and with limited input on opportunities for improvements, this space is anticipated to be sufficient to serve children and youth during the planning period. While the youth space at the East Shore Community Centre is functional, the City has outgrown this space and a replacement is needed as the facility is nearly 70 years old.



George Ashe Library and Community Centre

¹⁷ Playworks. Youth Friendly Communities. Retrieved from <http://playworkspartnership.ca>

This Master Plan fully supports the City of Pickering's intention to replace the East Shore Community Centre with a new Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in the City Centre. This planned new facility is envisioned to contain a dedicated space for children and youth that offers amenities including a lounge, computer room, multi-media room, general activity room, and access to other spaces within the facility (e.g., gymnasium). Together with the proposed children and youth centre in Seaton, these facilities will support Pickering's efforts to remain a "platinum" level Youth Friendly Community. Continued consultation with children and youth is encouraged to identify and confirm space requirements for these new facilities.

Recommendations – Dedicated Children and Youth Space

20. A dedicated children and youth centre should be included as a part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. The provision of a new children and youth space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering is also supported by this Master Plan. The integration of dedicated children and youth space should include various space arrangements depending on the intended use and function such as a lounge, games room, multi-media room, general activity space, and shared kitchen. Further consultation with children and youth is encouraged to identify and confirm space requirements.

5.8 Older Adult Space

Supply

Pickering has three older adult spaces that are used by individual community groups.

The Rouge Hill Seniors' Club is located at the **George Ashe Library and Community Centre**. The Club has 148 members and holds a number of social activities and programs throughout the week including darts, carpet bowling, billiards, board games, cards, fitness, presentations, and more.

The South Pickering Seniors' Club has over 1,000 members and is located at the **East Shore Community Centre**. This Club meets six days per week and engages a range of activities, including darts, shuffleboard, bingo, card games, and more.

The Claremont Seniors' Club is located at the **Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre**. With 40 members, the Club meets twice a week and participates in various social activities including cards, games, pot lucks, and day trips.

In addition to Pickering's dedicated older adult spaces, there are a number of other older adult and seniors' social groups that gather at Pickering's municipal facilities. The City also offers a range of registered and drop-in sports and programs for older adults and seniors at various parks and community centres across Pickering.

Considering Pickering’s older adult community, the City’s supply of older adult spaces yields a service level of one older adult space per 9,300 older adults (age 55+), which is the highest level of service among the benchmarks. Similar to youth spaces, these findings should be interpreted with caution given that municipalities often offer older adult services outside of these dedicated spaces.

Market Trends

Approximately 28,000 older adults (age 55+) currently reside in Pickering and by 2026, it is estimated that these age groups will grow to approximately 40,000¹⁸, representing an increase of nearly one-half. Aging trends suggest that older adults will be the fastest growing age cohort over the next decade, which is being driven by the aging baby boomer generation. Research suggests they are wealthier and more physically active compared to past generations. As a result, there is a shift away from traditional older adult programs towards activities that focus on active recreation, health and wellness, active living, and education opportunities, although a balanced program offering is necessary to ensure that there is something for all interests and abilities.

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey found that 15% of households participated in organized seniors’ programs in the past 12 months; however, the survey reported higher participation levels for other activities that may interest older adults and seniors including gardening (71%) and golf (34%). 3% of households played pickleball, which is a sport generally attractive to older adults. The provision of dedicated older adult space ranked fourth in support for additional investment, suggesting that older adult space is a high priority for residents.

Stakeholder group surveys were submitted by the Rouge Hill Seniors’ Club and the South Pickering Seniors’ Club, and each identified potential improvements to the respective facilities that they utilize. The Rouge Hill Seniors’ Club expressed the desire for additional storage space, display space and use of a dedicated office at the George Ashe Library and Community Centre. The South Pickering Seniors’ Club requested access to more space at the East Shore Community Centre to continue providing popular programs and activities.

Table 26: Service Level Comparison, Dedicated Older Adult Space

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 55+)	Older Adult Spaces	Service Level
Pickering	28,000	3	1 : 9,300
Richmond Hill	55,000	5	1 : 11,000
Oshawa	50,000	4	1 : 12,500
Ajax	30,000	2	1 : 15,000
Aurora	15,000	1	1 : 15,000
St. Catharines	48,000	3	1 : 16,000
Whitby	34,000	1	1 : 34,000
Average	37,000	3	1 : 16,100
Median	34,000	3	1 : 15,000

¹⁸ Estimated by the consultants through applying the proportion of older adults and seniors (age 55+) reported in the 2016 Census (29%) to the 2026 population forecast contained in the City of Pickering’s Detailed 20 Year Population Forecast (2016), and rounded to the nearest 1,000 persons.

Needs Assessment

This Master Plan fully supports the City of Pickering's intention to replace the East Shore Community Centre with a new Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in the City Centre. Demographics in mature neighbourhoods within and in surrounding the City Centre are indicative of aging trends, while the new community centre's centralized location and proximity to transit corridors should increase its accessibility to a larger market of seniors. Being close to the Central Library will also be a strong benefit and could result in synergies that benefit both the Library and the seniors space. While the seniors' space at the East Shore Community Centre is still functional, a replacement is needed as the facility at the end of its lifespan and has a number of constraints (e.g., accessibility, parking, etc.) that limit the community centre to grow its seniors programming.



Seniors Room at the East Shore Community Centre

This planned new facility is envisioned to contain a dedicated space for older adults that offers amenities including a games room and lounge, computer room, and general purpose activity room. Older adults will also have access to the other components that are proposed to be located at the new facility such as multi-purpose rooms, and gymnasium. These components will allow the City to provide flexible community space that can respond to the diverse active and passive interests of older adults. Consultation with the South Pickering Seniors' Club, other older adult service providers and the general public is recommended to identify and confirm space requirements for the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and to explore how best to transition members to the new seniors space.

For the proposed multi-use community centre in Seaton, selected multi-purpose meeting and program rooms should be designed in a manner that allows their conversion to dedicated older adult space if deemed to be required in that community after this current master planning horizon elapses in 2026. It would be premature to recommend a dedicated older adult space at present time given that a cursory review of draft plans of subdivisions and land use schedules would appear to attract younger adults and families to a greater extent than older adults (based on observations in greenfield developments across the GTA). Until the City has a better understanding of the demographic mix of Seaton based on uptake of housing, it is better for the City to deliver 55+ programs out of intergenerational spaces such as the proposed pool, gymnasium, fitness centre and multi-purpose rooms. As the Seaton community develops, the City should monitor requests and re-evaluate the need for dedicated older adult space in order to inform an update to this Master Plan's assessments.

Recommendations – Dedicated Older Adult Space

21. This Master Plan supports the provision of a new older adult space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering. The provision of space should include, but not limited to, a games room and lounge, computer room, and activity room. Consultation with the public is recommended to identify and confirm facility space requirements.
22. While the integration of dedicated older adult space at the proposed multi-use community centre in Seaton is not recommended at this time, the facility's meeting and/or program rooms should be designed with the potential to be converted to older adult space, should it be required in the future. The City should monitor requests and re-evaluate the need for dedicated older adult space during the next Master Plan period.

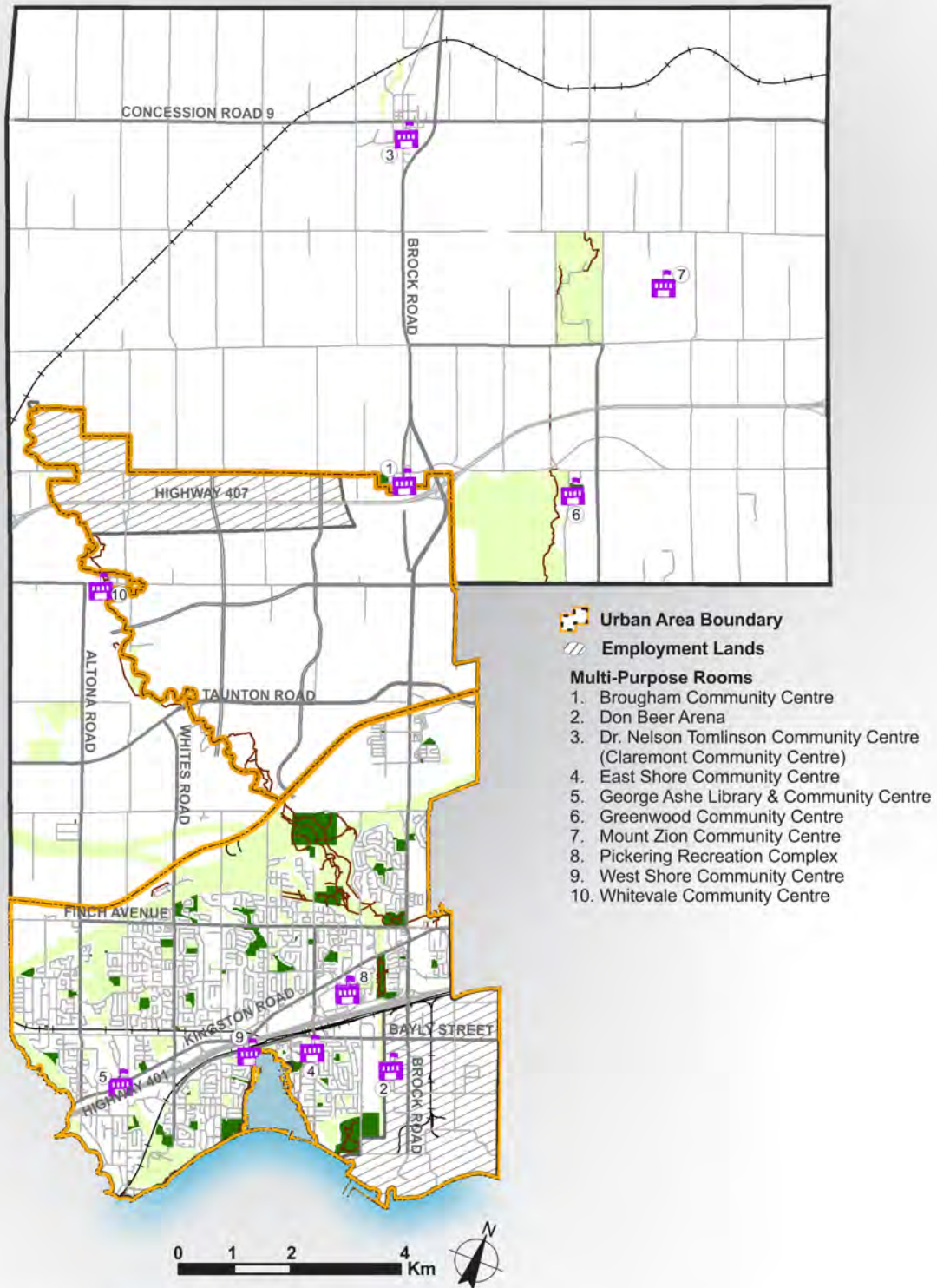
5.9 Multi-Purpose Rooms

Supply

Pickering has 14 multi-purpose rooms. This includes nine rooms at three community centre locations that can be used for rentals, municipal programs, meetings, social gatherings, and more. These rooms can accommodate more up to 120 occupants and feature amenities such as a kitchen or kitchenette, bar area, audio-visual equipment, tables and seating, storage, and speaking podium, although not all amenities are available in each room. For uses that require even larger spaces, Pickering offers five banquet-style rooms that can accommodate more than 150 occupants.

In addition to these multi-purpose rooms, there are five small community centres found in Pickering's northern hamlets. These community spaces are owned and maintained by the City, while day-to-day operations and permitting is undertaken by individual community groups. The supply of multi-purpose rooms are summarized in Table 27 and is illustrated in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Distribution of Multi-Purpose Rooms



Data provided by the City of Pickering

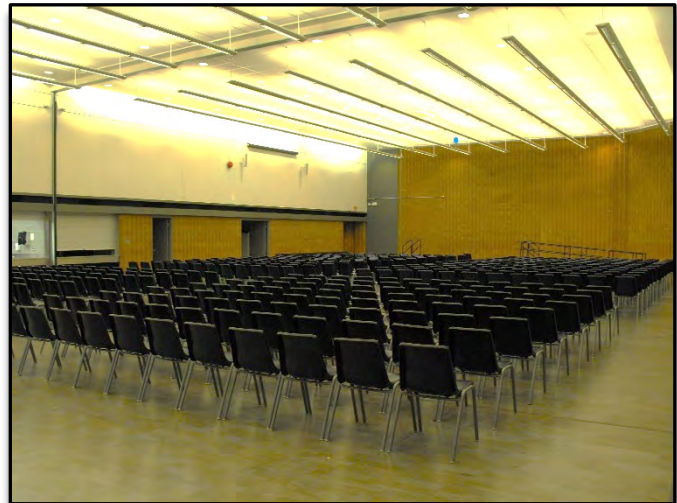
Table 27: City of Pickering Multi-Purpose Rooms

Multi-Purpose Rooms	Large Multi-Purpose Rooms
East Shore Community Centre (2) George Ashe Library and Community Centre (2) Pickering Recreation Complex (5)	Don Beer Arena East Shore Community Centre Pickering Recreation Complex (2) West Shore Community Centre
Other Community Centres Operated by Community Partners	
Brougham Community Centre Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre Greenwood Community Centre	Mount Zion Community Centre Whitevale Community Centre

Pickering’s supply of multi-purpose rooms achieves a service level of one community space per 6,900 residents. A comparison of service levels with benchmarked municipalities was not conducted given that these spaces are constructed based on the ability to be incorporated as a part of new facility construction and the need to offer support spaces to support programming, rentals, and ancillary needs. As a result, the number of community spaces vary in each community and a comparison of service levels would not yield any meaningful findings.

Market Trends

Historically, stand-alone community spaces were constructed as small single-purpose facilities or halls generally for passive activities (such as social gatherings and meetings). The construction of stand-alone program spaces is not considered a best practice in current facility planning and design due to a number of factors such a programming limitations, operational costs, and other variables. Multi-purpose rooms are frequently incorporated in new multi-use facility construction as they facilitate cross programming opportunities, while achieving economies of scale in facility construction and efficiencies in maintenance / management.



Pickering Recreation Complex Banquet Hall

Community Engagement

With respect to multi-purpose rooms, the household telephone survey found that there was generally moderate levels of usage. In the past 12 months, 23% of households participated in children’s’ programs, 16% participated in teen programs, and 15% engaged in organized seniors’ programs. A total of 48% of households supported additional investment in community halls, which ranked 17th out of 24 facility types, suggesting that this is not a high priority for Pickering households.

A number of stakeholder surveys were submitted by user groups that utilize Pickering’s multi-purpose and meeting spaces for a variety of social activities and events. Specific spaces mentioned included those located at the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre, East Shore Community Centre, Pickering Recreation Complex, George Ashe Library and Community Centre, and Whitevale Community Centre. Suggested improvements included updating washrooms and kitchens, enlarging parking space, undertaking accessibility retrofits, expanding facilities to provide additional meeting space, more storage space, and other ancillary amenities (e.g., display space).

Usage Profile

Usage data provided by the City reveals that over the past three years, utilization of Pickering’s community spaces varied between 22% and 80%. This usage profile is typical of community spaces found in other municipalities as they are generally not high demand space.

Given that Pickering’s standalone hamlet community centres are managed and operated by local community organizations, utilization data is not readily available. City staff indicate that these spaces have relatively low levels of utilization as these facilities are not programmed and are primarily used for local rentals.

Table 28: Summary of Community Space Utilization by Location, 2014 – 2016

	Multi-Purpose Rooms			Large Multi-Purpose Rooms		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Don Beer Arena	-	-	-	37%	41%	55%
East Shore Community Centre	33%	33%	39%	56%	53%	50%
George Ashe Library and Community Centre	56%	46%	52%	-	-	-
Pickering Recreation Complex	66%	77%	70%	31%	41%	40%
West Shore Community Centre	-	-	-	72%	78%	80%

Source: City of Pickering. Usage for non-municipally operated community centres not available.

Needs Assessment

While there is available capacity at Pickering’s multi-purpose rooms, the provision of these spaces should be considered as a part of new recreation facilities to offer convenient and affordable multi-use space within a multi-use facility. The City’s vision for the Seniors’ and Youth Community Centre, contains one multi-purpose room suitable for meetings and small gatherings as well as two large multi-purpose rooms that can be partitioned into smaller spaces. This is an excellent example of providing ancillary spaces within a new multi-use recreation facility to accommodate cross-programming opportunities and is supported by this Master Plan. Similar multi-purpose rooms should be integrated within the proposed multi-use indoor recreation facility in Seaton. These spaces should be designed with flexibility in mind to support a variety of uses and to be converted to other uses (if required). Supporting amenities that should be considered for all community spaces include storage, sinks, kitchen, durable flooring surfaces, and more.

It is recognized that the City's existing single use community centres are valuable municipal facilities as they are rural focal points that function as public gathering spaces. As previously indicated, the provision of these facilities require a coordinated approach between the City and its community groups, which has fostered a positive relationship between parties and allowed groups to establish a sense of ownership with the facilities that they operate. It is understood that the City previously explored the long-term strategy for its stand-alone facilities, which articulated that the community groups do not have sufficient resources to operate and maintain the facilities on their own capacity. As a result, it is expected that this operating model will continue over the planning period.

Recommendations – Multi-Purpose Rooms

23. Multi-purpose rooms should be integrated at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. These spaces should be flexibly designed to accommodate a broad range of programming opportunities that respond to community needs and to be converted to other facility uses (if required). Supporting facility amenities may include, but not be limited to, partition walls, storage, sinks, kitchen, and other ancillaries staff deem necessary.

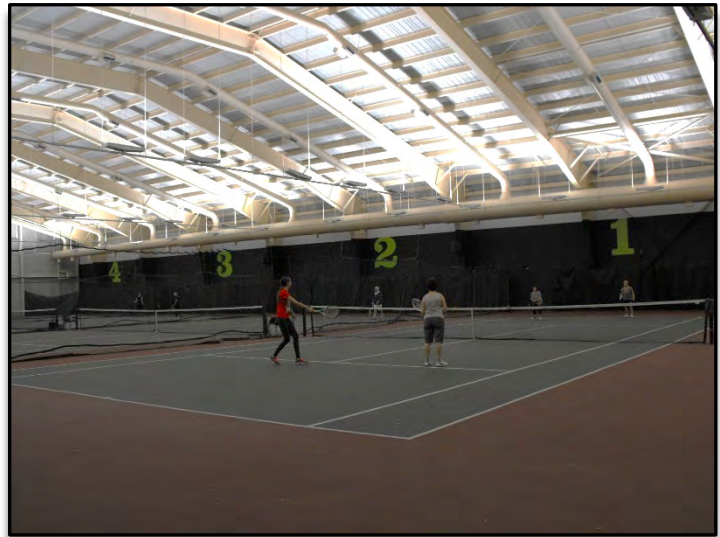
5.10 Indoor Racquet Sport Courts

Supply

The City offers indoor racquet sport courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex consisting of the following:

- 2 racquetball courts (also used for handball);
- 8 squash courts (including 6 single courts and 2 doubles courts); and
- 4 indoor tennis courts

In addition to these indoor hard surface courts, a number of indoor spaces are utilized for pickleball (although they are not permanent courts) at the East Shore Community Centre, George Ashe Library & Community Centre, and St. Marys High School.



Indoor Tennis Courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex

Pickering provides the greatest number of indoor hard surface courts compared to benchmarked municipalities and as a result, the City boasts the highest service level for indoor tennis courts at one per 24,000 residents and indoor racquet courts at one per 9,600 residents. Private-sector

indoor court providers and clubs are excluded in this comparison, although it is recognized that they exist in some municipalities.

Table 29: Service Level Comparison, Indoor Racquet Sport Courts

Municipality	Population Estimate	Indoor Tennis Courts	Service Level	Indoor Racquet Courts	Service Level
Pickering	96,000	4	1 : 24,000	10	1 : 9,600
Aurora	57,000	-	n/a	4	1 : 14,200
Ajax	128,000	4	1 : 32,000	5	1 : 25,600
Oshawa	165,000	4	1 : 41,200	4	1 : 41,200
Richmond Hill	198,000	-	n/a	-	n/a
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a	-	n/a
Whitby	138,000	-	n/a	-	n/a
Average	131,000	4	1 : 32,400	6	1 : 28,700
Median	135,000	4	1 : 32,000	5	1 : 19,900

Note: Excludes private-sector providers and clubs.

Market Trends

The sport of squash flourished in the G.T.A. between 1970 and the mid-1990s after which growth stagnated. A report published by Squash Ontario reveals that participation in the sport has been in decline since 2010.¹⁹ Similarly, racquetball was once a popular sport in the 1980s but its popularity has waned. While these sports are most commonly played by adults, there are some private and commercial clubs with well-established junior programs as well as varsity-level clubs. Few municipalities provide squash and racquetball courts due the limited playing market of the sport though most municipalities in south Durham offer the service.

As a result of declining participation in the sport, the City of Richmond (British Columbia) recently explored options to repurpose an existing racquetball court in favour for more fitness space. Through working with the City's racquetball playing community, a compromise was reached and the City installed a movable wall to accommodate both racquetball and fitness activities.²⁰

Participation in tennis is experiencing a slight resurgence after a period of decline (discussed in greater detail in Section 5.16). Indoor tennis is largely played by those seeking club-type experiences with programs, house leagues, clinics, etc. along with those looking to train in the sport year round. Accordingly, indoor tennis courts have long been dominated by private sector racquet clubs, though a few municipalities in the G.T.A. such as Pickering have chosen to provide indoor courts including Oshawa, Ajax and Brampton. Other municipalities such as Aurora have formed partnerships with third party operators to deliver indoor tennis to the community.

¹⁹ Squash Ontario. 2015 State of the sport – a comprehensive report on recreation and leisure trends in Canada including the sport of squash. Retrieved from <https://squarespace.com>

²⁰ City of Richmond. Staff Report 11-7125-01/2016-Vol 01. South Arm Community Centre Upgrades. Retrieved from <https://www.richmond.ca>

Community Engagement

Feedback received regarding indoor racquet courts was largely relegated to the Public Input Session where some attendees expressed a desire to keep the two racquetball courts. The household telephone survey found that in the past 12 months, 3% and 2% of residents played squash and racquetball, respectively, which were among the least played sports in Pickering. Over one-third (36%) of residents supported spending additional funds on squash and racquetball courts, ranking 20th and 21st out of 24 facility types. As the household telephone survey is representative of the entire City, the input received through the consultation process suggests that squash and racquetball are not high priorities for City residents.

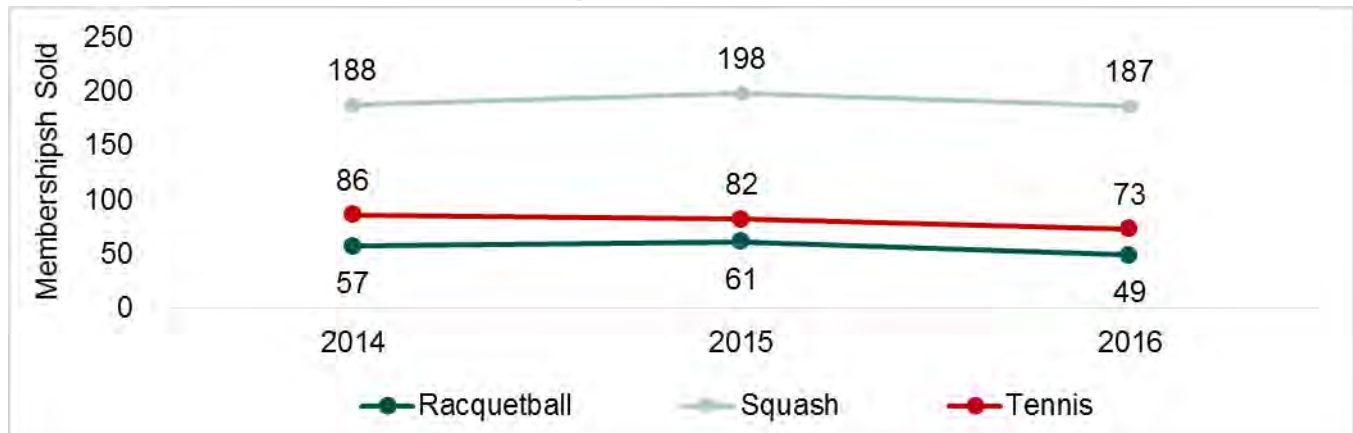
A stakeholder group survey was submitted by the Pickering Squash Club, which regularly uses the squash courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex and offered a number of suggestions to improve the facilities including, but not limited to, renovating dressing rooms and showers, providing a members lounge, towel service, and undertaking repairs to Court #5. In addition, the Club requested municipal assistance in promoting the sport in order to attract new members.

A stakeholder survey was also submitted by the 1st Pickering Pickleball Club. The Club currently plays at the Pickering Village United Church in Ajax and while the Club has grown to 75 members since its inception, non-members are also welcomed to play. The Club does not play in Pickering as there are no dedicated pickleball courts. As a result, the Club has requested the development of four pickleball courts at a single location.

Usage Profile

Memberships are available to those seeking regular access to the indoor racquet courts. Each membership provides users with unlimited access to the hard surface courts and benefits including discounts on supporting services (e.g., child supervision) and access to restricted fitness areas. Non-members may also purchase court time on a pay-as-you-go basis. Data provided by the City indicates that over the past three years, membership purchases for racquetball and indoor tennis have declined, while squash memberships have remained stable. It should be noted that some of these members are non-residents. As a result, the number of local resident members is lower.

Table 30: Hard Surface Court Memberships Sold, 2014 – 2016



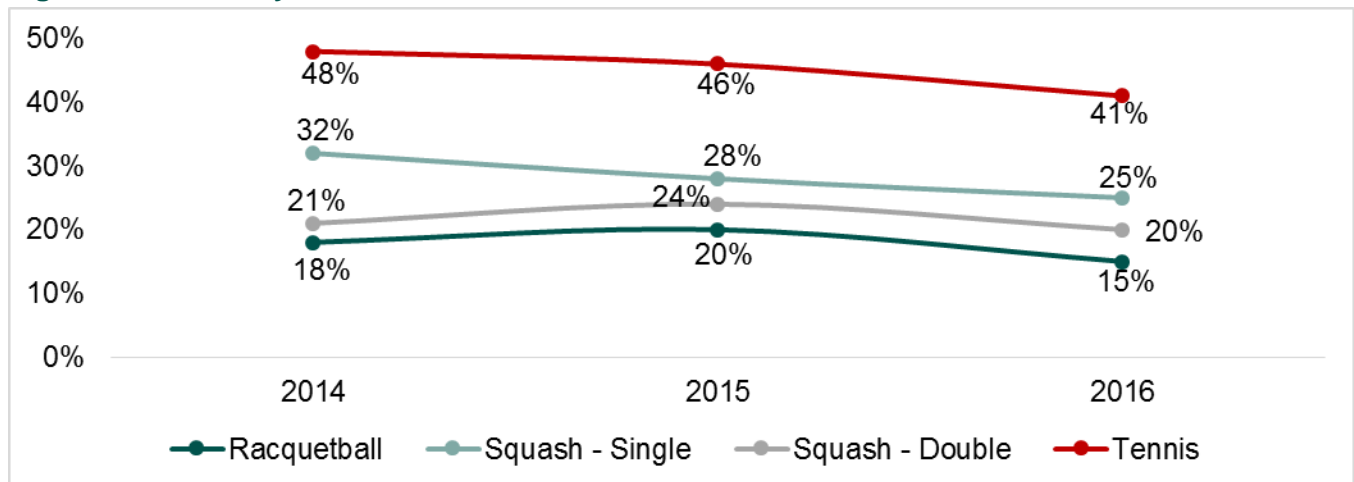
Source: City of Pickering. Includes Basic and Plus Memberships only. Golden Memberships are excluded.

Utilization of Pickering’s indoor racquet courts during prime-time hours are illustrated in Figure 15, which includes membership and pay-as-you-go usage. This figure illustrates that usage of indoor hard surface courts have declined between 2014 and 2016, which reflect the membership trends previously described. City staff indicate that these usage trends have continued in 2017, indicating that there has been no dramatic improvements in how these spaces are used. The majority of hard surface court usage is from members participating in programs and league play. The following trends were noted for each hard surface court type:

- Tennis courts were the most used indoor hard surface court type. Between 2014 and 2016, utilization declined 7% from 48% to 41%.
- Single squash courts declined 7% from 32% to 25% over the past three years.
- Utilization of double squash courts generally remained unchanged from 2014 to 2016 (20%).
- Racquetball courts were the least used hard surface court type, with utilization declining from 18% to 15% over the past three years (including handball usage).

Indoor racquet court usage during non-prime time hours (during the day) are lower compared to prime time hours, which is expected. Indoor tennis courts had the highest level of non-prime time usage at 26% for 2016, while squash and racquetball had 8% utilization, suggesting that there is ample unused capacity during the day.

Figure 15: Summary of Prime-Time Indoor Hard Surface Court Utilization, 2014 - 2017



Source: City of Pickering. Utilization includes membership and pay as you go usage.

Needs Assessment

Indoor Tennis Courts

A service target of one court per 75 to 100 regular tennis players is a general rule of thumb used to identify needs for club-format tennis courts. With 73 memberships for the indoor tennis courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex, the industry standard reinforces excess capacity evidenced through the 41% utilization rate. Projecting the current capture rate forward (less than

1% of residents between the age of 5 and 55) results in 108 indoor tennis members by the year 2026. This level of participation is sufficient to support two indoor tennis courts over the master planning period.

A surplus of indoor tennis courts and declining utilization levels may suggest that consideration should be given to scaling back the number of courts and explore alternative uses for this space. The Master Plan, however, did not identify any new in-demand indoor recreation facilities for this space. It may also be premature to recommend the removal of any indoor tennis courts given that Pickering's City Centre is poised for residential intensification during the planning period and beyond. In addition, south Pickering's population is aging and as trends suggest, there has been a resurgence in tennis as older adults are seeking more active recreation activities. These factors may potentially bolster tennis court usage in the future and as a result, it is recommended that the indoor tennis courts be retained during the planning period. The City should continue to monitor usage and investigate ways to enhance utilization. This may include strategies such as offering free or low-cost clinics/classes on a trial basis, or engaging outdoor tennis clubs to draw in usage during the winter season. Adding pickleball playing boundaries for up to two indoor tennis courts may also provide an opportunity to bolster facility utilization, while meeting the needs of pickleball players during the short term. Indoor tennis utilization and membership levels are presently such that the City would be remiss in not re-examining the case for a relining project.

Indoor Pickleball Courts

There is no generally-accepted service target for the provision of pickleball courts as the sport continues to grow in popularity and given that pickleball has not traditionally been a core level of service for municipalities. As a result, pickleball courts are primarily provided in response to market demand, membership/participation levels, opportunities to be integrated within existing municipalities, and capital and operating considerations. The City has been working with the 1st Pickering Pickleball Club to explore possible location to play indoor pickleball on a year-round basis. Several locations were considered including the Pickering Recreation Complex, Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre, and the East Shore Community Centre; each of these locations were deemed to be inappropriate for the Club due to various reasons.

With two new gymnasiums being recommended in South Pickering and Seaton, the City should ensure pickleball markings are included as part of floor lining – consistent with Recommendation #16 of the Master Plan – and in doing so will improve the geographic distribution of indoor play opportunities and would be complementary to the lining pickleball playing boundaries to the indoor tennis courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex (noted above).

During the summer months, pressures on gymnasiums tend to lessen and it is anticipated that a degree of pickleball play will transition outdoors to pickleball courts recently installed at Village East Park, as well to the outdoor pickleball courts proposed through the Master Plan in Recommendation #36.

Other Indoor Racquet Courts

The provision of squash and racquetball courts are based on qualitative factors such as corporate philosophy, market demand, participation/membership, and capital and operating considerations. Pickering is unique in providing eight squash and two racquet courts as there are few municipalities that have made investments to this scale due to the fact that these sports are generally served by private clubs. Squash and racquetball are also smaller in participation compared to other sports and data provided by the City indicated that membership is stable (or declining in the case for racquetball), which has translated into low utilization levels.

The City previously explored opportunities to remove one racquetball court in response to decreasing utilization but was met with opposition from members. Over the past few years, City staff have worked with racquetball and handball players to attract new users by promoting the sport, hosting clinics, and other initiatives. These efforts should be commended as it resulted in a slight increase in membership and usage levels in 2015; however, this growth was not sustained during the following year. Broader participation trends suggest that usage levels of racquetball courts will continue to be low. It is recognized that usage of squash courts has also declined during the same period; however, it has managed to maintain a higher utilization level compared to racquetball, which is supported by a stable membership base, league play, and organized programming that is led by a professional squash player. On this basis, it is recommended that one or more of the City's racquetball courts be repurposed to another use in order to enhance use of the space to benefit the broader community. The community engagement process did not yield a definitive use for this space, however, there are a number of strategies that should be explored such as reclaiming space to expand fitness programming, given that participation in active fitness programs have been grown by nearly one-third over the past three years.

Alternatively, the City may exercise more creative strategies to test new opportunities that are not traditionally provided by the municipal sector. The repurposed racquetball space(s) can be reinvented to offer a broad range of activities on a trial basis to gauge the public's interest. Providing new activities on a temporary basis also ensures that the City continue to provide fresh and existing activities to continue drawing in repeat or new users. Such activities that should be considered include virtual reality simulator (e.g., golf, digital fitness), rock-climbing wall, or another activity. Potential repurposing options should be guided by input from the public.



Indoor Squash Courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex

Recommendations – Indoor Racquet Sport Courts

24. Investigate strategies to enhance utilization of the indoor tennis courts such as offering free or low-cost clinics/programs on a temporary basis, engage outdoor tennis clubs to increase usage during the winter months, or other strategies identified by the City.
25. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball on the gymnasium floor at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre, the proposed multi-use facility in Seaton, and at the existing indoor tennis courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas with other court markings.
26. Repurpose a minimum of one racquetball court at the Pickering Recreation Complex for other uses such as additional group fitness space. Alternatively, creative strategies should be explored to offer non-traditional recreation activities on a temporary basis such as virtual reality simulators (e.g., golf, digital fitness), rock-climbing wall, or another activity. Potential repurposing options should be guided by input from the public.

5.11 Indoor Turf Facilities

Supply

The Pickering Indoor Soccer Centre is the City's sole indoor turf facility, which is provided in partnership between the City and the Pickering Soccer Club. The facility is owned by the City and it is operated independently by the Soccer Club. The facility offers a certified F.I.F.A. regulation soccer field that can be partitioned into smaller fields, a four lane running track, meeting rooms, and ancillary spaces.

Table 31: Service Level Comparison, Indoor Turf Facilities

Municipality	Population Estimate	Indoor Turf Facilities	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	1	1 : 57,000
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Whitby	138,000	1	1 : 138,000
Oshawa	165,000	1	1 : 165,000
Richmond Hill	198,000	1	1 : 198,000
Ajax	128,000	-	n/a
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	1	1 : 130,800
Median	135,000	1	1 : 138,000

Note: Includes municipally-owned and partnership facilities.
Excludes private-sector providers.

Pickering has a service level of one indoor turf facility per 96,000 residents, which is second highest after Aurora.

Market Trends

Complementing outdoor fields, municipalities including Pickering have developed indoor artificial turf facilities to provide enhanced recreation experiences and to respond to increasing demands for year-round play. While the primary use of artificial turf facilities is for soccer, the Pickering Indoor Soccer Centre can accommodate other field sports including rugby, lacrosse, football, mosh ball, training, and fitness pursuits.

Consultation

Consultation undertaken during the initial phase of the Master Plan did not yield any requests for indoor soccer fields, although the household telephone survey found that 13% of households participated in indoor soccer activities. The Pickering Soccer Club, who is the primary user of the facility indicated that there they have approximately 3,500 participants. These players are primarily associated with usage of outdoor fields, although the Club indicated that they generally accommodate a similar level of players through their indoor programs. The number of non-club participants that rent field time at the indoor turf facility is not quantified.

Usage Profile

The Pickering Indoor Soccer Centre is operated independently by the Pickering Soccer Club and as a result, utilization data is not readily available. Discussions with the Club indicated that the facility is used well as it accommodates various sports and community rentals (including schools) in addition to usage from the Club. With that said, the Club indicated that there is time available to accommodate additional usage, particularly during the day and weekends.

Needs Assessment

There is no generally accepted service level for the provision of indoor turf facilities. Some municipalities own and operate their own facilities; however, the most common approach to provision has been through partnerships between municipalities, non-profit sports associations and/or other public institutions (such as school boards). The partnership-based provision model is the one utilized in Pickering and the City has worked with the Pickering Soccer Club on this successful endeavor since the facility opened in 2015.

While the usage profile for the Pickering Soccer Centre is not available, it is understood that the facility is currently used well with opportunities to accommodate some additional usage. Through the group survey submitted by the Club, the desire for a second indoor turf facilities was not identified as the majority of the group's pressures focused on outdoor soccer fields. On this basis, it is anticipated that the existing indoor turf facility is sufficient to serve Pickering's indoor turf needs during the planning period.

Recommendations – Indoor Turf Facilities

27. Continue to monitor the demand for indoor turf facilities over the master planning period, including the collection of utilization data, to determine if/when a second facility is needed.

5.12 Soccer Fields

Supply

The City of Pickering's 41 soccer fields consists of one lit artificial turf field, four lit natural grass fields and 36 unlit grass fields (the latter of which includes permitted school fields). To account for extended playing capacity, lit artificial turf and lit natural turf fields are assumed to be equivalent to 2.0 and 1.5 unlit natural fields, respectively. As a result, Pickering has an effective supply of 44 unlit equivalent soccer fields. This supply excludes one lit artificial turf field and two natural grass fields at Beverley Morgan Park since they are primarily permitted for football (see Section 5.14).

Table 32: Service Level Comparison, Soccer Fields

Municipality	Population Estimate	Soccer Fields	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	37.5	1 : 1,500
Pickering	96,000	44	1 : 2,200
Oshawa	165,000	59.5	1 : 2,800
Whitby	138,000	47.5	1 : 2,900
St. Catharines	135,000	37	1 : 3,600
Ajax	128,000	34	1 : 3,800
Richmond Hill	198,000	41	1 : 4,800
Average	131,000	43	1 : 3,100
Median	135,000	41	1 : 2,900

Note: Unlit equivalents shown.

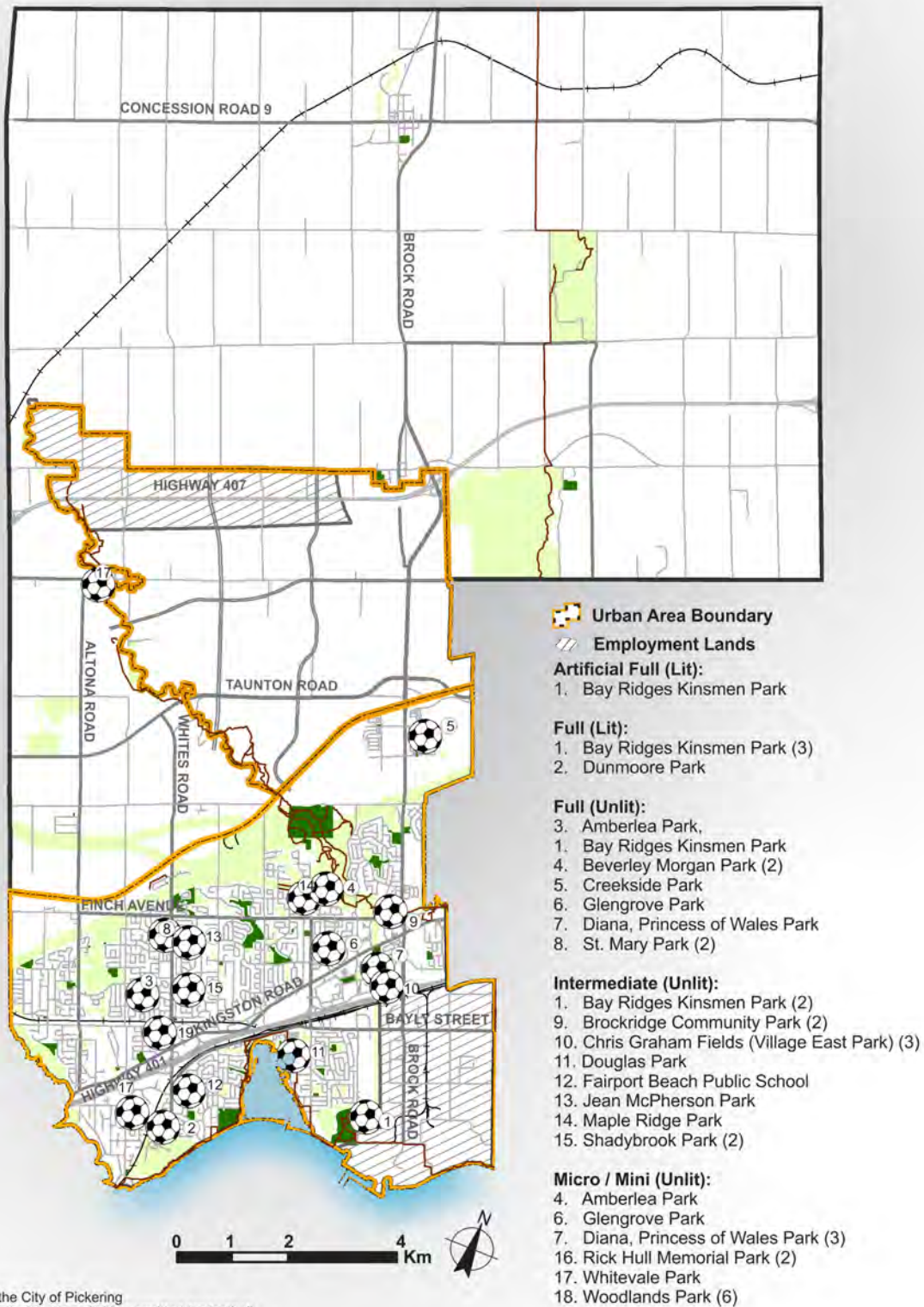
The City's soccer fields are categorized into full, intermediate, and micro/mini sizes. A summary of the supply can be found in Table 33 and the distribution is illustrated in Figure 16. The City's outdoor soccer fields are augmented by the Pickering Soccer Centre, an indoor soccer dome operated by the Pickering Soccer Club.

Pickering's soccer field supply yields a service level of one unlit equivalent soccer field per 2,300 residents, which is the second highest level of service after Aurora.



Shadybrook Park

Figure 16: Distribution of Soccer Fields



Data provided by the City of Pickering
Note: Excludes football fields or fields permitted for football.

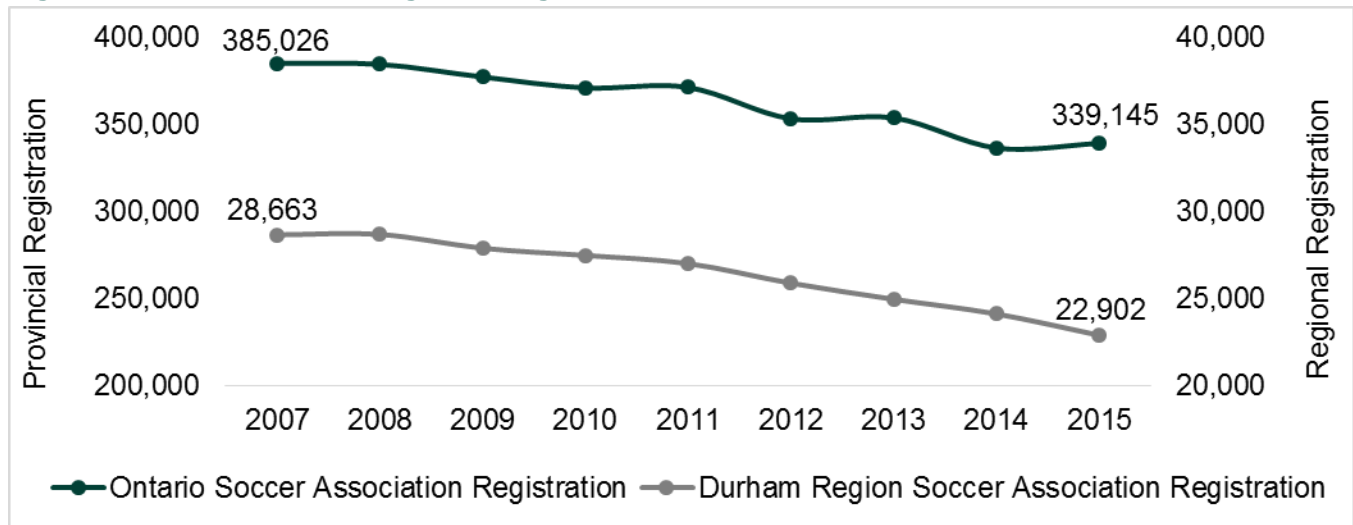
Table 33: City of Pickering Soccer Field Supply

Artificial Full Field			
Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park Turf			
Lit Full Field			
Dunmoore	Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #2	Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #3	Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #5
Unlit Full Field			
Amberlea Large Beverley Morgan SE Beverley Morgan NE	Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #4 Creekside	Glengrove Diana, Princess Adult St. Mary Park #1	St. Mary Park #2
Unlit Intermediate Field			
Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #1 Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park #6 Brockridge Community Park East Brockridge Community Park West	Chris Graham #1 (Village East Park) Chris Graham #2 (Village East Park)	Chris Graham #3 (Village East Park) Douglas Park Fairport Beach Public School	Jean McPherson Maple Ridge Shadybrook North Shadybrook South
Unlit Micro/Mini Field			
Amberlea Small Glengrove Small Diana, Princess #1	Diana, Princess #2 Diana, Princess #3 Rick Hull Memorial Park #1	Rick Hull Memorial Park #2 Whitevale Woodlands (D.H.S.) #1 Woodlands (D.H.S.) #2	Woodlands (D.H.S.) #3 Woodlands (D.H.S.) #4 Woodlands (D.H.S.) #5 Woodlands (D.H.S.) #6

Market Trends

The Ontario Soccer Association (O.S.A.) identifies that national soccer participation peaked in 2007 with 385,026 registered youth and adult participants and has slowly declined each year since. For 2015, the O.S.A. reported a total of 339,145 players, a decline of 12% from the 2007 peak. Similarly, registration figures reported by the Durham Region Soccer Association declined by 20% during the same period from 28,663 participants in 2007 to 22,902 participants in 2015 Figure 17. In Pickering, participation data indicates that there are 5,171 soccer registrants, which is an increase of 8% over the past three years.

Figure 17: Provincial and Regional Registration Trends in Outdoor Soccer



Source: Ontario Soccer Association Annual General Meeting Reports

The overall decline in participation may be due to a number of factors such as demographic trends and the emergence of soccer clubs and academies that are not affiliated with the O.S.A. which may not be accounted for in whole or in part. Despite declining participation trends reported by the O.S.A., soccer continues to be the most popular organized sport among Canadian youth. Coupling this trend with its worldwide appeal, high fitness quotient, and relatively low cost to participate, soccer fields are in demand in most municipalities although some decreasing usage is being reported.

Since the Ontario Soccer Association adopted the Long Term Player Development (L.T.P.D.) model, organizations have been evolving the delivery of their programs. With less emphasis on scoring and winning, L.T.P.D. focuses on improved coaching, fewer games, more ball time, and skill development. Several new standards were developed that are specific to each age group, which includes varying coaching styles, number of plays, playing time, field size, and other variables. Some of these new standards will have a direct impact on the provision of municipal soccer fields, particularly with respect to the standards in field size and the number of players, as reducing the number of players per team influences the demand for field time.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey found that one out of every four households played soccer in the past 12 months, making soccer the most popular organized activity though ranking 12th in overall participation when including unstructured activities. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of households supported additional investment in improving or providing new soccer fields, ranking ninth out of 24 facility types, and suggesting that soccer fields are a moderate priority among residents.

Soccer groups responding to the stakeholder group survey reported using a number of fields throughout the City including Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park, Diana, Princess of Wales Park, and Glengrove Park. Suggested enhancements to Pickering’s soccer fields included improving drainage, fencing around soccer fields, adequate parking, and storage space. Requests were made for appropriately-sized soccer fields to meet mandated O.S.A. requirements.

Usage Profile

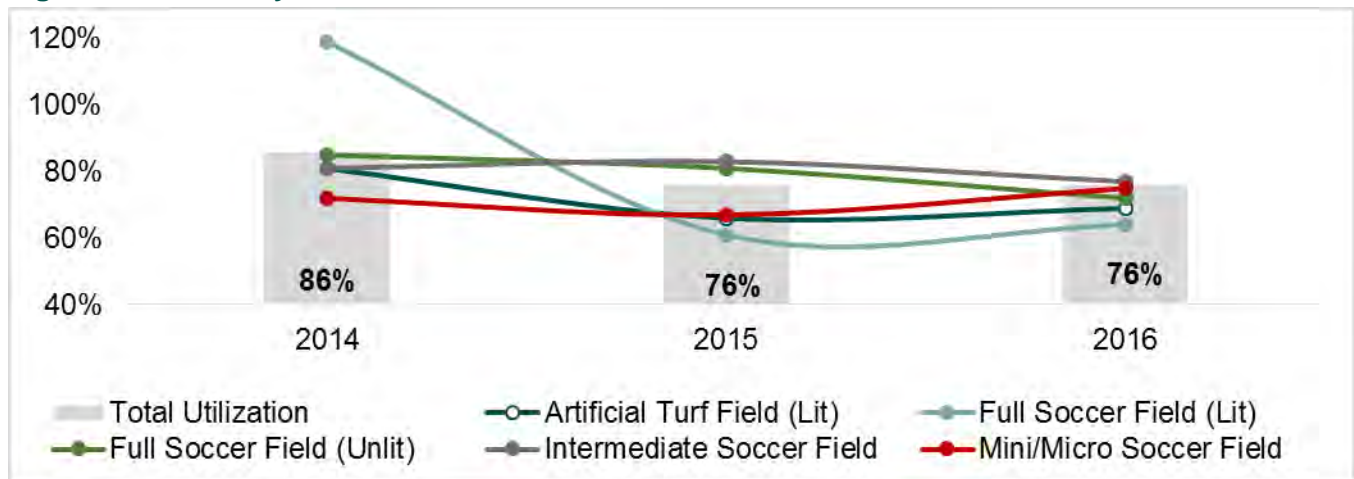
Pickering’s natural grass soccer fields are generally available for booking between mid-May and the end of September while artificial turf fields are available for rent from March to the end of October. The City does not currently have a sports field allocation policy; however, City staff indicate that the fields are generally used between:

- 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm for unlit fields (11:00 pm for lit fields) during the week
- 9:00 am to 9:00 pm for unlit fields (11:00 pm for lit fields) during the weekend

A review of the City’s usage data reveals that Pickering’s soccer fields are generally well used. For 2016, the City reported a system-wide utilization rate of 73% which represents a decline from 2014, when the City recorded a utilization rate of 83%. Discussions with City staff indicate that this decline in usage is primarily due to improved weather conditions during the 2014 playing season, which allowed groups to utilize the fields for more hours compared to 2015 and 2016. Historically, it was also common practice for some groups to book large blocks of field time that would ultimately be unused; however, when the City implemented lighting fees in 2015, groups refrained from block booking unused fields. As a result, utilization adjusted downwards in 2015 and 2016.

A summary of soccer field trends observed over the past three years by soccer field type is contained in Figure 18. It should be recognized that the data presented in this section represents permitted field time and not actual usage, although staff indicated that permitted field data accurately reflects how fields are used.

Figure 18: Summary of Soccer Field Utilization, 2014 - 2016



Source: City of Pickering

Artificial Turf Field (Lit)

- The artificial turf field at Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park is generally used well; however, utilization declined 12% from 81% to 69%.

Full Size Soccer Field (Lit)

- Utilization of Pickering's lit full size fields was 64%, which is a decline of one-half from 119% in 2014. As previously indicated, City staff indicated that this is due to improved weather conditions for 2014, resulting in additional requests from groups for more field time (this resulted in higher than anticipated usage of fields in 2014 as represented by usage exceeding anticipated capacity)..
- Bay Ridges Kinsmen #2 and #3 were the most used fields in 2016, with each booking 1,050 and 946 hours, respectively.
- Bay Ridges Kinsmen (former football field) was the least used field, with 265 hours. This field is used exclusively by the League1 soccer league and as a result, the field has limited use to maintain high quality playing conditions.

Full Size Soccer Field (Unlit)

- Over the past three years, usage of full size soccer fields declined 13% from 88% to 82%.
- The soccer fields at Glengrove Park (867) and Diana, Princess of Wales Park (815 hours) were the most used fields for 2016.
- The least used soccer field for 2016 was Bay Ridges Kinsmen #4, which had 60 hours of usage.

Intermediate Soccer Field

- From 2014 to 2016, utilization of intermediate soccer fields declined from 81% to 77%.
- The soccer fields that had the most usage for 2016 were Douglas Park (937 hours), Bay Ridges Kinsmen #1 (857 hours), and Bay Ridges Kinsmen #2 (798 hours).
- The soccer fields at Fairport Beach Public School and J. McPherson were used the least in 2016. Each field had 255 hours of usage recorded.

Mini/Micro Soccer Field

- Utilization of mini/micro soccer fields increased marginally from 72% to 75%.
- The three soccer fields at Diana, Princess of Wales Park were the most used fields for 2016, which had between 690 and 959 hours of usage.

Needs Assessment

The 2002 Master Plan utilized a population-based standard to identify soccer field needs; however, this method does not fully represent soccer needs as this approach considers population segments that do not play the sport. Best practices suggest that a participant-based standard is the preferred approach to project soccer field needs as it considers registered participants, market trends, usage profile, standards of play, and other related variables.

A service target of one soccer field per 80 to 90 registrants is typically used to identify soccer field needs. A service target on the lower end of the spectrum – one field per 90 registrants – is recommended for Pickering given that regional participation is softening and that there’s capacity to accommodate additional usage within the existing supply.

While there are over 5,000 soccer participants using fields in Pickering, 4,329 participants are local residents. For the purposes of this Master Plan, assessments exclude the remainder who are a part of predominantly non-resident groups given that the City’s priority is to serve its own residents (noting that the majority of non-resident participants are adult players that are considered to be more mobile and playing in multiple of municipalities due to the regional nature of their leagues).

Assuming that participation rates continue to increase in line with City-wide population growth, it is estimated that there will be over 6,000 participants by 2026. Applying the recommended provision target to the projected number of participants suggests that there will be a need for up to an additional 23 unlit equivalent soccer fields over the next ten years (Table 34).

Table 34: Projected Soccer Field Requirements

	2017	2021	2026
Population (Age 5-55) Based on 62% of the 2016 Census population	60,200	74,500	84,700
Estimated Number of Participants Based on a capture rate of 7%	4,329	5,358	6,089
Number of Unlit Soccer Field Equivalents Required Based on a target of one soccer field per 90 participants	48.1	59.5	67.7
Surplus (Deficit) Based on an unlit equivalent supply of 44 soccer fields	(4.1)	(15.5)	(23.7)

Constructing 23 new unlit equivalent soccer fields over a ten year period is a substantial quantum to provide given the amount of land required. The reasoning behind the large deficit in soccer fields is most likely linked to the fact that the Pickering Soccer Club (with 3,544 participants) makes very efficient use of Pickering’s soccer field supply as they subdivide existing fields into smaller field sizes in order to meet L.T.P.D. playing standards. As a result, the Pickering Soccer Club can accommodate many more players on a single field through simultaneous programming.

While it is expected that there will be some level of demand for new soccer fields over the planning period, the construction of 23 new soccer fields is not recommended. Instead, a phased approach is endorsed, which will allow the City to incrementally develop new soccer fields as required. It is recommended that the City provide up to 12 new unlit equivalent soccer fields over

the planning period, and re-evaluate soccer field needs on an on-going basis with a more detailed assessment taking place during the next Master Plan. A combination of soccer field types and sizes should be provided to ensure that there is a sufficient supply available to accommodate user groups.

The provision of new soccer fields should be strategically located to bolster the existing distribution of soccer fields. A high level review of existing soccer field locations suggests that Pickering has a strong distribution south of Taunton Road. It is anticipated that the majority of future soccer participants will be located Seaton, where the majority of population growth is expected to occur. In doing so, the following approach should be considered.

- **One lit artificial full size field** (+2 unlit equivalents) should be located at a future Community Park. As the availability of affordable land becomes scarce, the provision of a lit artificial turf field ensures that the City maximizes the efficient use of facility space by facilitating extended periods of play and accommodating other field sports such as rugby and football. Preference should be given to co-locating the artificial field with other sports fields or indoor recreation facilities to support tournament potential and to support the ability to utilize on-site amenities such as washrooms and parking.
- **Four lit natural grass fields** (+6 unlit equivalents) should be located at a future Community Park. These field should be located together with the proposed lit artificial turf field, at another singular site, or in groups of two at other locations, to facilitate simultaneous games and tournaments. Other site selection criteria should include the availability and/or access to amenities such as parking and washrooms.
- **Four unlit natural grass fields** (+4 unlit equivalents) should be located at a future Community or Neighbourhood Park. These fields should be located in groups of two to support simultaneous games and tournaments, or at individual parks to enhance distribution and to facilitate neighbourhood-level play.

In addition to constructing new soccer fields, there is a need to ensure that Pickering's existing inventory of soccer fields are adequate to serve its users. General observations and discussions with City staff indicated that while Pickering's soccer fields are generally in good condition, opportunities may exist to remove, relocate, or repurpose existing sports facilities, which are identified below.

- **Brockridge Community Park** features two intermediate size soccer fields that are located on lands that also serve as water retention ponds. As a result, these lands are periodically submerged with water and are unavailable for use. While these fields are permitted to the Pickering Soccer Club, the group has had to limit scheduling games and practices at this location due to this issue. In addition, on-site parking at this location is a challenge during peak usage of the Park's sports facilities, given the presence of three ball diamonds. With these factors in mind, consideration should be given to the removal and relocation of these two soccer fields to an alternative location. A broad scan of parks south of Taunton Road indicates that there are limited relocation options. As such, these soccer fields should be relocated to a future park in Seaton (no net increase).

- A ball diamond is located at **Maple Ridge Park**; however, it is not permitted given that the City has a surplus of ball diamonds. Recognizing that there is a need for additional soccer fields, an opportunity exists to repurpose the ball diamond into a soccer field. An intermediate soccer field is currently located on site, which has very strong utilization. The provision of a second soccer field provides an opportunity to deliver an enhanced playing experience with the potential to support tournament games (+1 unlit equivalent).

Recommendations – Soccer Fields

28. Construct 12 new unlit equivalent soccer fields in Seaton over the planning period while initiating an on-going monitoring process to ensure that the City does not over-supply fields and to determine if/when additional fields are required beyond those recommended in the Master Plan. Multi-field sites are encouraged to support simultaneous games and tournament. The following soccer fields should be constructed. Where appropriate, supporting amenities should be provided including, but not limited to parking and washrooms.
 - a. One lit artificial full size field at a future Community Park.
 - b. Four lit natural grass fields at a future Community Park.
 - c. Four unlit natural grass fields at a future Community or Neighbourhood Park.
29. Explore opportunities to remove, relocate, and/or repurpose existing sports facilities to improve utilization, with consideration given to the following.
 - a. Relocate the two intermediate soccer fields at Brockridge Community Park to Seaton.
 - b. Re-purpose the underutilized ball diamond at Maple Ridge Park into a soccer field.

5.13 Ball Diamonds

Supply

The City of Pickering’s ball diamond supply consists of 32 diamonds that accommodate hardball and softball. This includes 12 lit diamonds and 20 unlit diamonds, including permitted school diamonds. Lit ball diamonds are assumed to be equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds due to the fact that lit diamonds can accommodate extended playing periods. On this basis, Pickering has an effective supply of 38 unlit equivalent ball diamonds. In addition to this supply, residents have access to non-permitted school diamonds. The City’s ball diamond supply and distribution can be found in Table 35 and Figure 19, respectively.



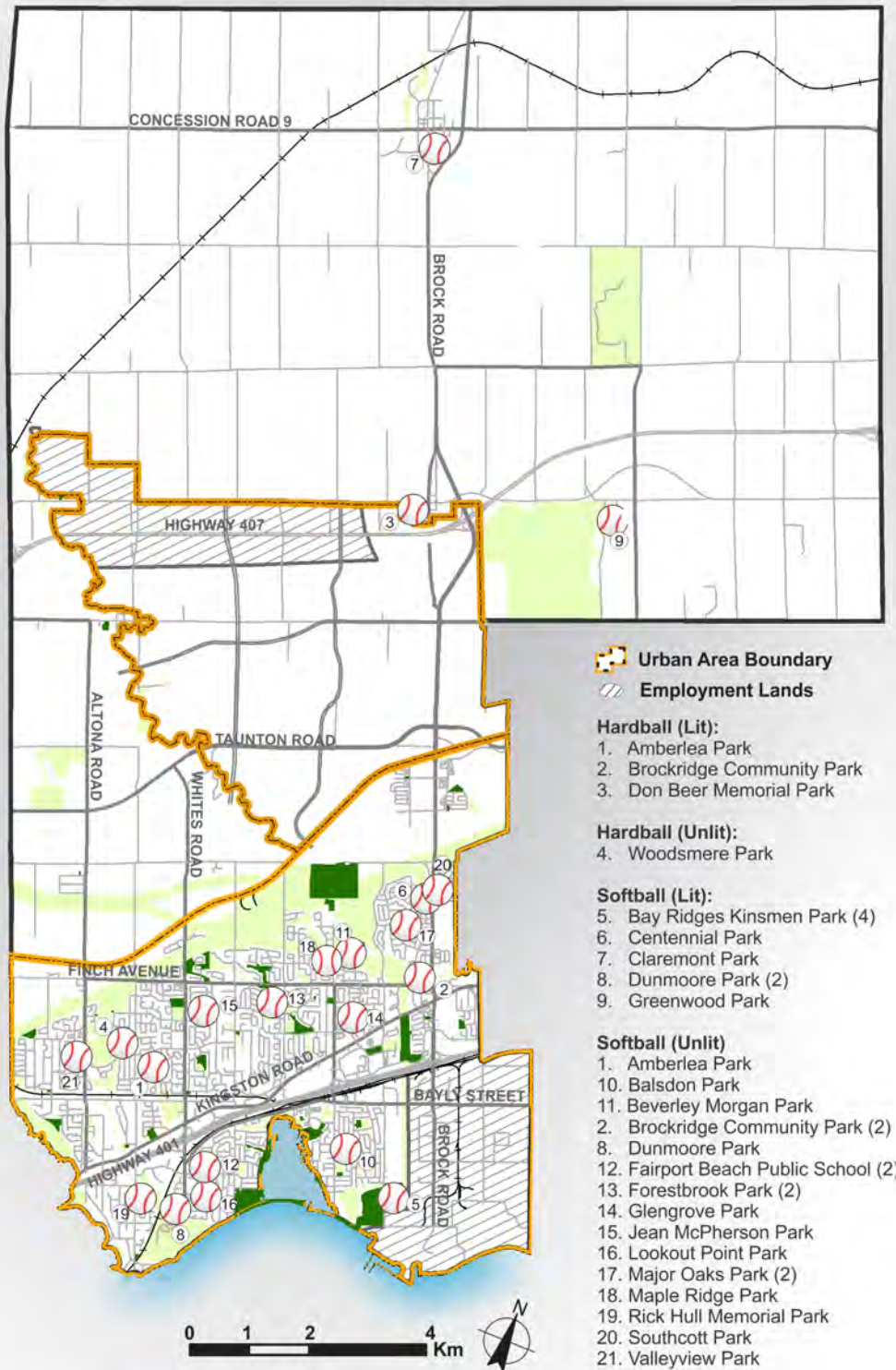
Amberlea Park

The City’s ball diamond supply translates into one unlit equivalent ball diamond per 2,600 residents, which is the highest level of service compared to benchmarked municipalities.

Table 35: City of Pickering Ball Diamond Supply

Lit Hardball		
Amberlea Diamond #1	Brockridge Community Park – Kirkey Field	Don Beer Memorial Diamond
Unlit Hardball		
S.M. Woodsmere Diamond		
Lit Softball		
Bay Ridges Kinsmen North Bay Ridges Kinsmen South Bay Ridges Kinsmen Hydro West	Bay Ridges Kinsmen Hydro East Claremont Diamond #1 Centennial Diamond #1	Dunmoore Diamond #1 Dunmoore Diamond #2 Greenwood Diamond #1
Unlit Softball		
Amberlea Diamond #2 Balsdon Park Beverley Morgan Brockridge Community Park Diamond #1 Brockridge Community Park Diamond #2 Dunmoore Diamond #3 Fairport Beach Diamond #1	Fairport Beach Diamond #2 Forestbrook Park Diamond #1 Forestbrook Park Diamond #2 Glengrove Park Jean McPherson Park Lookout Point Park Major Oaks Diamond #1	Major Oaks Diamond #2 Maple Ridge Park Rick Hull Memorial Park Southcott Park #1 Valleyview Park

Figure 19: Distribution of Ball Diamonds



Data provided by the City of Pickering

Market Trends

After being considered a sport in decline for the better part of the past two decades, baseball and its variations (softball, fastball, slo-pitch, etc.) are currently experiencing a resurgence. At the provincial level, Baseball Ontario reported that there were nearly 14,000 competitive league participants in 2016, which is a growth of 21% compared to 2004.²¹ Registration data reported by the Eastern Ontario Baseball Association, which consists of several baseball associations in municipalities including

Pickering, revealed a growth of 30%, with nearly 1,500 players for 2016 (Figure 20). Registration reported to Baseball Ontario does not include recreational/house leagues and participants registered in non-affiliated ball groups and as a result, actual participation figures are significantly greater.

The renewed interest in baseball is driven by a number of factors such as a greater focus in skill development and grassroots programs to engage children and youth at a young age to participate in the sport. The growing popularity of the Toronto Blue Jays is also a contributing factor. Since Baseball Canada adopted the Long Term Player Development (L.T.P.D.) model, the organization has focused on developing and honing skills and coaching styles, as well as fostering leadership and organization. Suitable competition formats and facility types are core components of Baseball Canada's L.T.P.D. model, the latter of which may have implications on the provision of diamond types and sizes in Pickering.

Of note, the development of accessible playfields are becoming more common to minimize participation barriers for persons with disabilities. Municipalities that have constructed (or are in the process of constructing) accessible diamonds include Amherstburg, Ottawa, and Caledon. Most recently, the City of Toronto announced the construction of its first accessible ball diamond, which is being funded in part by the Jays Care Foundation. These ball diamonds are specially designed to allow participants who use mobility aids, such as wheels chairs, to play independently and to circle the ball diamond without the assistance of a support person. Inclusive features in the design of accessible diamonds include smooth surfaces with contrasting colours, and accessible dugouts and washrooms.

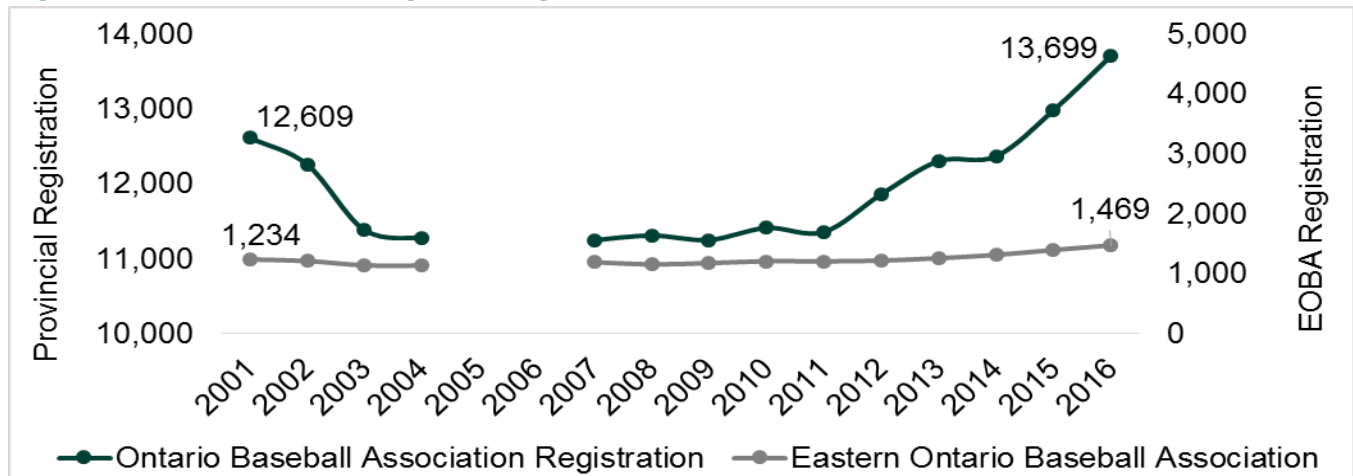
Table 36: Service Level Comparison, Ball Diamonds

Municipality	Population Estimate	Ball Diamonds	Service Level
Pickering	96,000	38	1 : 2,600
Aurora	57,000	22	1 : 2,600
Oshawa	165,000	60	1 : 2,700
Whitby	138,000	42	1 : 3,300
St. Catharines	135,000	27.5	1 : 4,900
Richmond Hill	198,000	39	1 : 5,100
Ajax	128,000	23.5	1 : 5,400
Average	131,000	36	1 : 3,800
Median	135,000	38	1 : 3,300

Note: Unlit equivalents shown.

²¹ Baseball Ontario. Annual General Meeting Reports. 2004 and 2005

Figure 20: Provincial and Regional Registration Trends in Baseball



Source: Baseball Ontario Annual General Meeting Reports

Note: Eastern Ontario Baseball Association includes 13 associations including Ajax, Clarington, Kanata, Kawartha, Kingston, Northumberland, Oshawa, Ottawa, Peterborough, Pickering, Quinte, Seaway, and Whitby. Participation data for 2005 and 2006 is unavailable.

Participation trends among local baseball groups have been consistent with regional and provincial trends over the past three years. Pickering has seven ball diamond groups that are regular users of municipal diamonds. For 2016, ball diamond groups had over 2,500 participants, which was a growth of 13% since 2014.

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey found that approximately one out of five households participated in baseball or softball in the past 12 months. 59% of households supported additional investment to upgrade or provide new ball diamonds, ranking 11th out of 24 facility types suggesting that there are other recreation facility priorities.

Ball diamond groups that submitted a stakeholder group survey reported using a number of ball diamonds in Pickering, with specific mention of the ball diamond located at Claremont Memorial Park, Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park, Dunmore Park, Centennial Park, and Forestbrook Park. Groups suggested a number of ideas to improve Pickering's ball diamonds, including improving drainage, larger ball diamonds for adult groups, replacing lighting, more washrooms, and replacing fencing.

Usage Profile

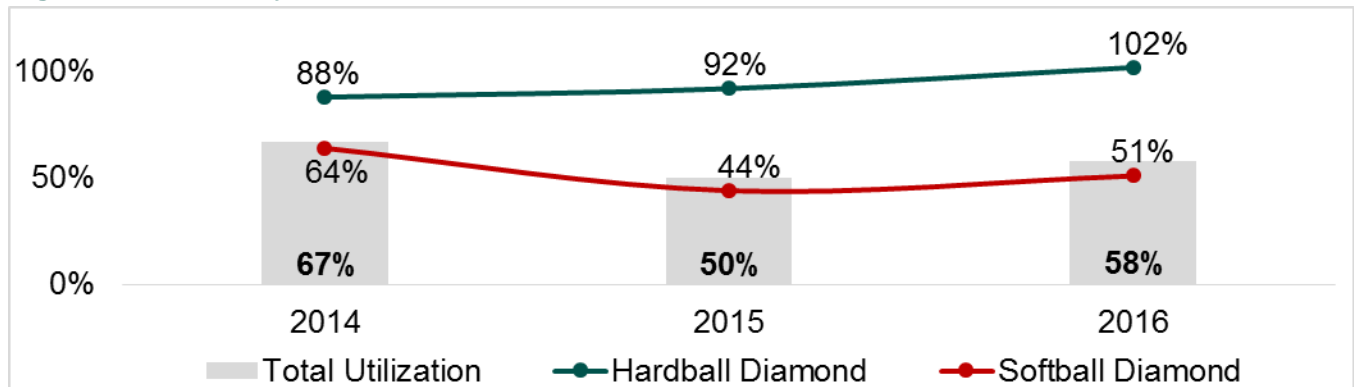
Utilization data provided by the City indicates that ball diamonds are generally available for booking between early-May and mid-October. As previously mentioned, the City does not currently have a sports field allocation policy and this applies to ball diamonds as well; however, the staff indicated that the diamonds are generally used between:

- 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm for unlit fields (11:00 pm for lit diamonds) during the week
- 9:00 am to 9:00 pm for unlit fields (11:00 pm for lit diamonds) during the weekend

A review of the City’s usage data reveals that Pickering’s ball diamonds are fairly well used. For 2016, the City reported a system-wide utilization rate of 58%, which is a decline of 9% from 2014. A summary of ball diamond utilization is contained in Figure 21. Usage trends from 2014 to 2016 is described below. It should be recognized that the data presented in this section represents permitted field time and not actual usage. Discussions with staff indicate that the data presented is representative of how ball diamonds are used.

- Over the past three years, utilization of Pickering’s hardball diamonds increased from 88% to 102%. City staff indicates that this is due to increasing demand for hardball diamonds, and the fact that the City permitted groups to utilize fields outside of regularly booked time slots for 2016, provided that the weather conditions were favourable. As a result, City staff indicate that the City is experiencing pressures for additional hardball diamonds.
- Utilization of softball diamonds declined from 64% in 2014 to 51% in 2016, suggesting that there is increasing capacity in the existing supply of softball diamonds to accommodate additional usage. City staff reported that this decline in usage is also due to the folding of the Pickering Softball Association.

Figure 21: Summary of Ball Diamond Utilization, 2014 - 2016



Source: City of Pickering.

Needs Assessment

A population-based service level was utilized in Pickering’s 2002 Master Plan to express ball diamond needs. Similar to other organized sports, however, a participant-based service target should be used as it can identify ball diamond needs more accurately. A service target of one ball diamond per 100 participants is recommended for Pickering as this standard is comparable to targets used in similar municipalities and it considers factors including standards of play, participation of minor and adult users, and the fact that there is existing capacity to accommodate additional usage at some fields.

For the purposes of this Master Plan, participants that are a part of groups that are predominantly non-resident are excluded from this assessment given that the City’s priority is to serve its residents. The majority of non-resident participants are adult players that are considered to be more mobile and are not restricted to playing outside of municipal boundaries. With a combined membership of over 2,500 participants, 2,012 players are local residents.

Assuming that participation rates continue to increase in line with City-wide population growth, it is estimated that there will be 2,830 participants by 2026. Applying the recommended provision target to the projected number of participants suggests that there will be a total need for up to 28 unlit equivalent ball diamonds over the next ten years, meaning the existing supply can accommodate ball diamond needs as a totality (Table 37).

Table 37: Projected Ball Diamond Requirements

	2017	2021	2026
Population (Age 5-55) Based on 62% of the 2016 Census population	60,200	74,500	84,700
Estimated Number of Participants Based on a capture rate of 3%	2,012	2,490	2,830
Number of Unlit Ball Diamond Equivalents Required Based on a target of one ball diamond per 100 participants	20.1	24.9	28.3
Surplus (Deficit) Based on an unlit equivalent supply of 38 ball diamonds	17.9	13.1	9.7

However, the city-wide supply is concentrated in south Pickering while future population growth will be directed to Seaton. Therefore, a strategy that relocates underutilized diamonds from mature neighbourhoods to Seaton is advanced. Existing diamonds that are potential candidates for removal include:

- **Maple Ridge Park** which contains a non-permitted ball diamond. As additional soccer fields are required during the planning period, an opportunity exists to repurpose the ball diamond into a soccer field. An intermediate soccer field is currently located on site, which has very strong utilization. The provision of a second soccer field provides an opportunity to deliver an enhanced playing experience with the potential to support tournament games (-1 unlit equivalent ball diamond).

The City will be required to further evaluate of the appropriateness to remove and/or repurpose each of these ball diamonds, as well as any other diamonds that it deems fit. The above strategy would allow the City to develop 3 unlit equivalent diamonds in Seaton without any net change to the ball diamond supply.

From a distributional perspective, Seaton would appear to require between three and four distinct parks containing ball diamonds. To this end, the following strategy is recommended in Seaton.

- **Seaton Location #1: Two lit softball diamonds (+3 unlit equivalent ball diamonds)** should be constructed at a Community Park. While there is capacity to accommodate usage at additional softball diamonds, the provision of softball diamonds in Seaton further bolsters geographic distribution in the north. As a single site, the diamonds could facilitate simultaneous games and tournaments. Support amenities such as parking and washrooms should also be contemplated.

- **Seaton Location #2: Two unlit hardball diamonds (+2 unlit equivalent ball diamonds)** should be constructed at the Community Park in conjunction with the two softball diamonds, or instead located at Neighbourhood Parks. Lighting these hardball diamonds is not deemed to be necessary given that the majority of hardball diamond usage is from minor groups that generally do not play late at night.
- **Other Parks in Seaton:** depending upon how many underutilized or antiquated diamonds are ultimately removed from the south Pickering, single hardball or softball diamonds could be integrated in Neighbourhood Parks in a manner that ensures sufficient geographical coverage in Seaton.

The rest of Pickering's existing ball diamond supply should also be evaluated to ensure that they are meeting the needs of user groups. While the City's ball diamonds are generally in good condition, requests have been made for additional hardball diamonds. Although the strategy articulated for Seaton would add two new hard ball diamonds, this may not be entirely sufficient to address needs given that growth of the minor hardball system is reportedly constrained by the fact there are four hardball diamonds in the City. In conjunction with the Seaton strategy, the City should evaluate opportunities to convert existing softball diamonds to hardball to further respond to hardball diamond needs.

Recommendations – Ball Diamonds

30. Construct ball diamonds at a minimum of two parks in Seaton utilizing the following construction approach. Where appropriate, supporting amenities should be provided including, but not limited to, parking and washrooms.
 - a. Two lit softball diamonds co-located at a Community Park to facilitate simultaneous games and tournaments.
 - b. Two unlit hardball diamonds at a Neighbourhood Park unless there is sufficient room at the Community Park proposed for softball diamonds and the City intends to create a ball diamond complex in Seaton.
31. Evaluate opportunities to remove, relocate, and/or repurpose surplus ball diamonds, with consideration given to the following:
 - a. Convert underutilized or antiquated softball diamonds, as appropriate, to hardball diamonds to relieve pressures at existing hardball diamonds.
 - b. Repurpose the non-permitted ball diamond at Maple Ridge Park to an intermediate soccer field, thereby creating a multi-field location suitable for simultaneous and tournament play, given the presence of an intermediate soccer field already on site.

5.14 Other Rectangular and Multi-Use Fields

Supply

The City offers one lit artificial turf field and two natural grass fields at Beverley Morgan Park. While these fields can be used for a range of field sports, they are primarily permitted for football, which will be the focus for this section. Although the sports field at St. Mary Park has the ability to accommodate football, it is primarily permitted for soccer, which has been captured in Section 5.12.

Pickering provides the third highest level of service for other rectangular / multi-use fields at one field per 32,039 residents. This service level comparison considers

dedicated football fields and multi-use fields that are provided by the municipality. Historically, sports groups such as football and rugby utilize school fields, which are excluded from this comparison and as such, these results should be interpreted with caution.

Market Trends

Football is generally played by minor age groups, although football is a popular sport to follow among adults. The Durham Dolphins is Pickering's only football group, which has maintained 340 participants over the past three years. Anecdotally, participation in the sport is steady or has grown marginally across different communities. The sport is often challenged by access to well-lit artificial turf fields (or dedicated football fields), as football is an autumn sport and night falls earlier during this time of year. Due to the lack of artificial turf fields in some communities, football games are played on natural turf, which tends to result in field damage in high traffic areas, thus limiting field use by other sports. Greater concerns over head injuries due to the nature of the sport has also been a limiting growth factor.

Community Engagement

Limited community input was received with respect to football. The household survey reported that 11% of residents participated in rugby or football in the past 12 months. Approximately half (52%) of respondents supported investment in improving or providing new football/rugby fields, which ranked 16th out of 24 facility types, suggesting that this is not a priority among residents.

The Durham Dolphins uses the artificial and natural grass sports fields at Beverley Morgan Park on a regular basis. The Club expressed that access to another field would be beneficial, with an interest in booking an additional four days. Additionally, the Club made requests for access to

Table 38: Service Level Comparison, Other Rectangular / Multi-Use Fields

Municipality	Population Estimate	Other Rectangular Fields	Service Level
Oshawa	165,000	6	1 : 27,500
Aurora	57,000	2	1 : 28,500
Pickering	96,000	3	1 : 32,000
St. Catharines	135,000	1	1 : 135,000
Whitby	138,000	1	1 : 138,000
Ajax	128,000	-	n/a
Richmond Hill	198,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	3	1 : 72,200
Median	135,000	2	1 : 32,000

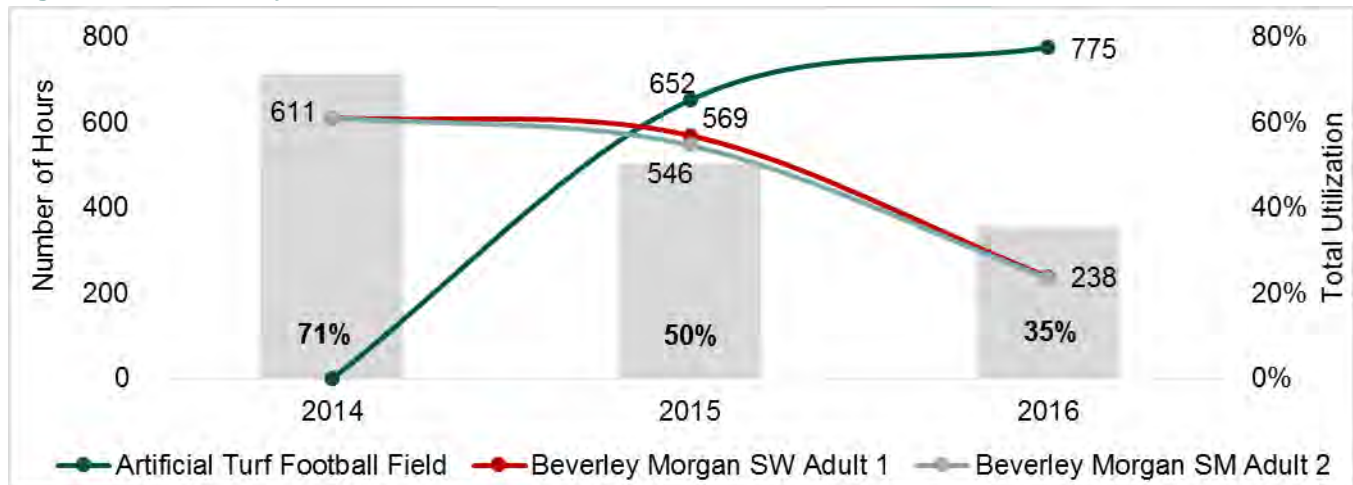
Note: Includes multi-use fields. Excludes school fields and fields primarily used for soccer.

supporting amenities including water, change rooms, and electricity as the leagues the Club plays in require these facilities. Given the absence of these amenities at present time, the Club indicated that they are currently renting off-site facilities to accommodate these needs.

Usage Profile

The Football Club permits three fields at Beverley Morgan Park. Utilization data provided by the City indicates that these facilities are currently under capacity. For 2016, these fields had a combined utilization rate of 35%, which is a considerable decrease compared to 2014 (71%). Part of the reason for this decline is due to the construction of the lit artificial turf football field, which was installed in 2015 and provided additional booking capacity. The artificial turf field is primarily used by the Football Club, with some usage from for soccer and high school rugby. While usage of the artificial turf field has been increasing since opening, utilization of the natural grass fields have been declining. With over 2,000 hours of available field time, these findings suggest that there is capacity to accommodate additional football usage.

Figure 22: Summary of Football Field Utilization, 2014 - 2016



Needs Assessment

Provincially, football field needs are commonly met through the use of secondary and post-secondary facilities. There are, however, some municipalities that accommodate football at existing multi-use fields given that the football playing season. As a result, there is no typical service target for the provision of football fields.

The need for football fields is primarily evaluated based on existing utilization levels and input received from the Durham Dolphins Football Club. Existing utilization levels suggests that there is available capacity to accommodate additional usage at existing fields and as such, additional football fields is not recommended at this time. Should the Club require access to additional fields, however, use of the recommended artificial turf field proposed to be located in Seaton should be encouraged (Recommendation #28). There are a number of benefits associated with using artificial turf fields as they are more durable and they offer extended playing periods throughout the year, which is suitable for the football season as the sport is played during the fall.

It is noted that the primary pressure points currently facing the Durham Dolphins Football Club relate to field amenities including, but not limited to, change rooms, electricity connection, washrooms, water, and spectator seating. Some of these amenities could be accessed through the adjacent Pine Ridge Secondary School through which the City has a reciprocal use agreement with the Durham District School Board. The City should engage the school board and the Dolphins to explore ways to collaboratively improve the playing experience on the football fields.

Recommendations – Other Rectangular and Multi-Use Fields

32. Engage the Durham District School Board and the Durham Dolphins Football Club to explore ways to collaboratively improve the playing experience at Beverly Morgan Park.

5.15 Cricket Pitches

Supply

The City of Pickering provides one cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park. Pickering and Ajax are only communities amongst its benchmarked peers that provide a cricket pitch.

Table 39: Service Level Comparison, Cricket Pitches

Municipality	Population Estimate	Cricket Pitches	Service Level
Pickering	96,000	1	1 : 96,000
Ajax	128,000	1	1 : 128,000
Aurora	57,000	-	n/a
Oshawa	165,000	-	n/a
Richmond Hill	198,000	-	n/a
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a
Whitby	138,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	1	1 : 112,000
Median	135,000	1	1 : 112,000

Market Trends

Cricket is experiencing relatively strong growth in Canada that is being driven by immigration from cricket-playing countries (largely from South Asia and the Caribbean) of which the G.T.A. is a destination that many of these newcomers choose to live. It is estimated that there are at least 6,000 cricket players involved in organized cricket clubs and associations. The sport appeals to a broad spectrum of age groups from children to older adults and it is expected that the popularity and growth of the sport will continue. Locally, the 2011 National Household Survey reported that approximately 23% of Pickering's population identify as a visible minority from origins where cricket is commonly played. Socio-demographic trends suggest that Pickering will continue to become home to residents that may have an interest in cricket. At present, the Pickering Cricket Club has 40 members.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey revealed that 3% of households in Pickering participated in cricket in the past 12 months, which was the second least popular activity surveyed. One in four households supported additional investment in developing new or improving existing cricket pitches, which

ranked last out of 24 facility types. This result suggests that cricket is not yet a priority in Pickering although this may change as the Seaton community develops and the population continues to diversify culturally.

The Pickering Cricket Club currently uses the cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park and through the stakeholder survey, expressed the desire for a clubhouse to support activities held by the group.

Usage Profile

The Pickering Cricket Club is the sole organized user of the Alex Robertson Park cricket pitch. Usage data shows the group using the pitch four days per week for a total of 32 hours. Given that this is the only group that rents the pitch, there is capacity to accommodate additional usage during the remaining three days of the week.

Needs Assessment

Most G.T.A. municipalities that offer cricket pitches generally use a population-based standard of one cricket pitch per 100,000 residents. This target is recommended for Pickering based on the fact that the City's diverse population is comparable to other G.T.A. municipalities and that there is no evidence to support adjusting this target based upon field availability, lower priority through broad consultations, and a membership base of 40 players for the local cricket club.

Under the G.T.A. standard, Pickering would be deficient by the equivalent of one-third of a cricket pitch by the year 2026. This in itself is considered insufficient to construct another field particularly with 32 hours of use taking place at Alex Robertson Park at present time. Beyond the planning period (2026+), the City may begin to face pressures for a second cricket pitch as Pickering continues to diversify and as Seaton reaches population build out.

As a long term strategy, it is recommended that the existing cricket pitch be relocated to a more appropriate location. Due to the amount of land required to construct a cricket pitch and associated amenities, preference should be given to relocating the pitch to Seaton. Relocating the pitch to Seaton may also bolster utilization as it is anticipated that this community will be home to a diverse range of residents, including those who may have an interest in playing cricket. The relocation of the existing cricket pitch should be subject to quantifiable demand for cricket once the City has a stronger understanding of the demographic profile of the Seaton community.

Recommendations – Cricket Pitches

33. As a long term strategy, explore opportunities to relocate the cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park. The relocation of the cricket pitch should be subject to demand and the ability to identify a park (preferably in Seaton) with sufficient space to accommodate a new pitch and supporting amenities to be determined in consultation with the Cricket Club.

5.16 Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Supply

Pickering provides 24 lit tennis courts at nine parks. With the exception of the tennis courts at Claremont Memorial Park and Village East Park, the City's tennis courts are operated by neighbourhood clubs that provide tennis programming to residents. As a result, a club membership is required to access these courts. The City's tennis courts can be found at the parks listed in Table 40. The geographic distribution of tennis courts is illustrated in Figure 23.

Table 40: City of Pickering Supply of Lit Tennis Courts

Lit Tennis Courts		
Bay Ridges Kinsmen Park (4)	Dunmoore Park (4)	Rick Hull Memorial Park (2)
Claremont Memorial Park (2)	Greenwood Park (2)	Shadybrook Park (2)
David Farr Memorial Park (4)	Maple Ridge Park (2)	Village East Park (2)

The entire supply translates into a service level of one tennis court per 4,000 residents, representing the second highest level of service compared to other municipalities. Solely based on unrestricted public tennis courts, however, Pickering provides the lowest level of service given that only four courts are available to the public. By contrast, Pickering offers the highest level of service for club courts.

Table 41: Service Level Comparison, Tennis Courts

Municipality	Population Estimate	Tennis Courts		Service Level		
		Public	Club	Public	Club	Total
Richmond Hill	198,000	79	6	1 : 2,500	1 : 33,000	1 : 2,300
Pickering	96,000	4	20	1 : 24,000	1 : 4,800	1 : 4,000
Aurora	57,000	10	3	1 : 5,700	1 : 19,000	1 : 4,400
St. Catharines	135,000	30	0	1 : 4,500	n/a	1 : 4,500
Whitby	138,000	22	6	1 : 6,300	1 : 23,000	1 : 5,000
Ajax	128,000	10	4	1 : 12,800	1 : 32,000	1 : 4,900
Oshawa	165,000	18	0	1 : 9,200	n/a	1 : 9,200
Average	131,000	25	6	1 : 9,300	1 : 22,400	1 : 5,500
Median	135,000	18	4	1 : 6,200	1 : 23,000	1 : 4,500

In response to increasing pressures for pickleball, the City added pickleball court lines to the tennis courts at Village East Park in spring 2017 to create multi-use courts. Among the benchmarked communities, Oshawa and Ajax are the only other municipalities that offer pickleball courts and does so using a multi-use court approach.

Market Trends

A 2014 study undertaken by Tennis Canada found that more than 6.5 million Canadians played tennis at least once over a 12 month period, a growth of more than 32% since 2012. The study found that the popularity of tennis is growing among Canadians as 51% of the population

indicated that they are somewhat or very interested in the sport, which is an increase from 38% in 2012. This trend is on par with research that suggests that the sport is experiencing a resurgence over the past several years since the popularity of tennis peaked in the 1970s.

Growth in tennis is driven by a number of factors such as the growing segment of active baby boomers that seek social, and, to some degree, lower impact activities. To ensure that tennis opportunities continue to be available for the new generation of players, there is a growing focus on promoting the sport at the youth level through club memberships for youth and programming opportunities that emphasizes the Long Term Athlete Development model. Tennis Canada reported that in 2013, more than 600,000 children between the age of 6 and 11 played tennis. Additionally, the success of Canadian men and women on the professional ATP and WTA tours, including a number of players from the GTA, has renewed interest locally and at a national level.

Table 42: Service Level Comparison, Pickleball Courts

Municipality	Population Estimate	Pickleball Courts	Service Level
Ajax	128,000	8	1 : 16,000
Oshawa	165,000	5	1 : 33,000
Pickering	96,000	2	1 : 48,000
Aurora	57,000	-	n/a
Richmond Hill	198,000	-	n/a
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a
Whitby	138,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	5	32,300
Median	135,000	5	33,000

Note: Includes multi-use courts; excludes gymnasiums for indoor pickleball.

There is also evidence that baby boomers are creating a small boost in tennis and related racquet sports as participation trends suggest that older adults have a greater desire to remain physically active in their retirement years. This age segment has driven the sport of pickleball to become one of the fastest growing sports in Canada, which is a lower intensity paddle sport that can be played on modified tennis courts (it requires a badminton-sized court and a net that is slightly lower than tennis height). The sport of pickleball continues to spread across the Province and its prominence is further bolstered for being played at the Durham Region Senior Games and Ontario Senior Games.

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey found moderate levels of participation in tennis and pickleball. In the past 12 months, 16% of survey respondents participated in tennis while 3% played pickleball. These activities are also commonly played outside of the City and are often requested facilities to be provided in Pickering. 54% of households supported additional investment in tennis courts, ranking 15th out of 24 facility types while investment in pickleball was the second lowest priority with 26% support. This would suggest that there is not a strong interest in such courts locally relative to other recreational priorities.

A stakeholder survey was submitted by the Sandy Beach Tennis Club. The Club reported 105 members, who currently use the tennis courts at Kinsmen Park. Suggested improvements included providing a paved walkway from the parking lot to the tennis courts. A written

submission from a member of the general public was also received stating the lack of public tennis courts in Pickering.

Needs Assessment

The service level of 1 tennis court per 4,000 residents (public and club-based courts) falls within targets across the province. Assuming that the City were to retain this level of service, the 40,000 new residents expected to arrive over the next ten years would require that a total of 10 new tennis courts be provided. The Master Plan recommends that the City focus on two broad – yet interrelated – strategies for its outdoor tennis courts.

1. Improving the distribution of unrestricted public courts; and
2. Increasing operational efficiencies of neighbourhood club-based courts.

Public Tennis Courts

Opportunities to access public tennis courts are limited. Just four public tennis courts exist in Pickering, two of which are located in south Pickering at Village East Park and the other two in north Pickering at Claremont Memorial Park. Unfortunately, a high level examination of existing parks reveals that there are limited opportunities to establish tennis courts given that most parks are currently built out, particularly in south Pickering. To this end, the City should explore adding public courts in the following locations:

- Rouge Valley Park in order to serve residents on the west side (+2 tennis courts);
- Seaton urban area through which tennis courts would be added in a minimum of three parks – best practices dictate that public tennis courts are best provided in pods of two (+6 courts);
- Maple Ridge Park by converting the club courts to unrestricted public access or by allocating the Tennis Club selected times during the week as will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow (no net change in total court supply);
- Greenwood Park by converting the club courts to unrestricted public access or by allocating the Tennis Club selected times during the week as will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow (no net change in total court supply); and
- Parks to be determined through future evaluation provided need for tennis courts can be demonstrated at that time (+2 courts).

Club-based Tennis Courts

Individual tennis clubs operate 20 of the City's tennis courts, of which all but one are distributed across south Pickering. These courts are attractive for users seeking tennis instruction and those that play tennis on a regular basis. A service target of one club court per 73 to 100 members is used as the industry standard for club court capacity. With a combined total of 1,457 club members, the City is providing a high level of service at one club court per 72 members. A closer look at each tennis club, however, reveals that actual service levels vary for each organization

(Table 43). This means that certain clubs are under a greater degree of pressure than others, while other clubs have ample surplus court capacity.

Table 43: Tennis Club Membership, 2016

Tennis Club	Number of Members	Tennis Courts Available to Members	Service Level
Amberlea Tennis Club	179	2	1 : 90
Dunmoore Tennis Club	326	4	1 : 82
Glendale Tennis Club	575	4	1 : 144
Greenwood Tennis Club	9	2	1 : 5
Maple Ridge Tennis Club	65	2	1 : 33
Rosebank Tennis Club	198	2	1 : 99
Sandy Beach Tennis Club	105	4	1 : 26
Total	1,457	20	1 : 73

Source: City of Pickering

The Greenwood Tennis Club has by far the lowest membership that may be a result of its remote location in north Pickering. However, the Club's actual registration is unknown because it sells access keys to individuals whom are not captured in the City's data tracking. The City should require this Club to provide up-to-date registration information regarding the number of persons using of its courts, as based on data available there is justification to convert this venue to public tennis courts either on a fully unrestricted basis or by allocating the Tennis Club selected times during the week.

On a court per player basis, the Maple Ridge and Sandy Beach Tennis Clubs are also operating well above their required needs. With respect to the Maple Ridge Tennis Club, low membership figures are likely due to a number of factors though its two-court template may limit the scale of programs it can deliver and makes it less attractive compared to certain other club locations in south Pickering. In fact, it is likely that all tennis clubs are competing for a finite base of players and the local competition is affecting the ability of clubs to grow sustainably over time.

To make more efficient use of resources devoted to tennis club courts by both the City and the tennis clubs, a consolidation strategy is put forth for the South Pickering Urban Area. With low court-to-player ratios at the Maple Ridge Tennis Club and the Sandy Beach Tennis Club, the City should encourage the amalgamation of these two organizations and direct club-based play to the Kinsmen Park location. In doing so:

- The collective memberships would be 170 persons and modestly improve the Kinsmen Park player ratio to 1:43. Amalgamation of the groups may also establish a critical mass to improve program delivery and club play that in turn attracts more players to the club.
- The Maple Ridge Park template with two courts is not ideal for club programming as it limits the type and scale of programs that can be delivered relative to a three or four court venue. On the other hand, four court templates as that found at Kinsmen Park are

conducive to running concurrent programs such as skill development clinics, round-robin tournaments, and general club play.

- It is fully appreciated that tennis club members living within proximity to Maple Ridge Park would be required to drive further than they are accustomed to if they were to use the Kinsmen Park courts (approximately 10 to 15 minute drive). This is deemed to be reasonable given that most tennis club members in the G.T.A. accept that club-based facilities are drive-to destinations.
- The City would undertake an engagement process for all tennis clubs – including the Maple Ridge and Sandy Beach Tennis Clubs – to discuss ways in which to improve the operational sustainability and player experience for all involved, including conversations centred upon the above-noted strategy.

Pickleball Courts

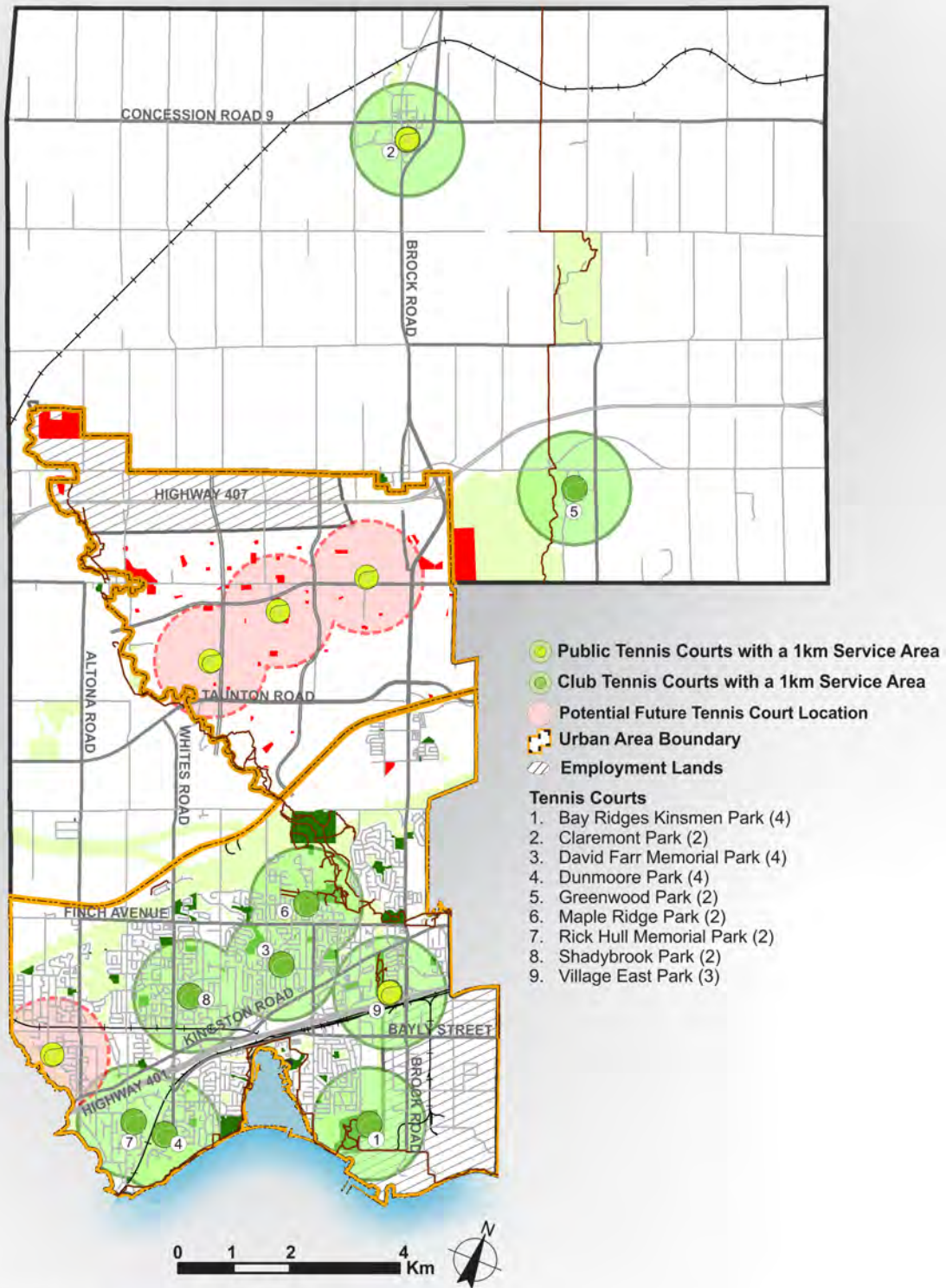
Following the City's recent efforts of adding pickleball playing boundaries to the tennis courts at Village East Park, there is merit in considering additional pickleball court locations using a multi-use court philosophy. The provision of outdoor pickleball courts provides an opportunity for members and non-members to play outside during the warmer weather.

The City should add pickleball boundaries to a select number of the new tennis courts that are being recommended in this Master Plan in response to any continued popularity of the sport. In the application of pickleball playing boundaries, consideration should be given to the use of contrasting colours to differentiate playing areas to avoid confusion between the two activities. Preferred locations should include parks that are within proximity to high concentrations of older adults or along major transportation/transit corridors for ease of access.

Recommendations – Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts

34. Construct a two tennis court pod at a minimum of three future parks in Seaton and, if feasible, at Rouge Valley Park.
35. Engage the neighbourhood tennis clubs to discuss ways in which to improve the local sustainability of the sport, improve operational efficiencies of the City and the Clubs, and explore potential amalgamation of Tennis Clubs and consolidation of the club-court supply.
36. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball at a select number of the new tennis courts recommended in this Master Plan. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas in order to avoid confusion between the two sports. Preferred locations should include parks that are within proximity to high concentrations of older adults or along major transportations/transit corridors for ease of access.

Figure 23: Distribution of Tennis Courts



Data provided by the City of Pickering

5.17 Outdoor Basketball Courts

Supply

There are 12 outdoor basketball courts located throughout the City. This includes nine full size courts (with hoops at each end) and three half courts (with a single hoop). In addition to these basketball courts, residents have access to outdoor basketball courts located at schools and other non-municipal providers. Pickering’s outdoor basketball courts can be found at the parks listed in Table 44 and their locations are illustrated in Figure 23.

Table 44: City of Pickering Outdoor Basketball Courts

Full-Size Basketball Courts		
Beverley Morgan Park Diana, Princess of Wales Park Don Beer Memorial Park	Frenchman’s Bay Ratepayers Memorial Park Glengrove Park (2 Lit) Rick Hull Memorial Park	St. Mary Park Valleyview Park
Half-Size Basketball Courts		
Major Oaks Park	Rouge Valley Park	St. Mary Park

Pickering’s supply of outdoor basketball courts yields a service level of one outdoor basketball court per 1,000 youth, which is the second lowest level of service compared to benchmarked municipalities.

Market Trends

Basketball courts are flexible outdoor recreation facilities as they can accommodate many informal and unstructured activities that require a large, hard surface. The local popularity of basketball is driven in part by the large Toronto Raptors fan base, affordability, access to free outdoor courts, and national appeal.

Compared to other sports such as hockey, basketball is easy to learn, safe, affordable to play, and can be played with one person or in small groups.

Community Engagement

The telephone survey indicated that one in five households used a basketball court in the past 12 months. Slightly more than half (56%) of households supported additional investment in this facility type, which suggests that there are other recreation facility priorities. Although these findings may suggest that outdoor basketball courts are not a priority to the general population,

Table 45: Service Level Comparison, Outdoor Basketball Courts

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 10-19)	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Service Level
Aurora	8,000	16	1 : 500
Richmond Hill	27,000	47	1 : 600
Whitby	20,000	30	1 : 700
St. Catharines	14,000	21	1 : 700
Oshawa	18,000	23	1 : 800
Pickering	12,000	12	1 : 1,000
Ajax	18,000	9	1 : 2,000
Average	17,000	23	1 : 900
Median	18,000	21	1 : 700

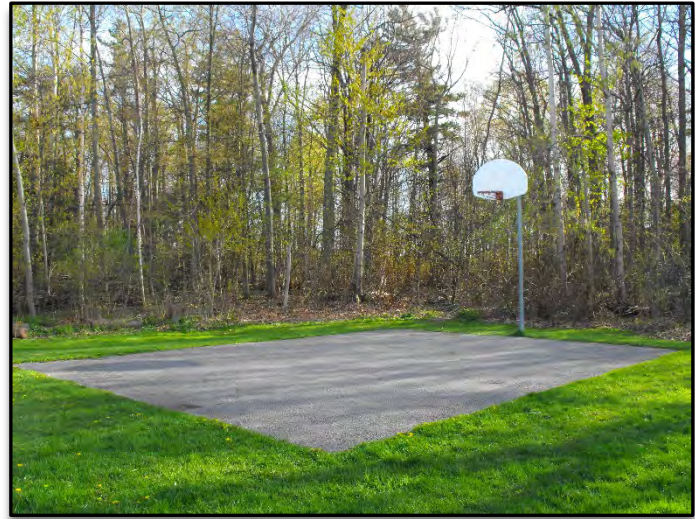
Note: Includes full and half courts; excludes school courts.

given the median age of the respondent at 57 years, the results may not accurately reflect the true community perspective for this youth-focused facility type.

Needs Assessment

The 2002 Master Plan utilized a provision target of one outdoor basketball court per 14,000 residents as it was suggested that the sport is played by a broad range of age groups. More recent trends in basketball suggests that although the sport boasts an active fan base spanning all age groups, the sport is primarily played by youth. As a result, an age specific provision target is used to identify basketball needs, which is consistent with best practices.

One outdoor basketball court per 800 to 1,000 youth is a common provision target that is used in other municipalities. With a municipal supply of ten outdoor basketball courts, Pickering is currently providing a service level of one basketball court per 1,000 youth. Moving forward, it is recommended that the City continue to maintain this level of service on the basis that Pickering’s basketball supply is well supported by a number of outdoor courts found at school sites, although it is recognized that the quality and configuration of school basketball courts vary by location. Additionally, the recommended service level ensures that service gaps and growth areas (e.g., Seaton) are adequately addressed.

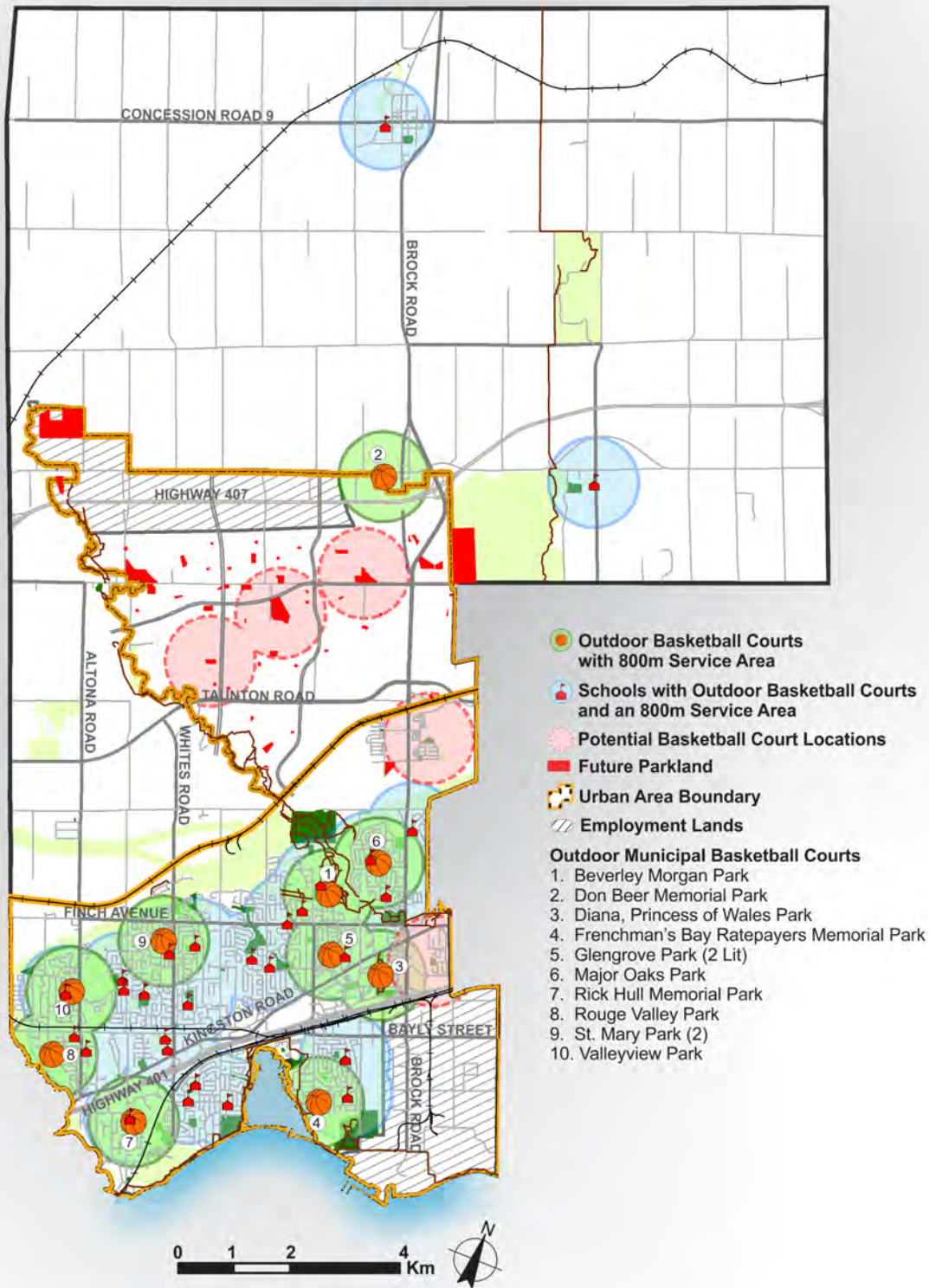


Rouge Valley Park

Table 46: Projected Outdoor Basketball Court Requirements

	2017	2021	2026
Estimated Youth Population (Age 10-19) Based on a 13% of the total population (2016 Census)	12,000	15,000	17,000
Number of Outdoor Basketball Courts Required Based on a target of one basketball court per 1,000 youth	12.0	15.0	17.0
Surplus (Deficit) Based on a current supply of 12 outdoor basketball courts	(0.0)	(3.0)	(5.0)

Figure 24: Distribution of Outdoor Basketball Courts



Data provided by the City of Pickering

Based on the recommended provision target, there is a need for five basketball over the planning period. To identify the optimum implementation strategy, the geographic distribution of basketball courts must also be assessed. A map of municipal and school basketball courts with an 800 metre service area is illustrated in Figure 24. Based on a spatial review of service gaps and future growth areas, the following strategy is recommended, which achieve the seven basketball courts required by 2026:

- Construct two basketball courts at Beechlawn Park and Creekside Park. Site visits to these parks suggests that there is sufficient space to accommodate a basketball court, which will be complementary to the other active outdoor recreation facilities that are present at each location. A review of demographic data by Census Tract revealed that nearly one-third (27%) on residents in these areas are children and youth and as a result, providing an expanded range outdoor recreation facilities with the addition of new basketball courts ensures that this segment of the population continues to be engaged.
- Evaluate and identify future parks in Seaton to construct three basketball courts. Site considerations should be given to availability and proximity to schools and other recreation facilities used by youth, walkability, visibility, and other criteria to be identified by the City.
- Preference should be given to the provision of full size basketball courts, although half courts may be considered for smaller park locations. Additional features for consideration include, but are not limited to, seating, shade, paint markings for other hard surface activities, landscaping, and appropriate sound buffering.

Recommendations – Outdoor Basketball Courts

37. Construct two basketball courts at Beechlawn Park and Creekside Park to reconcile service gaps in south Pickering.
38. Evaluate and identify future parks in Seaton to construct three basketball courts. Site considerations should be given to availability and proximity to schools and other recreation facilities used by youth, walkability, visibility, and other criteria to be identified be the City.
39. At a minimum, future basketball courts should be designed to be full size basketball courts with two posts, hoops, and surface paint markings. Additional features for consideration include, but are not limited to, seating, shade, paint markings for other hard surface activities, landscaping, and appropriate sound buffering.

5.18 Outdoor Ice Rinks

Supply

The City maintains a natural outdoor ice rink at Claremont Memorial Park while a volunteer group maintains a natural rink at Whitevale Park, which are used for recreational skating. Pickering's

supply of outdoor ice rinks translates into one outdoor ice rink per 48,000 residents. This is a mid-range service level compared to Aurora, Richmond Hill and Ajax, the only other benchmarked municipalities that provide outdoor ice rinks.

Table 47: Service Level Comparison, Outdoor Ice Rinks

Municipality	Population Estimate	Outdoor Ice Rinks	Service Level
Aurora	57,000	4	1 : 14,200
Pickering	96,000	2	1 : 48,000
Richmond Hill	198,000	3	1 : 66,000
Ajax	128,000	Varies each year	
Whitby	138,000	-	n/a
Oshawa	165,000	-	n/a
St. Catharines	135,000	-	n/a
Average	131,000	3	1 : 42,800
Median	135,000	3	1 : 48,000

Market Trends

Recreational skating outdoors is a Canadian tradition, although the ability to maintain outdoor rinks has become increasingly difficult due to climate change. Natural ice rinks are the most affordable method to build and maintain given that expenses are largely relegated to water and operational time. However maintenance can be cumbersome when temperatures are near or above the freezing mark in the winter months.

Alternatively, municipalities may construct a refrigerated outdoor rink, although this approach is much more expensive given the capital and operating costs of having mechanical infrastructure in place. For example, the benchmarked City of St. Catharines estimated a construction cost of \$1.2 to \$1.6 Million and another \$140,000 annually to operate (that particular rink was not approved in the end).²² In addition to cost challenges, there are other limiting factors specific to outdoor ice rinks including safety and liability concerns, proximity to adjacent residences, less daylight in the winter, having hydro and water services in place, etc.

Consultation

Limited input regarding outdoor ice rinks was received through the consultation process with one request received from a resident who expressed the desired to have an outdoor recreational skating rink installed at East Woodlands Park, adjacent to the George Ashe Library and Community Centre.

Usage Profile

Usage of outdoor ice rinks cannot be quantified given that they are not programmed. As outdoor rinks are primarily used for casual skating, a look at drop-in skating participants at Pickering's

²² City of St. Catharines. Staff Report RCS-689-2012. Seasonal ice rink for Montebello Park. Retrieved from <https://www.stcatharines.ca>

indoor arenas can provide high level insight into the popularity of informal skating opportunities. The City indicated that there were 7,118 drop-in skating participants in 2016, which is a decline of 28% compared to 2014, which suggests that there is waning demand, at least for drop-in skating occurring within an arena. As previously indicated in the arena assessment, declining participation in skating may be driven by a number of factors including the cost to participate, safety concerns, and lack of knowledge of the activity as Pickering becomes increasingly culturally diverse.

Needs Assessment

There is no generally accepted service level target guiding the provision of outdoor ice rinks as the approach varies by municipality. Some municipalities have been able to work with volunteer groups to share responsibilities with a common provision model being that municipal staff provide and set up/take down skating boards, while volunteers are responsible for flooding and maintaining the ice surface. Observations in a number of communities, however, reveal that commitment from volunteers to maintain outdoor rinks has diminished over time due to the considerable maintenance efforts required. This is being felt locally as the City of Pickering reassumed the responsibility of maintaining the outdoor rink at Claremont Memorial Park, thereby requiring the City to commit staff and other resources to this endeavour.



In addition, outdoor rinks are becoming more difficult to provide in Pickering as the City has been experiencing warmer winter weather, which has limited the window of opportunity for ice skating. For example, the outdoor rink at Claremont Memorial Park was used for approximately two weeks in 2016 as the weather was not cold enough to maintain a suitable skating surface. In an effort to enhance the quality of outdoor ice, the City's recently completed master plan for Claremont Memorial Park identifies that the outdoor rink will be reconstructed and sheltered.

While the provision of outdoor ice may be a challenge at times, there is still merit for the City to consider outdoor skating as a level of service. In doing so, however, the City would need to be strategic and direct such a use away from the neighbourhood level and instead provide a rink to serve a city-wide role as a distinctive destination type amenity. For example, the intensification related initiatives being planned in the City Centre could provide an opportunity and impetus for the City to develop an artificial skating rink as part of a future park development or redevelopment, including park designs that embody a more 'hardscaped' feel (Nathan Philips Square in Toronto, Market Square in Kingston and Celebration Square in Mississauga are examples). Providing a destination rink, however, attains more of an economic development and urban design objective with recreational use being the secondary objective (i.e. such a rink would be used to draw people into a chosen area). As part of future studies exploring intensification and/or economic development in Pickering, the City should explore the costs and benefits of

providing a destination outdoor rink that would be tied to strategic initiatives relating to park, recreation or other civic facility developments.

Recommendations – Outdoor Ice Rinks

40. Recognizing that a new outdoor rink is included in the Master Plan for Claremont Memorial Park, additional or future outdoor ice rink(s) should only be considered in conjunction with other civic planning, urban design and/or economic development analyses given the sizeable costs to construct and operate refrigerated rinks.

5.19 Skateboard Parks

Supply

The City’s sole skateboard park is at Diana, Princess of Wales Park, located adjacent to the Pickering Recreation Complex. The City recently considered developing a second smaller skateboard park at East Woodlands Park, adjacent to the George Ashe Library and Community Centre. However, this decision was deferred to the outcome of the Skateboard Park Strategy, which is being undertaken in conjunction with this Master Plan.

Table 48: Service Level Comparison, Skateboard Parks

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 10-19)	Skateboard Parks	Service Level
Aurora	8,000	2	1 : 4,000
Ajax	18,000	3	1 : 6,000
Oshawa	18,000	3	1 : 6,000
Whitby	20,000	3	1 : 6,700
Pickering	12,000	1	1 : 12,000
St. Catharines	14,000	1	1 : 14,000
Richmond Hill	27,000	1	1 : 27,000
Average	17,000	2	1 : 10,800
Median	18,000	2	1 : 6,700

The Skateboard Park Strategy will determine the expected participation rate in action sports, including skateboarding, scooters and BMX. These sports utilize a similar terrain collectively known as “skate parks”. Furthermore, the Skateboard Park Strategy will investigate different ways of arranging a network of skate park opportunities throughout the City to serve a variety of age groups and skill levels. This process will include public consultation regarding potential skate park sites, and will include the design of an initial skate park facility.

Pickering’s skate park results in a service level of one skate park per 12,000 youth, which is on the lower end of the spectrum compared to benchmarked municipalities. This comparison should be interpreted with caution, however, as the provision of skate parks is also influenced by the size and scale of each location.

Market Trends

While once considered a fad, skateboarding has demonstrated sustained longevity. With research revealing that youth are gravitating towards more unstructured and low-cost activities such as skateboarding. Skate parks are now considered a core recreation facility in most municipalities across Ontario. Historically, skateboarding was viewed by many as supporting negative youth behaviour; however, it has now become a mainstream, positive activity that municipalities have embraced. It is recognized that the provision of skate parks provides youth with a safe and positive atmosphere to engage in outdoor physical activities, while socializing with others who share common interests. With the introduction of skateboarding as a part of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, lending further credibility to the sport, this has the potential to drive interest and participation in skateboarding even higher which in turn could lead to greater demands for future skateboarding facilities.

Community Engagement

The Public Input Sessions solicited residents' ideas for developing new or improving skate parks in Pickering. A broad range of ideas were expressed and generally speaking, residents felt that skate parks are important for the youth demographic as it provides a safe place for them to gather. With respect to design, it was indicated that skate parks should be located in visible areas to enhance safety and encourage use. Residents suggested that a skate park should be able to accommodate roller blades, BMX bike, and other modes of wheeled sports/activities, and be large enough to have areas for all skill levels. An array of apparatus and features were requested, including bowls, half-pipes, rails, stairs, and more, to allow users to perform a variety of tricks.

The household telephone survey indicated that in the past 12 months, 8% of households participated in skateboarding, which was one of the least popular activities that was surveyed. That said, 40% of households supported investment in skate parks, which ranked 19th out of 24 facility types. While this suggests that skate parks is not a priority to the general population, given the median age of the respondent at 57 years, the results may not accurately reflect the true community perspective for this facility type.

Needs Assessment

Please refer to the Skateboard Park Strategy for recommendations regarding skateboard park facilities in Pickering.

Recommendations – Skateboard Parks

41. Implement the recommendations of the City's Skateboard Park Strategy.

5.20 Splash Pads

Supply

Pickering has splash pads located at Beachfront Park and Amberlea Park, which feature a range of interactive features including spray posts, spray creatures, a waterfall, and water jets. These facilities complement other recreation facilities at their respective parks including seasonal washrooms, playgrounds, seating, and shade areas (amenities vary by location).

Service Level

Two splash pads in Pickering translates into a service level of one splash pad per 5,000 children, which is the second lowest service level compared to benchmarked municipalities. The provision of splash pads do not solely rely on these service levels but rather geographic distribution on the basis of enhancing walkability, particularly as these facilities are oriented towards children and young families. The size and scale of design is also an influencing factor in the provision of splash pads.

Table 49: Service Level Comparison, Splash Pads

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 0-9)	Splash Pads	Service Level
Whitby	17,000	14	1 : 1,200
Richmond Hill	20,000	13	1 : 1,500
Oshawa	18,000	6	1 : 3,100
Aurora	6,000	2	1 : 3,100
Ajax	17,000	5	1 : 3,400
Pickering	10,000	2	1 : 5,000
St. Catharines	13,000	2	1 : 6,300
Average	14,000	6	1 : 3,400
Median	17,000	5	1 : 3,000

Market Trends

Most municipalities have shifted to the provision of splash pads as an alternative to outdoor swimming pools and wading pools. Splash pads have proven to be more cost effective than traditional outdoor pools to build and operate as they can be integrated into most park settings and do not require regular staffing as there is no standing water to supervise or treat frequently. Splash pads have gained in popularity in recent years to become one of the most sought after amenities for young families seeking affordable and accessible opportunities to cool down on a hot day.



Amberlea Park

Community Engagement

The telephone survey found that 26% of households used a splash pad over the past 12 months, which was the 11th most popular activity. Three out of five of households supported investment in new or improved splash pads, ranking as the 10th highest priority, suggesting that there is moderate support for this facility.

Needs Assessment

An age-specific market standard is used to identify splash pad needs as these facilities are primarily used by children. Most G.T.A. municipalities utilize a provision standard of one splash pad per 3,000 to 5,000 children, which is within Pickering’s level of service at 1:5,000 (based on Pickering’s 2016 Census population of children age 0-9). It is recommended that the City adopt a service level of 1:3,000 children to guide future splash pad needs. This provision target is a departure from the City’s current service level of 1:5,000 children, however, this adjustment is appropriate given that much of the future population growth, which is expected to occur in Seaton, will likely be young families. The recommended provision target is also consistent with many of the benchmarked municipalities.

Table 50: Projected Splash Pad Needs

	2017	2021	2026
Estimated Children Population (Age 0-9) Based on a 10% of the total population (2016 Census)	10,000	12,000	14,000
Number of Splash Pads Required Based on a target of one splash pad per 3,000 children	3.3	4.0	4.7
Surplus (Deficit) Based on a current supply of 2 splash pads	(0.7)	(2.0)	(2.7)

Application of this service target reveals that Pickering will require two new splash pads by 2026. As previously mentioned, most growth is expected to take place within Seaton and based on planned land use patterns, households with children can be expected. Thus, it is recommended that two new splash pads be concentrated in Seaton to serve new residents. With a new multi-use recreation facility planned for the community, there is merit in constructing a splash pad at this location to complement the recommended indoor pool. In addition to serving children in Seaton, a splash pad at this location achieves efficiencies in facility construction and the ability to access supporting amenities that are available through the recreation facility such as washrooms, change rooms, and parking. A second splash pad should be considered at another park in Seaton to maintain a balanced geographic distribution of splash pads. It is recognized that the City is currently working with a developer to construct a new splash pad at a future Village Green in Seaton, which is expected to meet this need.

Recommendations – Splash Pads

- Construct two splash pads in Seaton. One splash pad should be developed in concert with the proposed multi-use community centre. The City and a developer are currently in the process of planning a second splash pad, which will be located in a future Village Green in Seaton, which is expected to meet this need.

5.21 Playgrounds

Supply

The City provides 58 playgrounds at parks throughout Pickering. The City’s playgrounds or play structures offer both basic and creative play experiences. The location of Pickering’s playgrounds is illustrated in Figure 25.

Pickering provides a service level of one playground per 200 children, which is consistent with benchmarked municipalities. Similar to splash pads, the provision of playgrounds relies on geographic distribution to ensure that these facility types are located within walking distance of residential areas.

Table 51: Service Level Comparison, Playgrounds

Municipality	Population Estimate (Age 0-9)	Playground Locations	Service Level
Richmond Hill	20,000	121	1 : 200
Oshawa	18,000	110	1 : 200
Pickering*	10,000	58	1 : 200
Aurora	6,000	33	1 : 200
Ajax	17,000	72	1 : 200
St. Catharines	13,000	52	1 : 200
Whitby	17,000	51	1 : 300
Average	14,000	71	1 : 200
Median	17,000	58	1 : 200

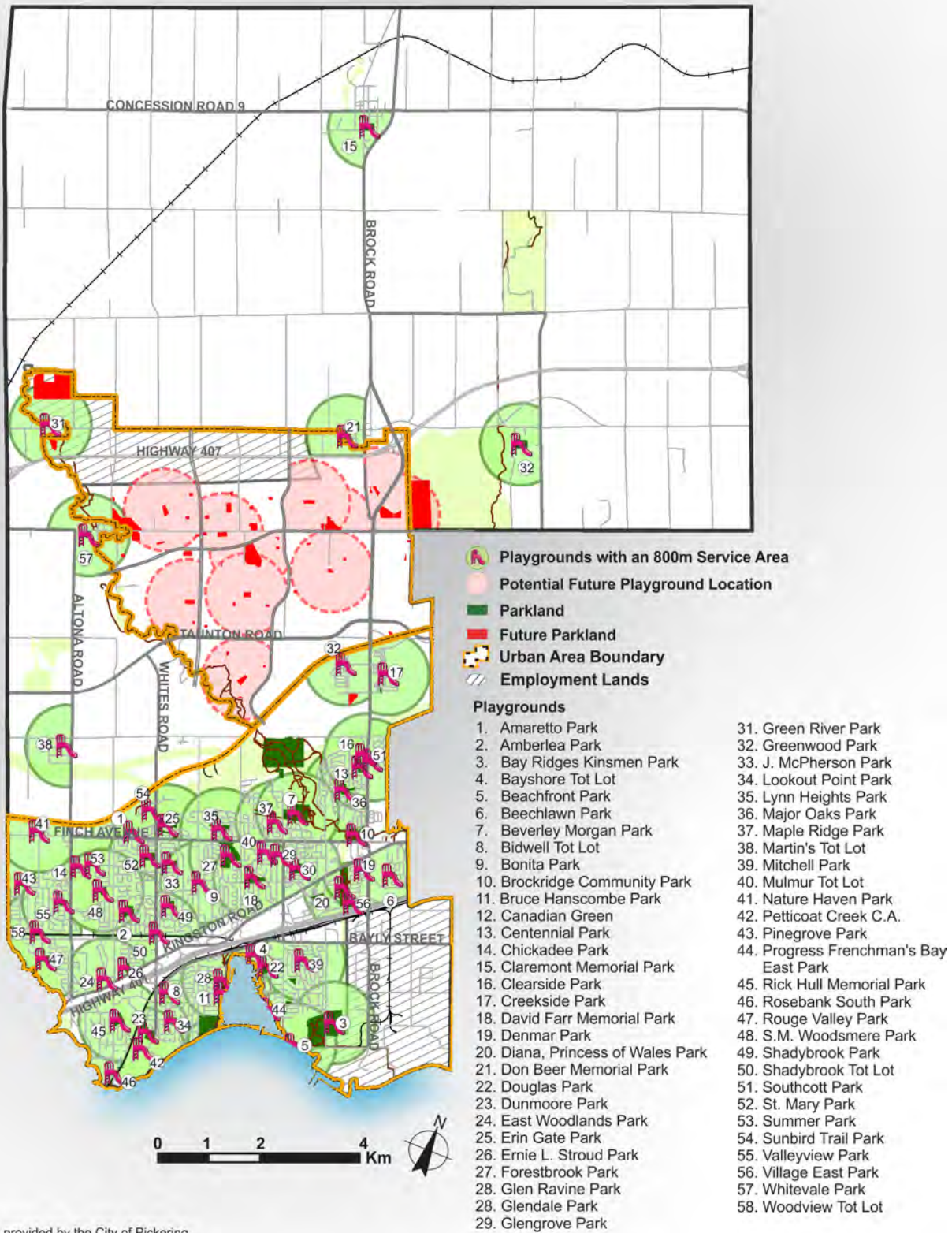
*Pickering’s playgrounds are designed for users age 0-12, however, a population estimate of users age 0-9 is used to compare with other municipalities.

Market Trends

Playgrounds are neighbourhood-level amenities that benefit early childhood development, foster cognitive development and social skills, and encourages physical activity. Playgrounds are typically provided within walking distance of major residential areas (5 to 10 minute walk), without having to cross major barriers such as arterial roads, highways, railways, and waterbodies. Traditional playground equipment generally consists of swings, a slide, and an array of climbing structures. More recent playgrounds that are constructed are designed to facilitate more creative and unique play experiences, and the integration of accessible features.

An alternative to the traditional and creative playground model, natural and adventure playgrounds are becoming more popular around the world. These playgrounds encourage utilize landscape features, provide creative options and daring opportunities, and use natural materials such as wood, logs, ropes, stones, and large boulders. These playgrounds are designed to appear more precarious and facilitate the concept of “risky play”, which encourages children to take more risks through climbing, exploring, moving vigorously, and creating their own activities using their imagination. These styles of play are popular in the U.K. and U.S.A., and are gaining traction in Canada. This type of play may be viewed as beneficial for children, particularly given that the most recent ParticipACTION report card identified that the over-protection of children (due to the perceived need to ensure that they are healthy and safe) is negatively impacting children’s ability to be physically active and develop valuable skills.

Figure 25: Distribution of Playgrounds



Data provided by the City of Pickering

Community Engagement

The household telephone survey indicated that 39% of households used a playground in the past 12 months, which was the sixth most popular activity. Three-quarters (76%) of households also supported additional investment in playgrounds, which ranked second out of 24 facility types. This result suggests that playgrounds are a high priority for residents.

Needs Assessment

Playground needs are evaluated based on geography given that these facilities are primarily utilized by families with small children. Playgrounds are best suited in parks that are within walking distance of residential areas to maximize access, particularly as children and some young families may not have access to a vehicle. Best practices suggest that playgrounds should be located within 800 metres of all residential areas, which generally equates to a 10 minute walk. This service area should not be intersected by major obstructions that may pose as walking barriers to children such as arterial roads and railways. Application of this service area in Pickering reveals service gaps in the following areas:



Douglas Park

- **Northeast corner of Brock Road and Finch Avenue** – It is recognized that portions of this gap area is currently under development, while other lands are subject to future development. Based on Census Tracts, the 2016 Census reported over 1,000 children living in this area. While portions of the Census Tract are presently served by playgrounds, a new playground at a future park should be contemplated to enhance service coverage in the area.
- **Southwest corner of Brock Road and Finch Avenue** – This area is characterized as a low and medium density residential neighbourhood, which are expected to be occupied by a mix of young families, older adults, and seniors. Census Tracts identified that there are 430 children living in the area. The absence of existing parkland and the fact that this neighbourhood has been established for some time suggests that opportunities to construct a playground are limited. Opportunities may exist, however, to secure a license agreement with Hydro One to establish parkland within the hydro corridor.
- **North of the Highway 401 Corridor between Pickering Town Centre to the westerly City boundary, south of Kingston Road** – A visual observation of this area reveals that this gap area is primarily characterized by commercial land uses and as a result, a playground in this area is not required.

Given that the majority of population growth is expected to occur in Seaton, the City should ensure that a sufficient number of playgrounds are available at future parks and that they are accessible to future residents by utilizing the 800 metre service area (with consideration given to major obstructions). Applying this service area within Seaton suggests that a minimum of 11

new playgrounds should be provided during the planning period. At the City's discretion, additional playgrounds should be considered, where appropriate, to enhance geographic distribution and serve gap areas.

Equally important to the provision of new playgrounds is the need to ensure that the City's existing play structures are safe, modern, and provides a quality playing experience. The previous Master Plan focused on the provision of safe and accessible playground locations, which was guided by a playground replacement program. The City does not currently have a replacement program in place, although it is understood that this is currently being explored by the City's Parks Operations Staff. The completion of a formal replacement strategy is critical to guide the renewal of playgrounds and positions the City to budget accordingly. As previously articulated, the provision of new and redeveloped playgrounds should be constructed to meet accessibility requirements to minimize barriers for users, regardless of ability. The integration of Natural/adventure playground and risky play elements should also be considered through playground renewal or development, which may include the use of natural materials (e.g., wood, stone, boulders, etc.), higher climbing structures, rope courses, and more.

Recommendations – Playgrounds

43. Address playground gaps through future park development within the South Pickering Urban Area.
44. A minimum of 11 playgrounds should be strategically located at future parks within Seaton to provide sufficient coverage within residential areas. At the City's discretion, additional playgrounds should be considered, where appropriate, to enhance geographic distribution and serve gap areas. Future playgrounds should be located within 800 metres of residential areas, without intersecting major obstructions such as arterial roads and railways.
45. The construction of new or redeveloped playgrounds should integrate natural / adventure features, which may include the use of natural materials (e.g., wood, stones, boulders, etc.), higher climbing structures, rope courses, and more. Playground design shall have regard for the Design of Public Spaces Standard and incorporate accessible playground features, such as using a firm and stable surface. Consultation with accessible groups and users is also encouraged. These factors should be considered as the City continues to prepare its playground replacement program.

5.22 Outdoor Running Tracks

Supply

The City has two outdoor tracks located at Beverly Morgan Park and St. Mary Park. The provision of outdoor running tracks vary in each municipality as most municipalities rely on accessing outdoor running tracks at schools. As a result, a service level comparison was not conducted. The need for indoor running/walking tracks is discussed in Section 5.6.

Market Conditions

Outdoor running tracks are primarily provided by school boards as these facilities have been a pillar in varsity athletics and support academic programming. Pickering is among the few municipalities that provides municipal outdoor running tracks, which are used by schools including the Pine Ridge Secondary School and the St. Mary Catholic Secondary School. The outdoor track facilities are also used by user groups including the Durham Dragons and Durham Gazelles, which are regional organizations that utilize facilities in other municipalities. Outdoor running tracks generally offer community benefits given that they serve the above noted groups as well as generally being available for use by others in the community (during non-school hours). As a result, municipally provided outdoor tracks are not common, although some examples do exist (e.g., Oshawa Civic Recreation Complex).

Community Engagement

The community engagement process did not yield any requests for outdoor running tracks.

Usage Profile

Permit data provided by the City indicated the outdoor running tracks are generally used approximately 153 hours a year. The most used outdoor running track is at Beverley Morgan Park (107 hours). This is partly due to the fact that the outdoor track at St. Mary Park is not permitted when the soccer field is in use due to safety reasons. Nevertheless, there is ample capacity available to accommodate additional usage at existing outdoor running tracks.

Needs Assessment

Outdoor running tracks are used by school students and sports organizations to support varsity athletic programs and competitive running. Municipalities generally refrain from constructing outdoor running tracks and encourage the use of existing facilities. In addition to Pickering's two outdoor running tracks, a high level scan in Pickering reveals that there is also an outdoor track located at Dunbarton High School. Regionally, outdoor tracks can also be found at schools in adjacent municipalities including Ajax, Whitby, and Oshawa. As these facilities are generally considered to be 'drive to' facilities, there is currently a strong distribution of outdoor running tracks in Durham Region. With these factors in mind, together with the fact that no significant requests for an outdoor running track received through the community engagement process, there is insufficient demand to warrant additional outdoor running tracks during the planning period. Requests for access to, or increased use of, outdoor running tracks should be accommodated at Pickering's existing facilities and school facilities.

Recommendations – Outdoor Running Tracks

46. Where possible, accommodate requests for access to, or increased use of, outdoor running tracks at Pickering's existing facilities and school facilities.

6.0 Service Delivery

The service review supports the development of the Master Plan and is a critical part of the priority setting process. The review responds to the need to ensure that residents are receiving a wide variety of choices and quality recreation and parks services, while considering the effectiveness of the service delivery system and the inclusion of all residents. The assessment includes the analysis of all the inputs gathered to support the Master Plan including public engagement initiatives, data and information provided by the City, related national and provincial initiatives, strategic priorities and industry best practices. Recommendations are developed with this meaningful input and prioritized in terms of their urgency and importance over the life of the Master Plan.



The service review for Pickering addresses the following strategic and operational questions at a minimum:

Service Delivery Model

- What is the current service delivery model and how can it be improved?
- What are the service delivery and programming options available in Pickering and are they the most effective?
- What is the role of the municipality in maximizing participation in recreation and parks, and in recognizing and enabling other related providers?

Service Provision

- What is influencing the delivery of services within Pickering e.g., current trends, aging population, participation rates, community inputs etc.?
- What is the current mix of services and is there a good range of choice available for all residents?
- What are the current utilization rates for program types and by age group?
- How does the City engage in Provincial and National-related initiatives (True Sport, Long-term Athlete Development, Jumpstart, Physical Literacy, Youth Friendly Communities, etc.) and how might these be addressed to better serve residents?

Accessibility and Inclusion

- Review of the current fee structure as well as non-resident, senior and student rates and current subsidy programs
- How does the City reach out to marginalized populations and can this be improved upon?

Community Supports

- How can partners and community stakeholder groups work better toward common priorities?

Internal Capacity

- What can be done to ensure that the current structure, organizational culture, staffing capacity and resource allocation best serves the residents of Pickering?

Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Key Result Area

- Based on the input, research, community engagement messages etc. – what is the go forward vision, mission, guiding principles, key result areas for the next five years?

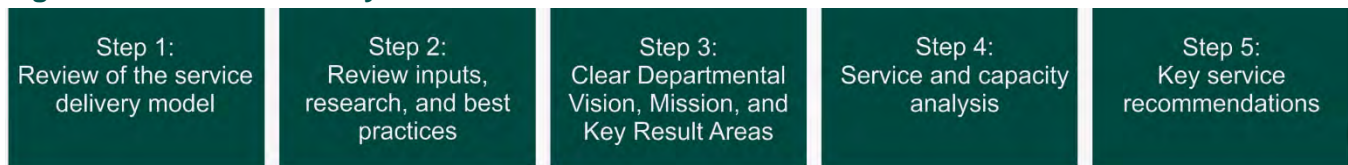
Performance Measurement

- How can information and data better inform evidenced-based decision making in the future?
- How can the residents and staff be informed as to the progress that is being made on the Pickering Recreation and Parks Master Plan?

6.1 Service Review and Program Assessment Process

This review ensures that the residents are receiving a wide range of services within facilities and parks utilizing the most effective and efficient methods. The review included a comparison of existing policies and practices in Pickering to those in similar jurisdictions as well as current industry practices and includes community expectations and corporate priorities. The review and assessment process is illustrated in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Service Delivery and Assessment Process



Step One: Review of the Service Delivery Model

The service delivery model is presented as to how recreation and parks services are delivered by the many related agencies in Pickering.

Step Two: Review Input, Research and Best Practices

An assessment of all inputs including but not limited to data analysis, community and staff engagement efforts, practices in other jurisdictions and related industry standards to capture service priorities.

Step Three: Clear Departmental Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Key Result Areas

These foundational elements of the Service Plan will inform departmental focus, resource allocation and specific priorities over the course of the Master Plan

Step Four: Service Capacity and Assessments

The service assessments will serve to ensure the continued sustainability of recreation and parks service delivery considering community priorities.

Step Five: Key Recommendations

Recommendations are offered to ensure that the key results are achieved over the life of the Master Plan. An implementation plan will ensure recommendations with the most urgency are dealt with in the short term and other recommendations would be implemented over the mid and longer-range timeframes. Performance measures will also be recommended and can serve to articulate annual and incremental successes and achievements as the Master Plan is implemented.

6.2 Recreation Service Delivery Model

Pickering has played a significant role in delivering quality recreation and parks opportunities to the public. This, combined with supporting community and stakeholder groups to thrive and utilize public facilities, has resulted in a fulsome delivery system for all residents and visitors. Further, the municipality must consider other commercial and non-profit providers and seek ways of not duplicating resources. Municipalities enable various methods of providing/enabling recreation and parks services to ensure residents can enjoy healthy lifestyles. Council must ensure that these delivery approaches are sustainable over time as the City cannot afford to replace many of the volunteer-driven opportunities with its own resources. Ensuring that community groups remain engaged in sport, recreation and parks delivery fosters social cohesion and community pride; volunteerism is a key element in service provision in Pickering.



Pickering's Role in Service Delivery

The role of the municipality in delivering recreation and parks services centres on future planning, being nimble to change services as the community evolves, ensuring full access especially for marginalized populations and providing/enabling a full range of services for all

ages and abilities. Programs and services are provided with a view to being cost efficient, providing quality assurance and safe services resulting in high levels of public satisfaction.

Specific responsibilities of the municipality include to:

- Understand the growth of the municipality and plan for any increase/decrease in service provision based on changes to the demographics, income levels, social issues and including a diverse population;
- Incorporate program/service approaches that can address social development issues within the community such as youth engagement, isolation in older adults, and improving physical activity level;
- Ensure that the infrastructure and amenities are in a state of good repair, are accessible (e.g., consistent with the AODA), and are flexible in terms of their uses;
- Provide a full range of activities based on the needs of the general population and within specific age groupings;
- Enable partners and other providers to excel and play their part in complimenting a full range of services;
- Comply with legislative requirements for all services and facility types;
- Incorporate quality assurance measures and standards in the delivery of service;
- Train and support respective staff and volunteers in the delivery of service;
- Support and recognize volunteerism in sport and recreation opportunities;
- Communicate and share knowledge with partners and stakeholders;
- Work collectively with partners and stakeholders in addressing needed improvements; and
- Measure the efficiencies and effectiveness of the City-wide recreation and parks delivery system.

Current Service Delivery Model

The adjacent illustration highlights the many providers of parks, recreation and sport opportunities in Pickering. Citizens have many choices in terms of an array of providers of varying opportunities. There is room for greater collaboration in supporting a common vision and sharing resources and expertise. In an environment of declining resources, all efforts should be made to reduce duplication, streamline communications where possible and work toward the common good.



Delivery of Pickering’s Recreation and Parks Services

Pickering uses many different service delivery methodologies to attract users and increase participation in recreation and parks services. The service methods for the major programs and services are demonstrated in Table 52, followed by a description of each. There is a range of stakeholders that deliver sports, programs and opportunities using the publicly owned infrastructure. Coordination and ensuring that all ages of residents regardless of their background enjoy a range of barrier free choices.

Table 52: Delivery of Key Programs and Services

Key Services / Service Delivery Methodology	Aquatics	Arenas	Fitness	Programs and Camps	Sport Delivery	Older Adults	Youth
Directly Offered Registered Programs	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Directly Offered Drop-In Opportunities	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Self-Organized Stakeholder Groups	◆	◆			◆	◆	◆
Facility Rentals- Private and Commercial	◆	◆			◆	◆	◆
Other Government Agencies				◆			

Directly Provided Programs and Services

The current service delivery model for recreation and parks in Pickering focuses on the direct provision of programs and services coupled with the delivery of sport and active pursuits through community groups, not for profit/charitable groups, private/commercial providers and community

organizations. The City delivers programs and services offered as registered programs and drop-in/casual opportunities. Staff design, develop and deliver programs based on quantified resident interests and new trends. Residents register for programs and commit to attend a series of classes for directly provided services. Most often there is a learning and skill development continuum involved in a structured environment and many of the programs and content are standardized so the public can be guaranteed a level of service that is based on industry standards and any legislated requirements.

In addition to registered programs, flexible drop-in activities are offered such as lane swim or public skating. Drop-in programs offer the ability to participate in a range of recreation activities without having to register beforehand. This provides flexibility for residents' busy schedules and active lifestyles. These drop-in/casual opportunities can accommodate more participants and are generally offered at a lower cost. Drop-in opportunities are becoming more popular as lifestyles dictate the need for more casual forms of recreation. Casual use of trails, parks, playgrounds and other active amenities are offered at no cost to residents and serve to strengthen families and individual levels of physical activity.

Indirect Provision by Community Based Groups, Private, Commercial and Not-for-Profit / Charitable Groups

Volunteer community groups exist to provide recreation, leisure and sport opportunities that broaden the range of opportunities in Pickering. These opportunities are managed by community members and a tremendous amount of volunteer effort is given to ensure that residents are provided with skill development, competition where applicable, qualified coaching, safe facilities and social opportunities. There are many supports provided through national and provincial sport bodies including coach training, educational opportunities, and capacity building with respect to governance and sport delivery. Most often community groups pay for their use of fields and facilities and there is a range of supports provided by Pickering including grants, subsidized rates for facility rentals, and communications on changes to legislative requirements and promotional materials.

Private and Commercial Operators follow the market and offer classes/opportunities in various activities through club memberships. Use of public spaces would be cost recoverable to profit generating if space is available. Pickering does not generally compete with private enterprise and will provide introductory versus specialized opportunities – for the most part although some specialized programming is appropriate in aquatics and fitness.

Observations

- Communities in Ontario are building stronger relationships with other providers of recreation and parks services within their jurisdiction. This approach is imperative in a climate of cost increases and declining resources. Results have proven to work toward common goals and address current social issues as well as to reduce duplication and share resources. Integrated Service Delivery is a term used to describe all related groups embracing a common vision and working better together to realize better outcomes for the community. While Pickering does have relationships with many related providers

(e.g., T.R.C.A.), more can be done to strengthen cohesiveness and better outcomes for the community.

- The Community Services Department has a strong relationship with the Pickering Library and the Durham Region Public School system and discussions do occur regarding program offerings and hosting programs within school sites. Building stronger relationships with other related service providers is timely especially with the anticipated population growth in Seaton.

Recommendations – Recreation Service Delivery Model

47. Strengthen the Service Delivery Model by convening joint meetings with all providers and related agencies (e.g., T.R.C.A.) in Pickering to share priorities and address common issues collectively.
48. Develop a Community Engagement Strategy to welcome new residents to Seaton, inform them of recreation and parks opportunities and begin to assist groups form or expand existing groups to provide localized recreation and parks opportunities.

6.3 Recreation and Parks Strategic Service Delivery Framework

The development of the Master Plan will demonstrate alignment with community priorities as captured in through input, plans for growth and the priority to serve the community with quality services with an emphasis on fiscal sustainability. Alignment with national and provincial priorities have also been taken into consideration.

A Framework for Recreation in Canada

One of the most recent national studies and determination of priorities is the Framework for Recreation in Canada (F.R.C.). The F.R.C. was developed over the course of three years and involved a significant amount of consultation with Canadians as to their thoughts on the benefits and importance of recreation. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association in collaboration with the Interprovincial/Territorial Governments – through the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and the Provincial /Territorial Recreation and Parks Associations – developed a framework that rejuvenates the definition of recreation and parks, articulates the economic impacts of recreation and parks as well as the benefits and key goals and strategies that should be evident in each community across Canada. This Framework is extremely relevant to the City of Pickering and will be referenced to develop relevant and key directions for the City. The development of the five key goals have been well researched and are evidenced-based (Table 53).



Table 53: Framework for Recreation in Canada

Vision Statement: We envision a Canada where everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster individual wellbeing, community wellbeing, and the wellbeing of our natural and built environment.

<p>Goal #1: Active Living Foster active living through physical recreation</p>	<p>Goal # 2: Inclusion and Access Increase inclusion and access to recreation for population that face constraints to participation</p>	<p>Goal #3: Connecting People and Nature Help people connect to nature through recreation</p>	<p>Goal #4: Supportive Environments Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities</p>	<p>Goal #5: Recreation Capacity Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field</p>
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Examples of Supportive Initiatives and Strategies

<p>Recreation for all ages</p> <p>Increasing residents' frequency, duration and intensity of physical activity</p> <p>Participation in recreation throughout one's life</p> <p>Physical literacy</p> <p>Sport development</p> <p>Sport tourism</p> <p>Free play opportunities</p> <p>Active families</p>	<p>Equitable participation for all, regardless of socio-economic status, age, culture, race, aboriginal status, gender, ability, sexual orientation or geographic location</p> <p>Specific efforts to Include marginalized populations</p> <p>Community engagement initiatives</p>	<p>Natural spaces and places</p> <p>comprehensive system of parks and trails</p> <p>Public awareness and education</p> <p>Minimize negative impacts on the environment</p>	<p>Provide essential spaces and places</p> <p>Flexible structures and spaces for multiple purposes</p> <p>Renewed infrastructure</p> <p>Active transportation</p> <p>Partnerships and sponsorships</p> <p>Assessment tools</p> <p>Aligned community initiatives</p>	<p>Collaborative system</p> <p>Quality assurance</p> <p>Service standards</p> <p>Knowledge management</p> <p>Business supports</p> <p>Marketing / communications</p> <p>Organizational effectiveness</p> <p>Performance management</p> <p>Economic impact</p> <p>Community capacity building</p> <p>Community engagement and leadership</p> <p>Volunteerism</p>
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Future Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and Key Result Areas

The service review and assessment has considered community and stakeholder input, data provided by the City, current research and trends, the Framework for Recreation in Canada and supporting national and provincial strategies and plans. A strategic framework serves to summarize this information into a focused plan and provide a direction through Council to City staff and related partners and stakeholder groups

Vision Statement

As articulated in Section 1 of the Master Plan, a **vision statement** has been developed to identify the future state of recreation and parks in Pickering and indicates how the City would like to be viewed.

Vision for Recreation and Parks in Pickering

We are active, cohesive and enjoy community pride in Pickering through our participation in recreation, parks and special events.

Mission Statement

A **mission statement** speaks what the Community Services Department does, who it does it for and how the Department goes about its work.

Mission Statement

A strong community network works well together in Pickering to provide quality parks, recreation and sport opportunities to all residents.

Guiding Principles on the Delivery of Recreation and Parks

The following guiding principles outline the values that the City embraces in addressing the provision and enabling of recreation and parks services.

Volunteerism and Community Engagement – We recognize that the delivery of recreation and parks services is fulsome and as a result of an engaged community, many volunteers give countless hours to provide opportunities. We value and appreciate our volunteers and recognize that volunteerism plays a large part in the ability of residents to be active.

Integrated Service Delivery – The Departments will work collaboratively with related organizations as the City is not the only primary provider of casual and active pursuits. A collective of related organizations and groups work toward the common goal of an active, cohesive and healthy community.

Maximum Participation – The benefits of being actively engaged in recreation pursuits result in healthier individuals and a healthier community. All efforts are made to include as many residents as possible in recreation and parks pursuits.

Broad Range of Opportunities – A choice of program and service types will be offered to meet a wide variety of interests and age ranges to optimize personal growth and development.

Social Development – Recreation and parks leaders are aware of the changing/growing community and respond to address social issues such as physical inactivity, reducing barriers to participation, and drowning prevention.

Access and Inclusion – Different approaches are taken to include more residents with diverse needs in accessing and participating in programs and services. This might include bringing programs to low income neighbourhoods where transportation may be an issue and/or meeting with leaders of varying cultures to ensure that needs are being met and to better engage residents.

Quality Assurance – All users of recreation facilities, programs and services will receive the benefit of stringent compliance with legislative requirements, safety, cleanliness, pleasing experiences and knowledgeable and customer driven staff.

6.4 Key Result Areas

The articulation of four key result areas serves to synthesize the service delivery review into priorities that require focus to either sustain or improve the delivery of recreation and parks in Pickering. Each of the four areas of focus are listed below and a fuller description will follow and include background information, a goal statement, promising practices, observations with respect to the Pickering context and a summary of the timely and relevant recommendations:

- Greater Participation
- Access and Inclusion
- Physical Activity and Outdoor Play
- Community Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness

Key Result Area #1: Greater Participation

Goal Statement: To increase participation in recreation and parks pursuits in all age groups.

Pickering's Community Services Department and related community stakeholders are focused on ensuring that residents have a myriad of choices in becoming active and engaged. The value of recreation and parks pursuits are well understood. Active lifestyles have many benefits; not only can one experience and accomplish new challenges but one can reduce the onset of chronic illnesses as well. Children and youth can discover their potential and become leaders within the community. Older adults reap the benefits of social engagement and lifelong self-discovery. The role of community groups, related organizations and the municipality is to engage

as many residents as possible in the recreation and parks pursuits of their choice and continue to engage new community members.

Preparing for the Seaton Community Expansion

The growth in Seaton could add approximately 33,000 residents to Pickering's population by 2026. While this is about a decade away, planning for required programs and services, as well as related staffing, should begin in the next two to three years. A Recreation Service Plan would apply current service levels and participation rates to the newly developed areas as a starting point. The development of a range of services for all ages will be required and significant effort will be needed to promote the benefits of participating and accessing programs. Staff will work to build capacity in the new neighbourhoods to support newly developing groups to provide a balance of directly provided services and community based efforts.

The Recreation Service Plan would include consideration of the following elements at a minimum:

Vision, Mission and Alignment with City Priorities

- The departmental vision and mission will capture the needs of the expanded community with greater emphasis on community capacity building and outreach.
- Priorities in the expanded neighbourhoods will most likely be aligned with City priorities.

Background Information

- A description of the housing stock and anticipated average number of family members per household.
- Anticipated income levels.
- Demographics and socio-economics.
- An articulation of social issues.
- School system and partnership opportunities.

Recreation and Parks Provision

- Current national, provincial, and local trends.
- Recreation services and service levels that will be provided by the City of Pickering.
- Recreation services that will be provided by other service providers (private, non-profit, other government agencies, etc.).

Community Strengthening Efforts

- Promotion of recreation and parks opportunities and the benefits of participation.
- Accessing services.
- Community engagement and outreach initiatives.

- Assistance in developing community groups (consideration of grants, funding, envelope expansion, etc.).

Staffing and Budget Requirements

- Resource allocation (human resources, equipment, program supplies, etc.) per facility and program type.
- Staff recruitment and leadership training.
- Volunteer recruitment and supports.

Monitoring Progress

- A performance measurement system that captures participation year over year.
- Provision of services by age group and activity type.
- Community engagement efforts.
- Diversity and inclusion efforts.
- Participant satisfaction levels.

Drop-In and Casual Recreation Opportunities

There is a trend in Ontario toward more casual and drop-in opportunities. This approach respects the fact that people commute, lead busy lives and hesitate to commit to an ongoing program over many weeks. In Pickering, the opposite scenario seems to be the case. Attendance in drop-in programs has decreased by 20% and participation in registered programs has increased by 28%. It should be noted that staff have increased the number and hours of drop in opportunities and therefore the capacity of these opportunities is greater. Older adults are responding well as they are at 88% of the maximum capacity. Children and youth have 33% and 16% fill rates currently. Staff will need to monitor the use of drop-in opportunities and ensure that these opportunities are available as the interest dictates. The most popular drop-in opportunities offered is through the City's Free Teen Program, particularly activities such as basketball and various Free Teen Events that are held each year (e.g., Youth Week, Artfest, etc.)

Registered Programs

The recreation program choices centre on opportunities in Active and Fitness, Creative, General Interest (non-active and creative classes), Summer and March Break Camps. The analysis of the program offerings demonstrates that there is a solid variety of choices for all age groups. Staff review participation data on a regular basis and are nimble in increasing opportunities where there are pent up demands and decreasing programs that continually demonstrate low fill rates.

The following table summarizes program participation from 2014 to 2016 for all age groups.

Table 54: Participation in Registered Programs, 2014 - 2016

Program Type	2014 Participants	2016 Participants	Growth	%
Active and Fitness	1,792	2,358	566	32%
Creative	759	920	161	21%
Summer Camps	1,803	2,344	541	30%
March Break Camps	173	195	22	13%
Total	8,954	11,503	2,549	28%

Over the past three years, registration in directly provided programs has increased by 28% or by 2,549 participants. This increase in registration is promising as it indicates that the programs being offered are reflective of current trends and what residents are interested in. The work of staff to offer a full range of choices for all ages of residents is being met. The market will continue to determine what is popular/reflective of current needs and course offerings will continue to change based on pent up demands and lower fill rates. There are no recommended changes as to the mix of program choices, staff will continue to monitor capacity and fill rates in each program type for each age group before session offerings are developed.

It is important to measure the current penetration rate of recreation program participation by each age group and by the general population on an annual basis. The penetration rate is typically measured by determining what percentage of the population is registered in direct programs. Only an approximate percentage can be given as some residents register in more than one program in each year, this data provides a high-level benchmark. While there is no current benchmark that each community sets to attain (as each community is different) measuring penetration rates year to year provides useful indicators. The goal is to attain as much participation as possible given facility space and fiscal sustainability. The approximate and current penetration rate of directly offered programs in Pickering is 12%. All efforts must be taken to increase the penetration rate of residents to ensure that the outcomes within the general population are positive ones.

Measuring the penetration rates of directly offered programs is but one measure to determine the effectiveness of the recreation and parks programs and services. Understanding quality assurance measures, legislative compliance, and participant satisfaction levels will offer a broader view. These performance measures are more fully described in Section 6.5.

Pre-School and School Aged Children (Age 0 – 9 Years)

Key Findings:

- There are 9,455 children age 0 – 9 years in Pickering as of 2016
- Children register for 38% of the total recreation programs offered annually in Pickering. This focus on children is a priority in influencing active lifestyles and exposing children to the many recreation and leisure opportunities available to them for their lifetime.
- The highest children’s participation levels are in camps and active and fitness programs.

- Libraries and Early Years Programs for pre-school and school aged children are offered at no cost and staff in Pickering work to reduce duplication in the recreation program offerings by these and other institutions and organizations.
- The approximate penetration rate of directly offered programs within the preschool and child population is 46% based on the number of participants not unique clients that are registered in this age group.

Table 55: Participation in Pre-School and School Aged Children Programs, 2014 - 2016

Program Type	2014	2016	Growth	%
Active	903	1097	194	21%
Creative	451	611	160	35%
General	70	178	108	154%
Camps	1698	2320	622	37%
March Break	173	183	10	6%
Total	3,295	4,389	1,094	33%

Promising Practices in Children’s Recreation

Child and Caregiver Drop-In Programs

Many community centres are offering open gym times for children and their caregivers during the day. Often this is a time when gymnasium space is not maximized and little supervision is required. Children enjoy the opportunity to meet others and discover what is possible with the age appropriate equipment that staff leave out for them. Caregivers often organize games and well supervise their children. These casual drop-ins also provide caregivers the opportunity to meet others in the neighbourhood and strengthen their community ties.

Larger Toys in Playgrounds

Many municipalities are seeking low cost ways to reduce screen time and increase the time that children are outdoors. The introduction of larger toys into playgrounds has seen significant success. The larger toys (kitchens, tractors, playhouses, tricycles etc.) are left in the playgrounds from spring until late fall. Anecdotal observations are that children are staying out longer as there is more to do than use the playground equipment.

Drowning Prevention

Municipalities offer swim lessons in a progressive continuum (although participation rates are highest in children). The municipality has a role to ensure that families are safe in and around water and can prevent water incidents. The Swim to Survive program was developed by the Lifesaving Society to teach children how to survive should they fall into the water. All grade three children are eligible to participate and schools can receive funding to offset costs to the municipality.

According to the Drowning Report produced each year by the Lifesaving Society there are just under 100 unintentional water related deaths in Ontario each year. Most incidents occur on the weekends (45%) around lakes. The age group most likely to experience an incident are males from the age of 20 to 34 and 50 to 64. There is some belief that newcomers to Canada

experience water related incidents at a greater rate but this research is still underway. The need to ensure that children and families are safe in and around water remains a core focus of the municipal aquatic program.

Youth (Ages 10 – 19 Years)

Key Findings:

- Pickering has 11,750 youth between the age of 10 and 19; this age group has witnessed a decline of 1,670 youth or a 12% reduction since 2011. The youth population will grow modestly in the future as per the Ontario Population Projections offered by the Ministry of Finance. The greatest participation occurs in general interest programs with over 97% of the total youth registrations.
- Participation in youth programs has increased by 1,165 participants or by 26% since 2014. While a range of opportunities is offered, the greatest participation is in General Interest Programs, which include non-active and creative classes.
- The approximate penetration rate of directly offered programs within the youth population is 48% based on the number of participants not unique clients that are registered in this age group.
- The Pickering Advisory Council for Teens acts as a sounding board in the development of new programs and opportunities.
- Girls-only programs are offered to respect some cultural and religious preferences and requirements, while at the same time address the issue of early teen females dropping out of recreational opportunities.

Table 56: Participation in Youth Programs, 2014 - 2016

Program Type	2014	2016	Growth	%
Active and Fitness	60	101	41	68%
Creative	6	19	13	217%
General Programs	4,330	5,420	1,090	25%
Camps	105	114	9	9%
March Break	-	12	12	100%
Total	4,501	5,666	1,165	26%

Promising Practices in Youth Engagement

The City of Pickering demonstrates many promising practices in engaging youth and are to be commended for placing importance and investing in the future of these residents.

Free Recreation Opportunities

A range of free and fee-based programs in recreation opportunities allows young residents more casual and non-structured opportunities. This approach also reduces barriers for any residents who may experience fees as a barrier to participation. Pickering offers basketball, sewing, breakdancing, baking, and games. Pickering youth with City offered Photo ID can participate.

PAC 4 Teens – Pickering Advisory Council for Teens

The Pickering Youth Council meets once per month to listen to youth needs within the community and assists in developing activities for youth. Volunteer hours can be earned toward the community hours required to graduate from secondary school.

Youth Friendly Community – Platinum Level

City of Pickering Council recognized the value of youth engagement and would like to ensure that youth can reach their greatest potential by being well supported in the community. The City received recognition through the Playworks Partnership in 2017 at the Platinum level. This is a great achievement as only 46 communities out of over 440 communities in Ontario have received Youth Friendly Community status. The Playworks Partnership was developed to ensure that youth enjoy supportive environments and a voice within communities. The Partnership was developed by 6 organizations and institutions that support youth development, engagement and leadership opportunities including 4H-Ontario, Ontario Physical Health Educators Association, Parks and Recreation Ontario, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

– Central Region, and the YMCA of Ontario. The Partnership has completed extensive research as to what approaches will keep youth engaged to consider communities “youth friendly”.



The Youth Friendly Communities Initiative lists 16 criteria that communities can employ toward this end. Communities address these criteria and apply for Youth Friendly Community status in either Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum levels pending on how many of the 16 criteria the respective community can attain. The designation entitles the community to post standardized road signs at strategic locations throughout the community. The criteria are currently under review and will be modified by the Fall of 2017. This has been a worthwhile initiative as youth are becoming more engaged in making their community meet their needs. It will be important to keep abreast of any changes to the Youth Friendly Community designation criteria to employ the latest evidenced-based best practices in Pickering.

Youth Workers

The use of Youth Workers to engage youth has been a promising practice employed throughout Ontario for the last 25 years. Youth Workers seek to engage youth wherever they congregate. The Ministry of Children and Youth – Youth Action Plan states the importance of Youth Workers in communities. Youth Workers engage youth to assist with any related issues by connecting them with the right resources but also work with youth to attain positive outcomes and active lifestyles.

Adults (Age 20 to 54 Years)

Key Findings

- There are 43,540 adults living in Pickering in 2016. This age group has the lowest participation rate in directly offered programs of all age groups.
- The online community survey identified that adults feel that there aren't enough opportunities to participate in recreation and parks related pursuits at City facilities.
- The approximate penetration rate of directly offered programs within the adult population is 1.6% based on the number of participants not unique clients that are registered in this recreation programs. This percentage is low as compared to other age groups within Pickering.

Table 57: Participation in Adult Programs, 2014 - 2016

Program Type	2014	2016	Growth	%
Active and Fitness	517	627	110	21%
Creative	76	81	5	6%
General	17	0	-17	-100%
Total	610	708	98	16%

Promising Practices in Adult Recreation Opportunities

Welcoming Spaces in Community Centres and Public Spaces

Families and adults alike are enjoying the use of community centre lobby spaces like they would a coffee shop. Municipalities are placing comfortable furniture in centre spaces and welcoming residents to use it as a social space. Many centres as space allows have installed pool tables and table tennis which are available for all hours that the community centre is open. The lobby spaces have become very animated with many adults and youth alike being active and socially engaged.

Recreational Leagues

Recreation departments are responding to a desire by adults to be active in varying sports but not wanting to volunteer to organize the group activities Volleyball, basketball, Pickleball seem to be popular activities offered through the organization of the municipality.

Outdoor Yoga/Exercise in Parks and Public Spaces

Animating outdoor spaces is responding to the recognition that it is important to be active and outdoors. Opportunities are advertised as casual and drop-in but seem to gain a following given enough promotion and time.

Older Adults and Seniors (Age 55+ Years)

Key Findings:

- In 2016, the older adult population in Pickering rested at 18,400 residents having grown by 19% since 2011. It is anticipated that this age group will experience the greatest

increase in Durham Region by 2026 with older adults increasing 26% and seniors (70 years plus) increasing by 68%.

- Pickering offers programs directly to older adults over the age of 55. These opportunities augment the opportunities provided by the two main older adult clubs – the Rouge Hill Seniors Club and the South Pickering Seniors Club. The clubs offer ongoing activities, trips, special events and programs at City facilities. A nominal annual fee and membership is required to participate in club related activities. City staff work with the club executives to ensure that any legislative and regulatory requirements are being met. These partnerships are strong and serve the older population well.
- The approximate penetration rate of directly offered programs within the older adult and senior population is 2.4% based on the number of unique clients that are registered in this age group.
- It must be recognized that the participation in recreation pursuits as offered by the self-governing Senior Clubs in Pickering which increases the penetration rate significantly. This data would be important to include as annual statistics are developed. These clubs are self-organized and self-governing and have the ability to respond to new trends and meet ongoing program needs. The City augments programs and opportunities where there are apparent gaps. The Seniors Clubs are an important part of the recreation delivery system and should be supported as required.

Table 58: Participation in Older Adult and Seniors Programs, 2014 - 2016

Program Type	2014	2016	Growth	%
Active and Fitness	312	358	46	15%
Creative	226	209	-17	-8%
General	10	88	78	780%
Total	548	655	107	20%

Promising Practices in Older Adult Recreation Opportunities

Shade, Seating, Washrooms and Water

As the population ages, municipalities are responding to strong requests to provide shade, seating, washrooms and water in larger parks and along well used trail systems. Older adults would like to become more active but the lack of these amenities may be causing barriers to their participation.

Self-Governance

Self-organized older adult clubs continue to be a strong practice in the provision of recreation pursuits. Municipalities play a role to assist groups form, provide space, assist with governance advice and augment these opportunities where there are gaps.

Community Hubs

Facilities that house seniors and older adult clubs are expanding their resources to include all related services to support older adults. Information on retirement planning, health-related

issues, etc. are included to provide one place where older adults can be supported and learn about healthy and active lifestyles.

Parks and Recreation Ontario High Five Active Aging

Parks and Recreation Ontario is currently working to identify the ideal principles and conditions of providing/enabling recreation opportunities for older adults. This quality assurance tool will identify best practices in working collectively with the older adult community to ensure quality and compliance with industry standards and legislative requirements.

Recommendations – Greater Participation

49. Continue to stress the importance of the need for children and families to be safe in and around water. Place a greater emphasis on public education and the need to learn to swim.
50. Continue to work with the school boards to broaden the Swim to Survive program.
51. Work to reduce screen time and at a minimum place larger toys in playgrounds to encourage children and caregivers to stay outdoors longer.
52. Continue to engage youth and meet the Playworks Partnership revised criteria for Youth Friendly Communities.
53. Work with community partners to jointly fund a youth worker over a period of 3 years and evaluate the merits of this approach to youth engagement and empowerment.
54. Host focus groups with adults to determine the right mix of programs and services with a view to increasing participation in this segment of the population.
55. Investigate the feasibility of adopting Parks and Recreation Ontario High Five – The Principles of Active Aging in the provision / enabling of programs and services to the older adult population.
56. Continue to monitor penetration rates and participation in drop-in opportunities to maximize participation.
57. Develop a Recreation Service Plan for the Seaton community in order to be proactive about the recreation needs of the increased population. Include at a minimum, a communications strategy to promote existing services, an approach to providing/enabling a range of services and engaging residents to form self-governing groups.

Key Result Area #2: Access and Inclusion

Goal Statement: Pickering Community Services makes specific efforts to include people who may have barriers to participation and may be unintentionally marginalized or underserved.

Parks and Recreation Departments in Canada have recognized that it is important to take different approaches to including all segments of the population in leisure pursuits with specific emphasis on marginalized populations. There are certain populations that experience barriers to participation and these barriers must be addressed in order to deliver full access to all residents. Barriers are typically experienced by persons with disabilities, newcomers to Canada from diverse cultures, persons from low income backgrounds, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Two Spirited Community (LGBTQ2S) community, the aboriginal community and women and girls.

Pickering has been proactive in implementing ways to include residents from low income backgrounds, persons with disabilities and females. This is evident in policy and practice. The City has also determined that the development of a Diversity Plan is projected to take place in the year 2020.

Culturally Diverse Residents

31% of the residents in Pickering are considered immigrants and it is anticipated that the number of newcomers will increase with the housing development in Seaton. According to the N.H.S., the largest immigrant group in Pickering is from Asian countries followed by residents from the Americas. The N.H.S. also reported that the 35% of residents are visible minorities. The largest visible minority group is Black (32%) followed by South Asian (31%), Filipino (10%) and Chinese (7%).²³

Pickering is offering Bollywood Dance, Latin Line Dancing, Learn to Skate, and Learn to Speak Spanish, all of which may or may not be appealing to a culturally diverse population. Ongoing dialogue with diverse populations as well as monitoring participation rates will ensure that the offerings are continually nimble and responsive.

Persons with Disabilities

According to the National Household Survey approximately 15.4% of Ontarians live with some form of a disability. Using this percentage against the population of Pickering the number of residents living with a disability could equal 14,000 people. The City offers a range of services to ensure that persons with disabilities can engage in recreation and parks activities. The Accessibility Advisory Committee as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians Act oversees the implementation of the Accessibility Plan which includes implementation of the requirements and accessibility upgrades to recreation and parks facilities and amenities. Specific to recreation, the Accessibility Coordinator works directly with residents with disabilities to ensure that they can integrate into the programs/camps with the needed supports. With the anticipated increase in the population and resultant older



²³ 2011 National Household Survey. Note: 2016 Census data pertaining to immigration and ethno-cultural diversity is scheduled for release on October 3, 2017.

adults and persons with disabilities, it is suggested that the Community Services Department consider the feasibility of offering more therapeutic programs as part of the program offerings.

Residents from Low Income Backgrounds

Pickering's Access to Recreation Program enables full participation in programs and camps to residents with lower incomes. The funding is provided by Canadian Tire Jumpstart, the City and Durham Region. In 2016 there were 9% of the population living below the Lower Income Cut-Off in Pickering which is approximately 8,300 people. 114 persons were provided funding to access recreation programs and camps; the current penetration rate of this program equals 1.3% of a population that is potentially at risk. All efforts should be made to increase the number of residents who participate in recreation and sport opportunities from lower income backgrounds.

Promising Practices in Inclusion and Access

Creating Stronger Relationships and a Sense of Belonging

Best practices dictate ongoing communications with representatives of resident groups of diverse backgrounds to ensure that the City is understanding needs. This ongoing dialogue and relationship building is to ensure that the City is offering meaningful programs and activities and creating an overall sense of belonging.

The Equity Lens

The City of Toronto developed an "Equity Lens" which is a simple tool that assists staff to be more inclusive as they review the effectiveness of existing policies/programs and develop new ones. The lens poses three questions for staff to address as programs and services are developed and/or reviewed.

1. How did you identify the barriers faced by diverse groups and assess the impact of the policy/program on them? What groups did you consult? What diverse groups are impacted by the identified barriers?
2. How did you reduce or remove the barriers? What changes have you made to the policy/program so that the diverse groups will benefit from the policy/program?
3. How do you measure the results of the policy/program to see if it works to benefit diverse groups?

Residents from Lower Income Backgrounds

One more successful approach to increase engagement is to equip Social Workers who support lower income residents with information about the programs and encourage their clients to participate. These Durham Regional staff could also assist by pre-screening residents to be approved for subsidized access.

Another approach to increasing participation is to offer no fee/low fee programs locally in predominantly low-income areas. This approach eliminates the need for transportation which can often be a barrier to participation.

Including Residents from Low Income Backgrounds – Advancing Access to Affordable Recreation in the Region of Durham

Pickering is currently participating with other Durham Regional municipalities and related partners to study the results of providing free recreation and supports to randomly selected Ontario Works recipients. Durham Region will promote this research project to its Ontario Works clients. This study has been funded by the Poverty reduction Office of the Provincial Government and will be under study for the next three years. This initiative is part of a collective who strive to increase access to recreation by low income residents in Durham.

Persons with Disabilities

Physical access to recreational facilities is imperative and a legislative requirement in Ontario as baseline criteria in treating all residents equitably. The development and delivery of recreation programs and services for persons with disabilities should be viewed as a collective responsibility within the community. Often, municipalities take a leadership role in bringing all support agencies together to begin a more holistic discussion on the strengths, challenges and gaps of program and service provision. These discussions often are the impetus in developing priorities and strengthening the ability of the collective to share resources, increase penetration and to develop innovative and meaningful programs. The City of Hamilton recently developed a recreation plan for persons with disabilities by engaging all support organizations and agencies and by reaching out to residents with disabilities and has seen stronger relationships and meaningful recreation services as a result.

LGBTQ2S Community

While there is no definitive percentage of the population that identifies as part of the LGBTQ2S community, varying polls and studies estimates centre in the 3.5 – 5% range. Homelessness, suicide and harmful practices are reported in this community as a result of exclusion, bullying and resultant mental health issues. The role of the municipality is to ensure that these residents are welcomed, included and free from harassment, hatred or bias within safe public spaces

Safe Spaces/ Positive Spaces

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Questioning and two-Spirited (LGBTQ2S) community often experiences exclusionary behaviours. The introduction of “Safe Spaces’ is one way of welcoming this community to public places. Safe Spaces was developed by Safe Spaces Canada whereby signage on the front door of a community space indicates that staff have been trained in reducing homophobic gestures and slurs and in creating welcoming environments.

The Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants developed the Positive Spaces Initiative through Citizen and Immigration Canada to denote public spaces that are safe for and welcoming to the LGBTQ community. Signage including the Pride flag in the graphic denotes that the space is positive for the LGBTQ2S population.

Cultural Diversity

Municipalities enjoying an increase in Cultural diverse populations have employed varying methods to better include newcomers to Canada. The approach with the most promising results is the building of relationships with the diverse cultural individuals and groups that are active in the community. Initial discussions centre on understanding recreation and park's needs, how to provide access, and navigating municipal government. Program related initiatives include the introduction of traditional Canadian sports and activities and introducing all residents to diverse activities, sports and leisure pursuits.

Brampton is reaching out to the South Asian population to better accommodate residents in parks, green spaces and within community centres. The way in which most successful communities include marginalized populations has been to ensure that the makeup of advisory committees, staff and volunteers, is representative of the community it serves. This notion includes persons of all equity seeking communities; cultural diversity, low income residents, the LGBTQ2S community, persons with disabilities and females etc. Ensuring that service provision receives input from the diverse community is the first step making certain that all residents belong. Further efforts to ensure that staff, volunteers and advisory committees are representative of the community has improved service delivery. Diverse opinions and contributions regarding service delivery improvements are broadened, representative and valued.



Girls and Women

Participation by girls and women often decline as females reach 10+ years and older. The *Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport (CAAWS)* which has a purpose to support and enable women in pursuing sport and active lifestyles and keeping women actively engaged in building community capacity. CAAWS' 55 to 70+ Project for "Young Senior" Women is a recent initiative aimed at keeping the young senior female engaged in sport and physical activity. 35 pilot projects are currently underway to enhance opportunities in soccer, pickleball, Nordic pole walking, synchronized skating and many other active opportunities. The project seeks to develop and support sustainable models where women are trained to lead and promote active opportunities in concert with community partners such as municipalities.

Recommendations – Access and Inclusion

58. Develop a Practice Guideline to support the current Access and Inclusion Policy for recreation and parks that outlines the role of the City of Pickering will take in working with the community to remove barriers and increase access to recreation and parks opportunities for all marginalized populations.
59. Develop an Equity Lens that serves to assist and train City staff in the needs of equity seeking individuals and groups within Pickering and in welcoming practices.
60. Develop an Access and Inclusion Reference Group made up of diverse and marginalized populations in Pickering to ensure that the City continues to strive to be inclusive and strengthens a sense of belonging for all residents.
61. Ensure that all public recreation and parks facilities in Pickering are welcoming to the LGBTQ2S community by adopting practices as outlined by Safe Spaces Canada.
62. Increase the number of low income residents participating in recreation and parks programs either by increasing the percentage of this population that access to Access to Recreation Program and/or by offering a greater complement of free to low cost opportunities in predominantly low-income areas.
63. Formalize ongoing dialogue with representatives of culturally diverse groups to ensure that recreation and parks needs are being met either by offering recreation opportunities common to their needs or introductory opportunities to traditional Canadian experiences.
64. Monitor the use of recreation programs and opportunities by gender/gender identity to ensure that there are equitable opportunities and respective participation rates for all.

Key Result Area #3: Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Goal Statement: We encourage residents to be physically active and to get outdoors so that everyone can gain the physical, psychological and emotional benefits.

Data compiled through the Canadian Health Measures Survey indicates that 9% of children and youth accumulate at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity as recommended through the Physical Activity Guidelines. Based on these less than optimal results, the ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth assigns a grade of D- for overall physical activity in 2016 for the fourth consecutive year.²⁴ While the ParticipACTION Report Card does not delve into adult physical activity levels, 2011 data from Statistics Canada using the Canadian Health Measures Survey showed that 17% of adult men and 14% of adult women attained the recommended 150 weekly minutes of moderate to

²⁴ ParticipACTION. 2016. The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth.

vigorous physical activity, though usually concentrated in activities occurring infrequently throughout the week.²⁵

Low physical activity levels are often linked to residents' lack of free time. Municipalities have little ability to directly influence this trend, however, there are strategies that can be implemented to mitigate the impacts of the "time crunch". Providing more unstructured programs can facilitate opportunities to participate as casual drop-in activities are often highly desirable, driving the need for indoor and outdoor spaces that facilitate unstructured pursuits. People with busy schedules are increasingly seeking spontaneous, non-programmed forms of activities that fit into their schedules. To assist in responding to this trend, the City of Pickering has implemented strategies to increase physical activity levels without requiring advanced registration or long-term commitments to allow users to participate at their convenience including Pay As You Go rates for fitness programs, access to hard surface courts, and drop-in swimming and recreational skating.



Promising Practices in Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

In 2011, the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology released the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines based on over four years of research analysis funded by several groups including the Public Health Agency of Canada. The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines are consistent with the World Health Organization's guidelines, and provide advice on how much physical activity is generally recommended to realize health benefits among various age groups.²⁶

Table 59: Summary of Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines

Age Group	Frequency and Duration	Intensity	Types of Activity
Early Years (0 to 4)	180 minutes throughout the day (toddlers)	Any intensity	A variety of activities in different environments Activities that develop movement skills
Children (5 to 11)	60 minutes per day	Moderate to Vigorous	Vigorous activities at least 3 times per week Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week

²⁵ Statistics Canada. Catalogue No. 82-003-X. January 2011. Physical activity of Canadian children and youth: Accelerometer results from the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey; Physical activity of Canadian adults: Accelerometer results from the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey.

²⁶ Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology. 2011. Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines and Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines.

Age Group	Frequency and Duration	Intensity	Types of Activity
Youth (12 to 17)	60 minutes per day	Moderate to Vigorous	Vigorous activities at least 3 times per week Activities that strengthen muscle and bone at least 3 days per week
Adults (18 to 64)	150 minutes per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more	Moderate to Vigorous	Add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week
Older Adults (65+)	150 minutes per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more	Moderate to Vigorous	Add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week

Source: Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, 2011

Canadian Sedentary Guidelines

Daily participation in physical activity is critical to one's well-being, and residents must consider how sedentary behaviours can have a detrimental effect on healthy outcomes as well. The Canadian Sedentary Guidelines developed by the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology²⁷ set about to minimize the amount of time that Canadians are inactive in a typical day (the guidelines themselves focus on children and youth under 18 years of age). Sedentary behaviours are defined as "postures or activities that require very little movement" and can be described as time spent in front of a computer, electronic game or television, extended sitting, time spent in motorized transport and in the case of 0 – 4 years old being restrained in a stroller or car seat. Setting limits on the amount of daily screen time is also suggested.

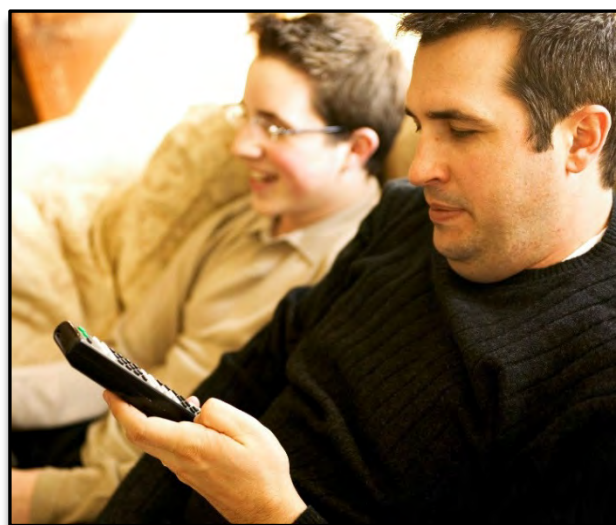


Table 60: Summary of Canadian Sedentary Guidelines

Age Group	Sedentary Guidelines and Screen Time
Early Years (0 – 4)	<p>Sedentary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit time spent in motorized transport, sitting, time spent indoors and being restrained in strollers etc. <p>Screen Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not recommended for 0-2 years No more than 1 hour per day for 2 to 4-year olds
Children and Youth	Sedentary

²⁷ Ibid

Age Group	Sedentary Guidelines and Screen Time
(5 to 11) and (12 to 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit time spent in motorized transport, sitting and time spent indoors <p>Screen Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than 2 hours per day

World Health Organization

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a guide that captures best practices and evidenced-based approaches in increasing physical activity. The document entitled “A Guide for Population Based Approaches to Increasing Levels of Physical Activity” is versatile as it can be utilized for national, provincial and local strategy development. The following list captures the relevant principles and can be utilized as a checklist for increasing physical activity levels in Pickering.

Table 61: Summary of Principles to Increase Physical Activity Levels

Intervention Type	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Level Political Commitment Alignment with National Policies and Initiatives Identification of National Health Goals and Objectives Specific Objectives Relevant to the Community Funding Support from Stakeholders Cultural Sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with Other Related Sectors Interventions at Different Levels within the Local Reality Target the Whole Population as well as Specific Target Groups A Coordinating Team Multiple Interventions Strategy Clear Identity for the Strategy Leadership and Workforce Development Dissemination

Source: World Health Organization

The Importance of Outdoor Play

Children are given fewer opportunities to engage in outdoor and ‘risky’ play compared previous generations. Children spend less time outdoors due to a fear of accidents and more time spent indoors engaged in sedentary behaviours and most likely in front of screens.

ParticipACTION has recently released a position statement on Outdoor Play in increasing physical activity in children. The position centres around children are less active when they are indoors and are engaged in sedentary behaviours. The key statement reads: **“Access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks—is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children’s opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings—at home, at school, in child care, in the community and in nature.”**

Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD)

Richard Louv authored two books specific to outdoor play; ‘Last Child in the Woods’ and ‘The Nature Principle – Human Restoration and the End of Nature Deficit Disorder’. In his publications, Louv (who completed extensive research across North America) contends that Nature Deficit Disorder is becoming increasingly evident in people who do not get outdoors often

enough. It is not positioned as a medical diagnosis but a health issue with possible symptoms of anxiety, depression, aggression, sadness and negative emotions. His research demonstrates that parents are allowing children to spend more time indoors in front of screens and are ignoring the merits of free play in an outdoor setting. Outdoor play is critical to children’s development; they need outdoor and unstructured play to master new skills, be active, learn new things and become in awe of their natural environment.

Community Signage

There is evidence that suggests that people will follow directions on community signage such as “take the stairs”, “1 Km to the next bus stop” as well as signage that captures distances on trails and sidewalks.

The Open Streets Movement

The concept to close a stretch of road for active and family related pursuits (walking, biking, rolling, etc.) began in Bogota Columbia. The movement is gaining in popularity in cities across North America such as Waterloo, Toronto, Midland and many more. Toronto calls their Open Street the ‘Paved Park” and dubs it Canadas largest recreation experience. May Open Streets applications have vendors and community booths as well as planned fitness classes, massages, food, etc. The Town of Whitby hosted an event on the 407 just before it was opened to allow the community access to the highway on foot or bike. The Open Streets Movement promotes family activities outdoors and promotes walking, while reducing screen time.

Outdoor Risky Play Strategies

In 2016, the Lawson Foundation launched an Outdoor Play Strategy that provided \$2.7M in funding to support risky outdoor play initiatives across Canada. Their research presents that children do better academically who are exposed to outdoor risky play and further that outdoor play is fundamental to children’s development. The Canadian Public Health Association has received funding to develop a Policy Tool Kit for service providers to outline healthy risks in playground settings.



Rosebank South Park

The City Calgary and City of Toronto are engaged in researching and experimenting with the merits of risky play and testing various applications. The City of Calgary was a recipient of the Lawson Foundation funding and has developed a “Play Charter” which shows commitment from many community partners in implementing more applications of risky play in that City. Calgary also used the funding to train Playground Ambassadors to facilitate risky play in children within Calgary’s parks system.

The City of Toronto has given direction to staff to investigate and propose more applications for Risky Play in that City. One simple solution is the large sand/dirt pile that has been added to Trinity Bellwoods Park in Toronto. Children and caregivers alike augment their time at the playground by playing in the sand pile digging, building, climbing, sliding down etc. This solution

is a simple low cost one to get caregivers and children to stay outside longer and engage in creative play. One of the other approaches seen in municipalities in Ontario is the addition of large plastic toys within the playgrounds (e.g., kitchens, dump trucks, tricycles etc.) to capture children's imaginations and increase their outdoor play time.

Healing Forests – Japan and South Korea

Healing Forest are gaining in popularity in Japan and South Korea. It is believed that they have healing powers as evidenced in the way that our brain reacts differently when people experience natural settings. Walks in forests are promoted to help people relax, be in awe of nature, be calm and rejuvenate.

Recommendations – Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

65. Develop a multi-year Communications Strategy on the advantages of being active and being outdoors. Ensure that the Strategy targets various segments of the population using appropriate communication vehicles. Include a community signage program to encourage physical activity.
66. Animate outdoor public spaces with active program opportunities such as yoga, tai chi, and other activities during appropriate seasons.
67. Further research and experiment with risky play applications to keep families outdoors longer and engage in self-discovery.
68. Identify Heart Healthy choices in the Leisure Guide and use the guide for public messaging with respect to the benefits of active living.
69. Work with surrounding municipalities and the Region of Durham to implement the evidence-based strategies identified by the World Health Organization to increase levels of physical fitness in Pickering.

Key Result Area #4: Community Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness

Goal Statement: Positive community outcomes in Pickering are a result of meaningful partnerships supporting recreation and parks, a competent staff team and talented volunteers.

The delivery of recreation and parks services in Pickering involves both administrative expertise and acumen to provide leadership and efficient/effective services. Ongoing public engagement, partnerships, and volunteerism are in place to ensure that all programs and services are current and reflective of community needs. Strengthening community capacity will address partnerships and volunteerism while organizational effectiveness evaluates the internal current structure, service levels and other supports.

Community Capacity

Partnerships

The City works with its partners to provide the highest level of service to the public while considering sharing of resources and reducing duplication. The City is open to working with community partners and has numerous arrangements in place. The use of lands for recreational purposes is made possible through agreements with Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One. Private and



Pickering Lawn Bowling Club

specialized recreation providers are contracted to provide their services using public facilities with revenue sharing in place. For example, the City partnered with the Pickering Soccer Club to construct the Pickering Soccer Centre. Each partnership arrangement is considered on its own merits, is approved by Council, and has the contractual documentation in place. The City is to be commended for maximizing the assets and capabilities that the community brings in broadening services at a shared cost.

In all partnership arrangements, specifications and requirements must ensure that the partner respects and aligns with the Department's vision, mandate, values, strategic priorities and service standards. The value in seeking out partnerships to provide a net benefit to both organizations and essentially reduce costs to the municipality.

Table 62: Partnership Types

Partnership Types	Description	Formalized Relationship
Not-for-Profit Community Groups	Community groups exist to provide services, leagues, education etc. using volunteers for the most part and are not-for-profit. They may require assistance in forming as a group but most likely require space and consideration for a not-for-profit rate for rental fees.	Community groups are typically governed by an Affiliation Policy or a Community Development Policy and thrive more effectively through sharing of information, cross-marketing of opportunities and regular communications to enhance the delivery system.
Complementary Institutions and Agencies	Working more effectively with school boards, hospitals and other agencies such as the Y and the Boys and Girls Clubs can benefit the community through the development of joint programs and initiatives and sharing of resources including facilities. This will broaden the reach of like programs and services and reduce duplication.	Requires a Service Level Agreement or a Reciprocal Agreement that outlines the rights, obligations and deliverables of each agency.
Private Service Providers	Private service providers have a for-profit mandate and may provide specialized programs and services not necessarily in the municipal mandate. Often profit sharing can provide an alternate form of revenue to the municipality.	A contract will articulate the rights, obligations and deliverables of each party. Specific consideration must be given to ensuring that quality assurance, risk management and service levels are equal to that of the municipality.

Partnership Principles

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

- The outcome of the partnership is aligned with the municipal values, mandate and priorities;
- There is an articulated need for the proposed service in the community;
- The financial and liability risks to the municipality is shared or reduced;
- The partner is equipped and qualified to co-deliver the service through identified efficiencies, and the ability to reach an identified segment of the population;
- The quality of the program or service provided through the partnership meets municipal quality assurance and risk management requirements and complies with legislation;

- Unsolicited for-profit partnership proposals are dealt with transparently and through a competitive process as identified in the City’s procurement process;
- Accountabilities and responsibilities can be clearly defined and complied with; and
- Annual reporting requirements capture participation numbers, expenditure reduction or revenue enhancement and are clearly aligned with departmental objectives.

Volunteerism

Volunteerism is an inherent part of the recreation and sport delivery system in most communities in Ontario. Volunteerism is one method of increasing the number of opportunities for the public while engaging qualified residents in meaningful unpaid work. The effort to attract, train, retain, supervise volunteers requires certain competencies and the dedication of time. Pickering values its volunteers and offers an online application process. Volunteer opportunities are listed on the City’s website. Potential volunteers fill out the online application, provide two letters of reference and are responsible to obtain their own Police Reference Check. A screening process matches applicants with the volunteer opportunity. Staff train, supervise and recognize volunteers.

In recent years the development of volunteer software applications has made volunteering more streamlined and has served too increased the number of volunteers in some communities. Typically, the software applications list all volunteer opportunities and match the skill sets needed with those who are interested in volunteering. Volunteers are still required to obtain Police Reference Checks. The advantage of the applications is that they manage a database of volunteers, match skills sets required, track volunteer hours and provide online training modules.

The value of volunteerism in Pickering cannot be measured in dollars alone. The value to the community demonstrates a significant level of community engagement, ongoing support for fellow residents, strong community values and a belief that recreation and leisure in general are critical programs and services. Tracking the hours of volunteerism and placing a minimal dollar value on the work serves to capture the extent to which programs and events are augmented and potential costs are avoided. The municipality appreciates the level of volunteerism and does not have the resource base to provide the full range of opportunities offered through the volunteers. **Table 63** indicates that volunteerism that has been captured accounts for over 5 full-time staff equivalents and avoids costs of over \$147,000 annually. Efforts to support and invest in volunteers demonstrates a direct benefit to the community.

Table 63: Annual Volunteer Hours Worked

Service	Volunteers	Hours per Year	Value at \$15.00 / Hour
Children’s Programs	5	40	\$600
Youth Services	22	550	\$8,300
Senior Services	58	7,660	\$114,900
Aquatics	75	642	\$9,600
Special Events	75	907	\$13,600
Total	235	9,799	\$147,000

Value rounded to the nearest \$100
Source: City of Pickering

Pricing Programs and Services

Pickering has a legislated requirement to post rates and fees on the City’s website according to Provincial legislation. A review of the methodology utilized to determine the pricing of programs and services revealed that the pricing of rates and fees is based on historical pricing plus inflation and a comparison to the market. This approach relies on historical practices and does not reflect cost recovery based on the true cost of the service. Current best practices in recreation pricing suggest that the municipality first understand the cost to deliver the service including both direct and indirect costs (operations and program costs). This is valuable information in determining where efficiencies could be made especially reductions to the indirect costs. A Pricing Policy could then be developed to determine the value of the program or service to individual and community good and the percentage of the program or service that must be cost recoverable to ensure fiscal sustainability over time.

Fee Structure

The analysis of fee structure for recreation programs and services included a review of fees for a sampling of programs for each age group as compared to surrounding municipalities. A per hour cost was determined to provide a baseline unit of comparison and to determine if Pickering’s rates are below or above average. The following table provides this comparison.

Table 64: Sampling of Program Fees by Municipality

Program / Service	Pickering	Ajax	Whitby	Oshawa	Average Fee / Hour	Pickering +/- Average
Aquatic Learn to Swim Class	\$13.32	\$13.86	\$12.72	\$11.84	\$12.94	Above
Children’s Dance	\$9.44	\$7.58	\$12.00	\$8.40	\$9.36	Above
Youth Basketball	\$9.38	Drop-in Only	\$5.09	\$10.01	\$8.16	Above
Adult Badminton	\$5.00	\$28.82	\$7.66	\$12.34	\$13.46	Below
Older Adult Pickleball	\$2.63	Drop-in Only	\$1.50	Drop-in Only	\$2.07	Above

Source: Municipal Recreation Leisure Guides

The following observations were noted:

- Pickering has above average fees in four program types and below average in one program type. There was a concern raised through staff consultation that other municipalities are close enough in proximity that local residents may register for programs in other municipalities if the fees are more reasonable. Fees in Pickering need to remain competitive and not be priced out of the market in order to maintain/increase participation.
- Fees are set in Pickering to be a general reflection of market rates and serve to capture annual increases to staff costs and inflationary increases to utilities, program supplies, and support costs.

Setting a Defensible Pricing Policy

The cost to host programs and services will be dramatically affected by the recently approved legislation to increase minimum wage. The lowest paid job category will now become the baseline in terms of rating the value of the positions in an equitable compensation system. There will be a fine balance between capturing the increases in costs through the fee structure. It is therefore strongly recommended that staff work to fully understand the costs of programs and services before a pricing policy can outline what percentage of the costs should be recovered through rates and fees. The following provides a framework to assist Pickering in setting a fair-minded pricing policy.

Table 65: Framework for Setting a Fair-Minded Pricing Policy

Costing of Programs and Services
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note that all programs and services should have a cost associated with providing them whether they are fee based or are provided at no cost. Further, all costs in the Department should be associated with providing a program or a service. 2. Articulate all programs and services and the administrative supports required to provide them including, but not limited to, administrative support, the development and distribution of the City Services and Leisure Guide, promotions, etc. 3. Differentiate between direct and indirect costs including hourly facility costs. 4. Articulate the direct and indirect (facility and overhead costs) for each program type. Determine an hourly cost and program/service cost (based on the number of hours a program is designed for and the cost of annual and other membership types). 5. Based on the actual costs as determined, calculate the current cost recovery rates per program and membership type.
Setting a Fair-Minded Pricing Policy
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a vision and set of guiding principles that would address the issues of equity, fair-minded cost recovery, and continuing to include residents of all ages. Ensure that fees are a reflection of true costs and that an Access Policy addresses affordability for those with lower income backgrounds. 2. Engage the public in discussing these principles, the process to set a fair-minded pricing policy and potential cost recovery rates per age group. For example, it may be determined that programs for children should recover 50% of the direct costs to encourage early participation and a healthy lifestyle. 3. Apply the suggested cost recovery rates as discussed to the current overall costs to determine what the current cost recovery rates are and if fees require adjustments. 4. Compare adjusted fees to the market and within municipalities in close proximity. 5. Phase in significant changes over a number of years in order to not adversely affect registration rates.

It should be noted that some municipalities within Durham Region offer incentives to certain age groups and within certain services in order to address income gaps (e.g., older adults) or to increase participation within a family (e.g., family memberships or to families with more than two children). While these incentives offer relief to families and help to increase participation, there is no standard incentive programs that are recommended over another. The incentive programs are traditional and relative to a community. The ongoing discussions among Regional municipalities could set about to measure the effectiveness of these incentive programs in order to determine regional best practices.

Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational Effectiveness can be described as an approach to continuous improvement to organizational design and structure, organizational culture, group and individual performance, communications, service delivery and performance measures. The elements of organizational effectiveness require evaluation and refinement on an ongoing basis. The purpose of the review of the organizational effectiveness and governance to support the Community Services Department is to ensure that there is the capacity to deliver on the recommendations housed in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan. While the input by the public and key opinion leaders did not probe deeply into organizational effectiveness and structural design, there were comments that are instructive along with the analysis.

Organizational Design and Structure

Organizations have different structures depending on the need for formalization and accountability. In a public setting, there is a need for an equitable distribution of work, clear delineation of responsibilities/accountabilities and transparency in all policies, communications and work efforts.

The current organizational structure meets common public organizational design standards:

- The department reflects a **centralized operation** and this is appropriate given the size of the operation, the number of facilities and the population of Pickering;
- Job descriptions are formalized and reviewed as required;
- There is a **clear chain of command** with autonomy and authority delineated where possible;
- **Cross functional teams** work as collectives in areas of common focus;
- There is a **flow of information** that relies on technology, regular one on one meetings as well as team and full staff meetings;
- The structure is relatively flat with 4 to 5 layers of staff between the Director and the public;
- The **span of control** (number of direct reports) ranges between 4 and 11 direct reports which is suitable given the size of the operation and scope of responsibilities. There is some variance in the number of direct reports with the maximum number resting with the Supervisor of Facilities/Operations with 11 direct reports.

- There is **specialization** and specific training and educational requirements in each of the disciplines (Culture, Operations, Senior Services, Aquatics, Fitness, Children/Youth, Adult Programming).

From this review, the organizational structure is sound and is appropriate should the scope of responsibilities remain the same in the future.

What is not clear or articulated are the approved levels of service provided by each discipline (# of cuts per season, number of horticultural displays receive what level of care, # of swim sessions per year etc.) While many of these are understood, a formalized analysis is required to determine if the right staffing levels are in place. This exercise would assist in determining the work processes, work efforts and lead to potential efficiencies through reducing duplication and better sharing of resources etc.

Organizational Culture

The culture of the Community Services Department is based on a common vision and the need to serve the public with quality services. Efforts are made to go about work by embracing new and innovative concepts and most importantly understanding the community's needs. The culture of the department has never been formally articulated and this exercise would be well worth the effort to engage staff in discussing what values should be in play to support the work of the department and the respective behaviours that would support these values. Articulating values and supporting behaviours, committing to them and reviewing them on an annual basis serves to strengthen a team's culture and customer driven approach. These values must be aligned with any values in place corporately and respected within the community.

Group and Individual Performance

Staff's focus has been very clear over the course of the last few years and that has been to meet the public's expectations around fiscal sustainability, quality, safety and service delivery. Priority has been given to the provision of quality services and facilities, cost containment efforts and overall public satisfaction. Training and professional development efforts are in place to identify and execute needed areas of training and keep staff current of innovations and developments within their fields.

Communications

Internal communications seem to be strong although the staff functions and disciplines are varied and the opportunities for joint planning sessions should increase because of the Master Plan recommendations and initiatives. Communications to engage community groups and better promote opportunities will be a focus in the future embracing the use of social media to augment traditional communications vehicles.

Recommendations – Community Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness

70. Continue to maximize partnerships with community agencies to broaden recreation and parks opportunities to the public with consideration given to cost containment and other community benefits.
71. Articulate the costs to provide individual units of service (cost for set of swim lessons, maintain a sports field, etc.) in order to develop an equitable and fair-minded Pricing Policy.
72. Research and obtain volunteer software to offer online volunteer opportunities, a pre-screening process, training, and tracking of volunteer hours with a view to increasing volunteerism in Pickering.
73. Work as a staff team to define the Community Services Department culture, values, and respective behaviours to maximize cohesion, efficiencies and effectiveness across divisions.
74. Formalize levels of service with a view to determining the description of service, target conditions, scheduled actions and work effort to arrive at an equitable distribution of work and allocation of resources.
75. Develop a standard methodology of testing satisfaction levels in programs and services.
76. Refine and gather baseline data in year one to inform Council and residents as to the recommended performance measures.

6.5 Monitoring Performance

The City of Pickering measures the capacity and utilization of programs, services, facilities and parks to determine satisfaction levels and if revenue targets have been met. This data serves to inform staff within the various units as to where programs and services need to be adjusted to either accommodate underutilization or address pent up demands. The data is critical to the sustainability of strong service delivery and facility usage. This data is provided to staff to assist them in developing new and revising the existing program mix as they plan for the upcoming year. Consideration is given to reaching all residents, offering a variety of choices and experiences and including all residents, especially marginalized ones.

Typically, performance is measured in four ways in a municipal setting including:

- **Inputs** – the investment in the program or service in funding and human resources
- **Outputs** – the return on the investment in participation rates, utilization of facilities, attendance at special events etc.
- **Efficiencies** – the cost to deliver services or cost reductions due to increased efficiencies etc. i.e. the value of volunteerism/sponsorships,
- **Effectiveness** – customer satisfaction levels within service and facilities

The value in measuring performance captures the progress made on the Master Plan and service delivery in general and allows staff to compare progress year over year. Annual reporting strengthens communications within the community, stakeholders and Council and ensures that staff efforts are transparent and are focused on priorities.

The following set of performance measures are recommended to be implemented to report out on the priorities within the Master plan and to assist with annual planning and reporting.

Table 66: Performance Measures

Performance Measure Type	Definition in a Recreation and Parks Context	Measure
Inputs	The investment that the City makes toward recreation and parks. Annual resources including gross operating budget, human resources, and the inventory of assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget by facility and program type • Number of full-time equivalents • Inventory of assets
Outputs	Capacity and utilization of facilities, programs and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and use of programs and facilities • Attendance at special events • Casual users of facilities and outdoor facilities • Penetration rate per age group in registered programs
Efficiencies	Cost to provide various services and programs per attendee/participant. The % of costs recovered by facility and program type.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost avoidance through sponsorships, partnerships and volunteerism • Cost recovery levels by facility and program type
Effectiveness	User and visitor satisfaction rates by program type rating safety, customer service, program quality and facility cleanliness at a minimum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User satisfaction levels by facility and program type

7.0 Implementation

This Section contains a framework for reviewing and updating the Master Plan. The recommendations put forth within this Master Plan are summarized, along with their suggested priority/timing.

7.1 Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

The City should regularly review, assess, and periodically revise the recommendations contained in this Master Plan in order to ensure that they remain reflective of local conditions and continue to be responsive to community needs. This will require monitoring activity patterns, tracking user satisfaction levels, dialogue with stakeholders and community organizations, annual reporting on implementation, short-term work plans, and undertaking a 5 year high level review and a detailed 10 year update to the Master Plan. Through these mechanisms – or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustment of resource allocations and priorities identified in this Master Plan may be required.

Reviewing the Master Plan requires commitment from staff, Council, stakeholders, and the public. An appropriate time for this is prior to, or during, the annual budgeting process. The following steps may be used to conduct an annual review of the Master Plan:

- Review of the past year (recommendations implemented, capital projects undertaken, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, etc.).
- Review the Master Plan to identify short-term projects and priorities based on staff review and consideration (e.g., financial limitations, public input, partnership/funding potential, etc.).
- Identification of issues or constraints anticipated for the coming year.
- Communication to City staff and Council regarding the status of projects, criteria used to prioritize projects, and upcoming projects.
- Budget requests/revisions, as necessary.

Recommendations – Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

77. Establish a system for the regular implementation, monitor, and review of the Master Plan, including the creation of an annual work plan to identify accomplishments and priorities for the coming year. A high level 5-year review and a detailed 10-year update should be undertaken.

7.2 Implementation Strategy

Throughout this Master Plan, recommendations have been identified at the end of each subsection. This is not intended to be a definitive list of recommendations for the Community Services Department, as ongoing capital projects/repairs, operating expenditures, and other initiatives outside the scope of this Master Plan may be identified and prioritized by staff and Council on a case-by-case basis. By approving this Master Plan as a guiding document, the City is not bound to implementing every recommendation; rather, this Master Plan provides guidance on community priorities and sets a general course for meeting community needs as they are presently defined.

Priority is generally synonymous with timing – the higher the priority, the sooner the recommendation should be implemented. All recommendations are important and, if properly implemented, will provide the community with enhanced recreation and parks services in Pickering. The priority/timing of recommendations is organized into the following three categories:

- Short Term priority (1-3 years)
- Medium Term priority (4-6 years)
- Long Term priority (7-10+ years)

It bears noting that the recommendations are based on what is needed and not what is financially achievable by the City at the present time. The proposed priority/timing of each recommendation has been determined based on an assessment of need, as identified throughout the planning process (including public consultation, trends and demographic variables, assessment of parks, facilities, services, etc.), and is based on ideal circumstances. Budget pressures, changes in participation rates or demographics, availability of volunteer resources, and other factors may impact the implementation of these recommendations. The pursuit of external funding opportunities and partnership opportunities may also be a contributing factor to the timing of implementation.

The following tables contain the recommendations in the order in which they are presented in the body of the Master Plan. Where applicable, estimated capital costs are articulated for each recommendation, which are based on industry best practices. Potential funding sources are identified in Section 7.3 of the Master Plan.

Parks Systems Recommendations

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Parkland Hierarchy System		
1. Adopt a new parkland hierarchy system as part of a future Official Plan Review or amendment, based on the framework identified in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan to provide greater clarity and accuracy towards locational characteristics, service area, permitted uses, and other details to guide the development and redevelopment of parkland in Pickering.	Ongoing	Staff Time
Parkland Needs		
2. On an opportunity basis, pursue opportunities to acquire parkland over and above the 34.8 hectares planned for acquisition by the year 2026 to address the needs of areas under growth pressures and service gaps, through use of parkland development strategies identified in this Master Plan. The acquisition and development of future parkland shall have regard for the natural heritage system and as necessary, consultation with the T.R.C.A. is encouraged.	Ongoing	Staff Time
Parkland Acquisition Policies and Guidelines		
3. During the next Official Plan Review, consider the City’s parkland dedication policies to ensure that they are consistent with the amended <i>Planning Act</i> as a result of Bill 73.	Ongoing	Staff Time
4. To supplement parkland dedications, utilize alternative parkland acquisition tools to enhance future parkland opportunities. Potential strategies include partnerships (e.g., T.R.C.A., school board, Hydro One, etc.), land purchase, or other methods described in this Master Plan. Emphasis should be placed on securing suitably sized and quality parkland parcels oriented towards recreational uses.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Community Gardens		
5. Continue to monitor the use and evaluate opportunities to expand the number of garden plots available at Diana, Princess of Wales Park as surrounding areas intensify residential lands. Any expansion of the community garden should be undertaken in conjunction with the Valley Plentiful Community Gardeners. The City should also investigate the potential to provide convenient parking and improved accessibility.	Ongoing	Staff Time
6. Establish a second community garden in Seaton contingent on seeking a willing community organization that will commit human and/or financial resources towards general maintenance and operation of the community garden. In consultation with residents and community stakeholders, a suitable site in Seaton should be selected, with consideration given to being centrally located, co-located with other recreation and park facilities, available amenities (e.g., water), and other site criteria identified by the City.	Medium Term	Staff Time
Leash Free Areas		
7. Monitor the usage and carrying capacity of the Grand Valley Park leash free area. Should the City receive significant requests and supporting study determines the need for additional leash free area, investigate potential locations and potential partnerships at that time. Future leash free areas shall be located in appropriate areas and have regard for floodplains, natural heritage features, and other environmentally sensitive areas.	n/a	n/a
Advancing Active Transportation		
8. With respect to the planning of active transportation infrastructure, Pickering's Integrated Transportation Master Plan should enhance existing recreational and utilitarian connections, linking future parks with the existing network, active transportation design, supporting amenities, maintenance, accessibility, and other relevant land uses/destinations as identified by the City. Alignment with T.R.C.A.'s Trails Strategy (which is currently being completed) is also encouraged.	Short	n/a

Recreation System Recommendations

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
The Need for New Recreation Facilities		
9. Detailed design of future indoor recreation facilities should be undertaken with an architect and in consultation with stakeholders and the public to define the allocation of space by component, confirm space needs, and to identify required supporting amenities (including sport-friendly features).	Medium Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
10. Construct a new multi-use recreation facility in Seaton as Pickering’s population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after 2021), which should include a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular indoor pool and separate warm water leisure pool, fitness centre and studio, full size double gymnasium, walking track, dedicated youth space, and multi-purpose spaces.	Medium Term	\$550 per sqft. (to be confirmed through preliminary design phase)
11. Construct a Seniors’ and Youth Community Centre in Pickering’s City Centre within the next five years to replace the aging East Shore Community Centre. The new Community Centre should include a full size gymnasium with an elevated walking track, dedicated spaces for older adults and youth, and multi-purpose spaces.	Medium Term	\$400 per sqft. (to be confirmed through preliminary design phase)
12. Contingent upon the construction of the Seniors’ and Youth Community Centre in Pickering’s City Centre, investigate options to repurpose or decommission the East Shore Community Centre due to its advanced age and deteriorating condition, which has limited the functionality to program space optimally to meet the needs of residents.	Medium Term	n/a
Ice Pads		
13. Design the recommended multi-use recreation facility in the Seaton area in a manner that allows it to be expanded to include a multi-pad arena through a second construction phase, contingent upon findings of a comprehensive arena provision strategy (Recommendation #14) undertaken at a future time.	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10 / Staff Time
14. Prepare an Arena Provision Strategy, or a comprehensive arena assessment as part of the scheduled 5-Year Update to the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, to determine whether a net expansion to the City’s supply of ice pads and/or relocation of an existing ice pad(s) is warranted based on prevailing market forces and arena operating conditions.	Medium Term	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Indoor Pools		
15. Construct one indoor pool as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton as the population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after the year 2021). The indoor pool should contain a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular pool and a separate warm water leisure tank to support swimming instruction, aquafit, therapy, and more.	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10
Gymnasiums		
16. Develop a full size gymnasium as a part of the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and a full size double gymnasium as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. Both gymnasium locations should be designed with sport friendly features in mind.	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10 and #11
Fitness Centres, Spaces, and Walking Tracks		
17. Construct a fitness centre as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. A group fitness studio(s) should be included to support the delivery of health and wellness programming. Supporting amenities should be considered including, but not limited to, flooring types, mirror walls, drinking fountain stations, storage space, and opportunities to integrate digital media systems and the latest technologies to enhance the health and wellness experience for users (including the provision of infrastructure space).	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10
18. Integrate outdoor fitness equipment in existing or future parks. Potential locations include active parks, along trail routes and/or the waterfront, and in neighbourhoods with concentrations of lower income households and/or older adults.	Medium Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
19. Incorporate an indoor walking track as a part of the proposed multi-use recreation facility in Seaton and at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering.	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #11

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Dedicated Children and Youth Space		
<p>20. A dedicated children and youth centre should be included as a part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. The provision of a new children and youth space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering is also supported by this Master Plan. The integration of dedicated children and youth space should include various space arrangements depending on the intended use and function such as a lounge, games room, multi-media room, general activity space, and shared kitchen. Further consultation with children and youth is encouraged to identify and confirm space requirements.</p>	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10 and #11
Dedicated Older Adult Space		
<p>21. This Master Plan supports the provision of a new older adult space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering. The provision of space should include, but not limited to, a games room and lounge, computer room, and activity room. Consultation with the public is recommended to identify and confirm facility space requirements.</p>	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #11
<p>22. While the integration of dedicated older adult space at the proposed multi-use community centre in Seaton is not recommended at this time, the facility's meeting and/or program rooms should be designed with the potential to be converted to older adult space, should it be required in the future. The City should monitor requests and re-evaluate the need for dedicated older adult space during the next Master Plan period.</p>	Long Term	n/a
Multi-Purpose Rooms		
<p>23. Multi-purpose rooms should be integrated at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. These spaces should be flexibly designed to accommodate a broad range of programming opportunities that respond to community needs and to be converted to other facility uses (if required). Supporting facility amenities may include, but not be limited to, partition walls, storage, sinks, kitchen, and other ancillaries staff deem necessary.</p>	Medium Term	Refer to Recommendation #10 and #11

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Indoor Racquet Sport Courts		
24. Investigate strategies to enhance utilization of the indoor tennis courts such as offering free or low-cost clinics/programs on a temporary basis, engage outdoor tennis clubs to increase usage during the winter months, or other strategies identified by the City.	Short Term	Staff Time
25. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball on the gymnasium floor at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre, the proposed multi-use facility in Seaton, and at the existing indoor tennis courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas with other court markings.	Medium Term	Staff Time
26. Repurpose a minimum of one racquetball court at the Pickering Recreation Complex for other uses such as additional group fitness space. Alternatively, creative strategies should be explored to offer non-traditional recreation activities on a temporary basis such as virtual reality simulators (e.g., golf, digital fitness), rock-climbing wall, or another activity. Potential repurposing options should be guided by input from the public.	Short Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
Indoor Turf Facilities		
27. Continue to monitor the demand for indoor turf facilities over the master planning period, including the collection of utilization data, to determine if/when a second facility is needed.	n/a	n/a

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Soccer Fields		
<p>28. Construct 12 new unlit equivalent soccer fields in Seaton over the planning period while initiating an on-going monitoring process to ensure that the City does not over-supply fields and to determine if/when additional fields are required beyond those recommended in the Master Plan. Multi-field sites are encouraged to support simultaneous games and tournament. The following soccer fields should be constructed. Where appropriate, supporting amenities should be provided including, but not limited to parking and washrooms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. One lit artificial full size field at a future Community Park. b. Four lit natural grass fields at a future Community Park. c. Four unlit natural grass fields at a future Community or Neighbourhood Park. 	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p>	<p>\$2.0 Million per lit artificial turf field</p> <p>\$400,000 per lit natural grass field</p> <p>\$200,000 per unlit natural grass field</p>
<p>29. Explore opportunities to remove, relocate, and/or repurpose existing sports facilities to improve utilization, with consideration given to the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Relocate the two intermediate soccer fields at Brockridge Community Park to Seaton. 	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>To be determined on a project-specific basis</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Re-purpose the underutilized ball diamond at Maple Ridge Park into a soccer field. 	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>To be determined on a project-specific basis</p>

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Ball Diamonds		
30. Construct ball diamonds at a minimum of two parks in Seaton utilizing the following construction approach. Where appropriate, supporting amenities should be provided including, but not limited to, parking and washrooms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Two lit softball diamonds co-located at a Community Park to facilitate simultaneous games and tournaments. 	Medium Term	\$500,000 per lit ball diamond
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Two unlit hardball diamonds at a Neighbourhood Park unless there is sufficient room at the Community Park proposed for softball diamonds and the City intends to create a ball diamond complex in Seaton. 	Medium Term	\$300,000 per unlit ball diamond
31. Evaluate opportunities to remove, relocate, and/or repurpose surplus ball diamonds, with consideration given to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Convert underutilized or antiquated softball diamonds, as appropriate, to hardball diamonds to relieve pressures at existing hardball diamonds. 	Medium Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Repurpose the non-permitted ball diamond at Maple Ridge Park to an intermediate soccer field, thereby creating a multi-field location suitable for simultaneous and tournament play, given the presence of an intermediate soccer field already on site. 	Medium Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
Other Rectangular and Multi-Use Fields		
32. Engage the Durham District School Board and the Durham Dolphins Football Club to explore ways to collaboratively improve the playing experience at Beverly Morgan Park.	Short Term	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Cricket Pitches		
33. As a long term strategy, explore opportunities to relocate the cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park. The relocation of the cricket pitch should be subject to demand and the ability to identify a park (preferably in Seaton) with sufficient space to accommodate a new pitch and supporting amenities to be determined in consultation with the Cricket Club.	Long Term	Staff Time
Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts		
34. Construct a two tennis court pod at a minimum of three future parks in Seaton and, if feasible, at Rouge Valley Park.	Medium to Long Term	\$150,000 (unlit) / \$200,000 (lit) per tennis court
35. Engage the neighbourhood tennis clubs to discuss ways in which to improve the local sustainability of the sport, improve operational efficiencies of the City and the Clubs, and explore potential amalgamation of Tennis Clubs and consolidation of the club-court supply.	Short to Medium Term	Staff Time
36. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball at a select number of the new tennis courts recommended in this Master Plan. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas in order to avoid confusion between the two sports. Preferred locations should include parks that are within proximity to high concentrations of older adults or along major transportations/transit corridors for ease of access.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Outdoor Basketball Courts		
37. Construct two basketball courts at Beechlawn Park and Creekside Park to reconcile service gaps in south Pickering.	Short Term	\$100,000 per full court or \$50,000 per half court
38. Evaluate and identify future parks in Seaton to construct three basketball courts. Site considerations should be given to availability and proximity to schools and other recreation facilities used by youth, walkability, visibility, and other criteria to be identified by the City.	Medium to Long Term	\$100,000 per full court or \$50,000 per half court
39. At a minimum, future basketball courts should be designed to be full size basketball courts with two posts, hoops, and surface paint markings. Additional features for consideration include, but are not limited to, seating, shade, paint markings for other hard surface activities, landscaping, and appropriate sound buffering.	Medium to Long Term	To be determined on a project-specific basis
Outdoor Ice Rinks		
40. Recognizing that a new outdoor rink is included in the Master Plan for Claremont Memorial Park, additional or future outdoor ice rink(s) should only be considered in conjunction with other civic planning, urban design and/or economic development analyses given the sizeable costs to construct and operate refrigerated rinks	Ongoing	To be determined on a project-specific basis
Skateboard Parks		
41. Implement the recommendations of the City's Skateboard Park Strategy	Refer to the City of Pickering Skateboard Park Strategy	
Splash Pads		
42. Construct two splash pads in Seaton. One splash pad should be developed in concert with the proposed multi-use community centre. The City and a developer are currently in the process of planning a second splash pad, which will be located in a future Village Green in Seaton, which is expected to meet this need.	Medium to Long Term	\$350,000 to \$500,000 per splash pad

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Playgrounds		
43. Address playground gaps through future park development within the South Pickering Urban Area.	Ongoing	To be determined on a project-specific basis
44. A minimum of 11 playgrounds should be strategically located at future parks within Seaton to provide sufficient coverage within residential areas. At the City's discretion, additional playgrounds should be considered, where appropriate, to enhance geographic distribution and serve gap areas. Future playgrounds should be located within 800 metres of residential areas, without intersecting major obstructions such as arterial roads and railways.	Medium to Long Term	\$50,000 - \$100,000 per location
45. The construction of new or redeveloped playgrounds should integrate natural / adventure features, which may include the use of natural materials (e.g., wood, stones, boulders, etc.), higher climbing structures, rope courses, and more. Playground design shall have regard for the Design of Public Spaces Standard and incorporate accessible playground features, such as using a firm and stable surface. Consultation with accessible groups and users is also encouraged. These factors should be considered as the City continues to prepare its playground replacement program.	Ongoing	To be determined on a project-specific basis
Outdoor Running Tracks		
46. Where possible, accommodate requests for access to, or increased use of, outdoor running tracks at Pickering's existing facilities and school facilities.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Service Delivery Recommendations

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Recreation Service Delivery Model		
47. Strengthen the Service Delivery Model by convening joint meetings with all providers and related agencies (e.g., T.R.C.A.) in Pickering to share priorities and address common issues collectively.	Ongoing	Staff Time
48. Develop a Community Engagement Strategy to welcome new residents to Seaton, inform them of recreation and parks opportunities and begin to assist groups form or expand existing groups to provide localized recreation and parks opportunities.	Ongoing	Staff Time
Key Result Area #1 – Greater Participation		
49. Continue to stress the importance of the need for children and families to be safe in and around water. Place a greater emphasis on public education and the need to learn to swim.	Ongoing	Staff Time
50. Continue to work with the school boards to broaden the Swim to Survive program.	Ongoing	Staff Time
51. Work to reduce screen time and at a minimum place larger toys in playgrounds to encourage children and caregivers to stay outdoors longer.	Ongoing	Staff Time
52. Continue to engage youth and meet the Playworks Partnership revised criteria for Youth Friendly Communities.	Ongoing	Staff Time
53. Work with community partners to jointly fund a youth worker over a period of 3 years and evaluate the merits of this approach to youth engagement and empowerment.	Ongoing	Staff Time
54. Host focus groups with adults to determine the right mix of programs and services with a view to increasing participation in this segment of the population.	Ongoing	Staff Time
55. Investigate the feasibility of adopting Parks and Recreation Ontario High Five – The Principles of Active Aging in the provision / enabling of programs and services to the older adult population.	Ongoing	Staff Time
56. Continue to monitor penetration rates and participation in drop-in opportunities to maximize participation.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
57. Develop a Recreation Service Plan for the Seaton community in order to be proactive about the recreation needs of the increased population. Include at a minimum, a communications strategy to promote existing services, an approach to providing/enabling a range of services and engaging residents to form self-governing groups.	Ongoing	Staff Time
Key Result Area #2 – Access and Inclusion		
58. Develop a Practice Guideline to support the current Access and Inclusion Policy for recreation and parks that outlines the role of the City of Pickering will take in working with the community to remove barriers and increase access to recreation and parks opportunities for all marginalized populations.	Ongoing	Staff Time
59. Develop an Equity Lens that serves to assist and train City staff in the needs of equity seeking individuals and groups within Pickering and in welcoming practices.	Ongoing	Staff Time
60. Develop an Access and Inclusion Reference Group made up of diverse and marginalized populations in Pickering to ensure that the City continues to strive to be inclusive and strengthens a sense of belonging for all residents.	Ongoing	Staff Time
61. Ensure that all public recreation and parks facilities in Pickering are welcoming to the LGBTQ2S community by adopting practices as outlined by Safe Spaces Canada.	Ongoing	Staff Time
62. Increase the number of low income residents participating in recreation and parks programs either by increasing the percentage of this population that access to Access to Recreation Program and/or by offering a greater complement of free to low cost opportunities in predominantly low-income areas.	Ongoing	Staff Time
63. Formalize ongoing dialogue with representatives of culturally diverse groups to ensure that recreation and parks needs are being met either by offering recreation opportunities common to their needs or introductory opportunities to traditional Canadian experiences.	Ongoing	Staff Time
64. Monitor the use of recreation programs and opportunities by gender/gender identity to ensure that there are equitable opportunities and respective participation rates for all.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Key Result Area #3 – Physical Activity and Outdoor Play		
65. Develop a multi-year Communications Strategy on the advantages of being active and being outdoors. Ensure that the Strategy targets various segments of the population using appropriate communication vehicles. Include a community signage program to encourage physical activity.	Ongoing	Staff Time
66. Animate outdoor public spaces with active program opportunities such as yoga, tai chi, and other activities during appropriate seasons.	Ongoing	Staff Time
67. Further research and experiment with risky play applications to keep families outdoors longer and engage in self-discovery.	Ongoing	Staff Time
68. Identify Heart Healthy choices in the Leisure Guide and use the guide for public messaging with respect to the benefits of active living.	Ongoing	Staff Time
69. Work with surrounding municipalities and the Region of Durham to implement the evidence-based strategies identified by the World Health Organization to increase levels of physical fitness in Pickering.	Ongoing	Staff Time
Key Result Area #4 – Community Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness		
70. Continue to maximize partnerships with community agencies to broaden recreation and parks opportunities to the public with consideration given to cost containment and other community benefits.	Ongoing	Staff Time
71. Articulate the costs to provide individual units of service (cost for set of swim lessons, maintain a sports field, etc.) in order to develop an equitable and fair-minded Pricing Policy.	Ongoing	Staff Time
72. Research and obtain volunteer software to offer online volunteer opportunities, a pre-screening process, training, and tracking of volunteer hours with a view to increasing volunteerism in Pickering.	Ongoing	Staff Time
73. Work as a staff team to define the Community Services Department culture, values, and respective behaviours to maximize cohesion, efficiencies and effectiveness across divisions.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
74. Formalize levels of service with a view to determining the description of service, target conditions, scheduled actions and work effort to arrive at an equitable distribution of work and allocation of resources.	Ongoing	Staff Time
75. Develop a standard methodology of testing satisfaction levels in programs and services.	Ongoing	Staff Time
76. Refine and gather baseline data in year one to inform Council and residents as to the recommended performance measures.	Ongoing	Staff Time

Implementation Recommendations

Recommendations	Timing	Estimated Capital Costs
Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan		
77. Establish a system for the regular implementation, monitor, and review of the Master Plan, including the creation of an annual work plan to identify accomplishments and priorities for the coming year. A high level 5-year review and a detailed 10-year update should be undertaken.	Long Term	Staff Time

7.3 Capital Funding Sources

There are a range of funding sources that municipalities can utilize to fund the development of capital recreation and park assets recommended through the Master Plan. Possible funding sources and a summary of these sources is presented below with respect to its potential use in funding the municipal assets.

Reserves and Reserve Funds

Reserves and reserve funds are typically comprised of the compilation of tax and user fee revenue that has been set aside for future capital projects. Funding is first collected and saved before the capital projects are undertaken.

Parkland Cash-in-lieu

The Planning Act establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and possible alternatives, with the implementation policies identified through local official plans. The conveyance of cash-in-lieu of parkland generated by development or redevelopment is an example of an alternative under the Act. At the municipality's discretion, the cash-in-lieu may be used for land acquisition or for the erecting or repair of buildings and other uses defined by the Act.

Development Charges

Development Charges are fixed dollar value per lot or area levied on property developers to fund municipal infrastructure in the area to be developed. These fees are passed onto new home buyers and are based on specific legislation. The basis for development charges is that new growth should pay for itself and not burden existing taxpayers. According to Pickering's 2013 Development Charges Background Study, over \$220 million of future capital projects is recoverable through future residential and non-residential development charges.

Debt Financing

Financing the construction of large-scale capital projects such as a new recreation facility is a common option in many municipalities. While Pickering may have sufficient borrowing capacity to finance construction, borrowing capacity can fluctuate on a month-to-month basis depending upon the number and scope of major capital investments undertaken by the City in the future.

Other than the capital cost of the project, the two key variables that determine the cost of financing a project are the interest rate and the term of the amortization period over which the project is financed. Interest rates are largely dictated by the prevailing economic conditions and the associated lending rates. Municipalities choose amortization periods based upon their financial capacities to handle capital repayment schedules as well as the nature of the project that is to be financed (e.g., up to 20 years for major recreation facilities).

Grants

Within the past decade, many municipal capital projects have received financial support from senior levels of government. For example, in 2009, the Federal and Provincial governments announced significant one-time grant programs (Build Canada Fund, Economic Stimulus Fund, and Recreation Infrastructure Canada), with portions of this funding being available for recreation and parks. This funding was successfully leveraged by many communities and has resulted in several new and enhanced facilities across the province, including Pickering. Most recently the federal government announced its commitment to invest over \$1.3 billion towards recreation infrastructure. As these projects tend to prioritize “shovel ready” projects, this Master Plan positions Pickering to respond accordingly to this funding program and other opportunities as they emerge.

User Fees

User fees for individual drop-in and organized activities are a way to direct some of the operating and capital costs of the facility away from the general taxpayer and onto the users who directly benefit from them. User fees vary considerably based on the type of recreation activity or facility. For example, a significant portion of revenue can be generated for arenas, but less so for multi-use space. User fees are typically established as a way to offset a portion of ongoing operating expenses (full cost recovery is rare in the municipal sector), while a capital surcharge may be introduced to be applied against the cost of borrowing for capital upgrades or improvements.

Partnerships

This funding source refers to partnering with private, non-profit and community stakeholders for the provision, maintenance, and renewal of municipal assets. Many municipalities have employed staff with expertise to seek out alternative sources of revenue to offset both capital and operating costs to maintain recreation and parks facilities, while reducing the fiscal impacts on residents. Many municipalities are partnering with not-for-profit corporations such as the YMCA to offset some capital impacts and often ongoing operational costs.

Sponsorships

Municipalities have sought alternate revenue streams through developing and nurturing sponsorship opportunities. Many municipalities have developed sponsorship policies that articulate a list of opportunities that the private and not-for-profit sector can offer to sponsor. This may include tree planting, program initiatives, and capital projects.

Naming Rights

Municipalities have established Naming Rights policies and guidelines to ensure that the naming of facilities, programs, and events are aligned with the corporate vision and identity. Assets are named generally for two reasons; to recognize an individual / group / or corporation's contribution to governance or the quality of life within a municipality, or to generate revenue to offset capital / operating costs.

Appendix A – Public Input Sessions

Living and Playing in Pickering

Location

- Enjoy the proximity to the waterfront and easy access to Toronto.
- In close proximity to Toronto and not too congested.
- Access to major centres (GTA); quiet neighbourhood
- Proximity to the lake and trails
- ‘Country-ish’ living close to Toronto; lake activities, forests and smaller town feel.
- Access to GO transit services. Excellent library.
- Easy access to many facilities, good infrastructure, big houses and near the Lake and Toronto.
- Large boats
- The area at Frenchman’s Bay! It’s like going to a lake up North and all the activities there.

Recreation Opportunities

- Great, growing community with convenient facilities for playing or exercising.
- Hot tubs, saunas (wet) and steam rooms at every community centre.
- Pickering is a city with a very strong sense of community, which I love in terms of being active. I love the skate park as it further pushes the sense of community and promotes healthy, active living.
- The Skate Park.
- Hosting free events at Esplanade Park, Recreation Centre and City Hall. Helps everyone participate in the community.
- “Playing in Pickering” is difficult. I go to Ajax to ride my bike, see a TIFF film, attend a theatre performance, play pickleball and swim lengths in one of three indoor Olympic pools.
- Love the racquetball courts! Excellent exercise for all ages.
- I value the most in the park and rec is the affordable indoor tennis court fee. Right now the price is ridiculous expensive and only the rich can afford. So if you can keep this in mind when planning that would be great!
- My family likes the publication of the seasonal recreational guides listing the programs being offered for the entire family. The registration process is easy to follow with a variety of classes. As for parks, they are always clean and in good condition especially for our daughter age 2.5 years old. The parks in each neighbourhood are different for each age group. It would be easy to explore new parks in the city with a similar web site like

<http://www.durhamregionplaygrounds.com> listing the features of the park. More splash pads could be built in the city and offered to the various neighbourhoods.

Parks

- Outdoor exercise equipment in parks.
- Love the concerts in the Park in the summer. Still feels like a small town but we are not really.
- Open green spaces, close to public transit, lots of programs offered (but more could be added), reasonable prices for programs, community involvement at all ages and beautiful waterfront (but more could be done to make it accessible to grow along the eastern side near Ajax).
- A good combination of greenbelt and urban areas.
- The greenspace and parks.
- Pickering West Shore community is peaceful with nature and walking paths/trails.
- There are many trees and green spaces.
- The things I like best about recreation and parks in Pickering are that we have access to the waterfront.
- The things I like best about recreation and parks in Pickering are the sheer number and diversity that are available to residents. However I think they can be improved by designating more space for adult users, especially those without children as I feel, and understandably so, a lot of thought goes to family demographics already and also by providing even more waste disposal options as litter seems to be a hard to tackle issue in our growing community. For example I, and many in my neighborhood of Village East, would appreciate a fenced dog area in the Diana, Princess of Wales Park. This park has numerous facilities for young people and is used extensively in the spring and summer months for soccer. While I am extremely happy to see the park in regular and abundant use, the traffic of users, especially large groups of children on a daily basis, can make it become a difficult space to share. A fenced dog area would provide a designated, safe and useful space for an overlooked group. It could be added in the otherwise rarely used orchard part of the park and keep both children and animals safe and satisfy the many pet owners in the neighborhood as well as concerned parents and residents who are uncomfortable meeting animals. Secondly, our neighborhood park (Village East and Diana, Princess of Wales) is also a perfect example of needing even further options for waste disposal. While there are bins available, again just given the sheer amount of traffic due to soccer practices, games, and tournaments garbage is regularly found piled up in the park area (primarily in the spring/summer) which is both a hazard and an eyesore.
- The City seems to have a fair number of parks and other facilities in relatively good repair. Also have quite a wide variety of programs that are reasonably priced and accessible to a large number of residents.
- The things I like best about recreation and parks in Pickering are our beautiful Lake Ontario waterfront, Frenchman's Bay (especially when it's frozen solid) and the trails, especially the Waterfront Trail.

- I understand you are looking for suggestions for the future of Pickering parks. I am the coordinator for a Durham Probus walking group for active retired people. We walk the various trails/paths in the area, weekly, all year round. We would love to see Pickering follow in Ajax's steps and make the waterfront trail accessible all year round.
- Large green spaces with mature trees.
- Recreation and parks in Pickering are clean and accessible to people of all needs.

General

- It's a safe place to live and is in great proximity to green spaces.
- Relatively safe community. Needs a better downtown.
- Great people!
- Close-knit community. Everyone in the same age group knows each other.
- It is fun to live here because there is lots of life.
- It's a great place to bring up children (i.e. lots of programs for families).
- It's a great place to raise kids, is multicultural and has good programs.

Improving Indoor Recreation Facilities

Improving Community/Recreation Centres

- More community centres!
- Renovations; modern designs, activities and welcoming to youth.
- More recreation facilities in the north side of Pickering.
- More local facility use-not regional/drive to. More use in the west end.
- We need more facilities for senior recreation.
- Upgrade facilities that exist-some are looking tired/ need fixing up. Build a few more facilities especially north of Rossland. Do a survey of users/non-users to see what equipment and quantities they would like to see/have access to.
- Plan for recreation sub-centre in Seaton to prevent over-crowding at Pickering Recreation Centre.
- Build a multi-use facility like Abilities Centre in Whitby or Audley Road Ajax Centre for basketball, badminton, pickleball and swimming.

Facility Types

- Facilities in the North end.
- More facilities north of Kingston Road.
- Cleaner facilities; better spaces for floor work; better check on people using equipment.

- We need more recreation facilities that are multi-use. Indoor swimming pools and multi-use courts.
- We need a theatre for drama presentations, shows and concerts.
- We need an indoor walking track and more up to date facilities.
- Indoor running track.
- PRC is good as a regional centre but Pickering needs community centres.
- Bench in men's drying area.
- Add another free-squat/bench rack (one is not enough for the attention it draws).
- Rock climbing, more pods, more sports programs.
- Build a ninja warrior course for kids.
- How about a leisure pool with hot tubs, sauna, slides and whirlpool
- Warmer pool; salt water pool
- Hockey
- Curling rink.
- Curling rink would be a great addition!
- Keep ice rinks open in the summer
- The one thing that would be a plus for seniors is to have a location whereby we could have a walking track to do our daily walks and not having to travel to Scarborough. We are healthy, but we might also be recovering from operations and need to walk with walkers, canes, to heal. Perhaps there is an ice hockey track or a school gymnasium we could rent.
- I have lived in Pickering my entire life. I now have a young family and have realized how disappointing our recreation programs and facilities are. Pickering is far behind other neighbouring cities. For example Ajax has three public pools and newer facilities. I remember when the recreation centre here was built and sadly it is dated and does not offer the same swimming enjoyment as other public pools. Our family in Barrie has much nicer facilities and more pools. The swimming lessons and facilities never met our families' needs. Petticoat creek is pricey as a family visit by the time you factor in parking, we prefer going to wonderland honestly. Fortunately Lifetime fitness has opened in Ajax. This recreation facilities has been life changing in our family's recreation. The offer great programs for the kids every day and evening allow them to work out as we work out, a very simple brilliant concept. I don't know why more places do not offer this. Their outside pool is unmatched and frankly not waiting for public swim times coupled with smaller swim classes has transformed them both into swimmers! As far as outdoor skating a few outdoor real ice rinks would be so nice! We live by the bay but we are scared to go on the lake. Toronto has so many rinks and we go there to skate outside. We run and walk regularly in Pickering. The cars are not very aware of pedestrians so we need to be so cautious. The one thing we notice is the lights are often not timed long enough for a pedestrian to cross without the light changing. The exception is the few lights with a

pedestrian button. Changing the timing would make it safer. Sadly even with all of our tax money the city of Pickering had disappointed us as a family regarding recreation and supporting our healthy lifestyle. We are happy to say as a family we work out at least five times a week but not in our hometown of Pickering. Lifetime has made the drive to Ajax worthwhile. Even their summer camps are more appealing. It would be great if the city of Pickering used their model and concept so more families could become active with a lower price point.

- Pickering has a wonderful senior's community and I hear time and again how the seniors' facility on Bayly is woefully lacking in parking and space. Many seniors cannot attend events because there is no space for them. I would be very happy to see a larger community centre provided for our active and thriving senior community where they can develop friendships, stay connected and keep healthy.
- I have been associated with the Recreation Centre more in the past two years since I retired. I registered for Aqua Fit Classes paid for the pool membership to have access to dressing rooms, lockers, sauna and whirlpool. This was great for a while, however, the Aqua Fit Classes became overcrowded, with no shower time afterwards, it was safer to get dressed and go home than taking your shower there. Last month I decided to try a class again, as my pool membership was running out, it was a joke. I came in from the pool, to shower, all filled, more than 10 people in the Whirlpool, allowable #8, and the overflow were in the sauna. The biggest let down was the Whirlpool. I've had two hip replacements in the past 20 months and Arthritis which flares up from time to time, however a hot tub is marvellous treatment, so soothing and comforting, so the evenings and weekends are an option, when and if the Equipment is working! I cannot tell you the number of times I went to the centre couldn't take a good soak, too many, how sad I was, and I met with a number of members who had the same complaint. Please do something!
- The letter above is echoed by many women I have spoken to. My yearly membership expired recently and I have joined another club I would also like to add to this the parking issue. Twice I went and there was no parking and was told that some of the rooms had been rented out to Hydro for seminars. Perhaps you might consider advising your members so they don't get there and have to turn around and go home. Paying \$300.00 for a membership and knowing that others are paying very little for one thing but using the Aquafit classes is just not fair. More monitoring is needed to be done for sure.

Courts

- Pickleball courts (15)
 - I believe there is a big need for indoor public courts for pickleball.
 - Respect the need for pickleball courts! It should be the people's place and insight and flexibility that should guide the thinking and the action.
 - We need more opportunities for indoor pickleball. One facility should have at least four courts (one tennis court could be subdivided into four pickleball courts).
 - Modern pickleball courts please.
 - By putting four good size pickleball courts in East Shore. They are much too small.

- Pickleball courts are desperately needed in Pickering for seniors. East Shore senior club is not an option.
- More daytime facilities for pickleball (indoor and outdoor).
- Provide three indoor pickleball courts.
- Pickleball is a fast-growing sport for both young and old (55-69 years old). Available pickleball courts in Pickering is needed-at least four courts (indoor).
- More pickleball courts
- Pickleball court.
- Pickleball would be a great addition!
- Need to add pickleball courts, there is a high demand!
- Pickleball —both indoor and outdoor.
- Pickleball
- Basketball courts (5)
- Squash and Racquetball (2)
 - We need to play more racquetball. Please keep both courts.
 - We would like to keep 2 racquetball courts.
- All-purpose gym (basketball, badminton, volleyball, soccer)

Amenities

- Book the recreation complex better-many big events happen at one time (ex. Swim meets and youth games).
- Parking is an issue
- Change rooms need to be cleaned
- Another indoor leisure pool for lane swimming and fun family water activities.
- Individual stalls in change rooms.

Improving Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Facility Types

- Outdoor Pool / Splash Pad (8)
 - Water/splash pad for Farr Park Gleanna and Dixie are perfect spots as there are lots of families and kids there.
 - A pool
 - More splash pads and park structures
 - Free splash pads please

- A swimming pool
- Install splash pads in empty parks.
- Provide soft play areas for toddlers
- Need for more leisure opportunities outside of the central Pickering area (splash pads).
- Outdoor skating (5)
 - Outdoor, permanent, refrigerated skating rink/trail
 - Designated 'slacklining' areas with anchor posts. It's a growing sport in Europe and North America.
 - Outdoor refrigerated Skating Rink (like Markham Civic Centre).
 - Make synthetic ice rink accessible. Current one is locked and far from parking, plus no benches around.
 - Outdoor skating rinks, trails for biking, walking and hiking
- Outdoor running track (2)
- Dog Parks (2)
 - Creating more opportunities for engagement, particularly smaller community dog parks so people can let dogs off leash before and after work in a convenient manner. Not feasible to drive to designated parks during the work week when local parks would be hardly used at all anymore other than by dog walkers.
 - Recreation and parks in Pickering can be improved by ensuring dogs are kept on the leash. I am not able to walk my dog in my own neighbourhood (Bay Ridges) because numerous owners do not keep their dog on a leash - and many are not friendly. My lovely golden has been attacked 3 times and nothing was done when I reported it. This easily could be a child getting hurt as well.
- More public fixed (not portable) toilets in parks
- Look to the Town of Ajax for their recreation and parks model. They've got ideas to involve all ages.
- Look up 'Roc' in Georgina. One hub full of activities for all ages/abilities to enjoy plus a potential revenue source.
- Water fountains/ bottle fillers needed in parks.
- Provide additional facilities for the 18-29 young adult demographic (outdoor skating rink that could serve as an outdoor hockey rink in the summer).
- Pickering community garden on Hwy 2. There is a need for cameras to monitor theft. Members work hard to grow their produce and it is a problem. Also need additional lots to meet the needs of seniors.
- Greater need to spread out the amenities (e.g., skateboard park) across Pickering. They are all in the central area.

- Updating the grounds from sand/gravel to wood chips at parks. Offering more splash pads. Movie or music nights in the parks. Making the classes at the recreation centre for swimming 45 minutes long as 30 minutes is too quick. Starting classes for swimming at different times for each age group. Adding more pools in the city. Make the parking at the recreation centre easier for classes as opposed to the events in the hall. Continue the parades and children's activities at Christmas and Easter.
- With all of the growth planned for Seaton and elsewhere in Pickering, my recommendation for the plan is to ensure that developers build more engaging playgrounds for kids. I am a strength and conditioning coach and, in working with children, I've seen how drawn they are to new physical challenges and how quickly they can progress in the right environment. A simple example is how drawn kids are to the rope climb station that we have at our gym. I installed one in my garage and anytime the garage is open, neighbourhood kids come over to try to climb the rope. This is just like the ones that you used to see in all schools and would be a very simple addition to any Pickering playground with a big benefit of developing strength and stability in the shoulders for our kids. A great example of the playground I'm describing is the "Common Ground Inclusive Playground" in Lakeland, Florida. See below for their website. Kids come from nearby towns just to play at the playground and it is amazing. Also, I would encourage the city to ask developers to include some of the newer playground designs which allow kids to practice their "American Ninja Warrior" skills. Things like ropes that they can climb, rock climbing walls, monkey bars of varying heights, etc. The playgrounds should challenge kids of all abilities and ages to give them progressively harder challenges.

Sports Fields and Courts

- Pickleball (11)
 - Pickleball would be nice.
 - Outdoor pickleball courts.
 - We need pickleball courts in Pickering.
 - Pickleball courts.
 - There is a need for afternoon pickleball.
 - Pickleball in the daytime right now. Would prefer afternoons.
 - Pickleball court would be great.
 - Pickleball courts are needed in Pickering. We have to go to Ajax now.
 - We need a dedicated pickleball facility.
 - Some outdoor tennis courts could be converted for pickleball.
 - Please build permanent pickleball courts in Pickering since this sport is becoming more and more popular.
- Tennis
 - Increase the number of public tennis courts.

- more tennis courts
- More soccer fields (2)
- Build a couple of outdoor handball/racquetball courts.

Waterfront

- Clean-up Frenchman's Bay West Park.
- Non-motorized boat launch for west split. Floating dock only.
- Vision should include a plan for continuous park on all of the Lake Ontario waterfront.
- Prepare a plan for non-motorized watercraft users to provide them access to Frenchman's Bay at multiple locations.
- Shuttle needed when there are activities at the Waterfront on Liverpool road. Parking is not sufficient.
- Recreation and parks in Pickering can be improved by further developing our waterfront. As an example, Ajax has an extensive park area at Ajax Rotary Park with picnic shelter, play structures including a splash pad and then the beachfront. We could develop basketball courts and soccer areas down by the water.
- When I walk the Ajax waterfront, their washrooms are exceedingly well maintained, are open for the whole year and even kept heated. Our waterfront is lacking in many ways. I strongly believe that we deserve better facilities, considering the size of our town and the huge number of people who frequent our beautiful lakefront. It's also nightmare trying to park there. A grave mistake was made when developing the area. Is there no way that additional land can be purchased for more parking?

Improving Parks and Open Spaces

Amenities

- Some parks should have port-a-potties so residents can use if required (seniors, children).
- Increase the number of pathways and protected forests and protect more green space.
- Cycling paths need to expand all over Pickering- we are behind the times.
- More shade areas in parks
- More lights. Safe traffic flow nearby (will promote people's ability to walk to these outdoor spaces)
- Edible gardens
- Build more community gardens close to community centres, schools, parks etc.
- Greenspace and hiking trails. Population is aging, outdoor areas that promote physical activity
- Multi-use parks, skate park, splash pads and basketball court.

- More walking trails in all of the parks, no matter how large/small
- More winter activities; bands and outdoor concerts would be great
- More walking and bicycle trails
- Please install washrooms in the parks. Install a few splash pads. Improve the front area of the Bike paths across Durham
- More trees and natural forests
- lake with parks and facilities for summer activities like bbq areas
- Waterfront trail to be completed.
- Continuous park and trail linkages from waterfront to Trans Corridor Trail.
- As an avid dragon-boater, walker, exerciser, I would like to point out to you that I think that the present toilet facilities at the bottom of Liverpool, beside the lake, are totally inadequate for the number of people who frequent the area. Not only do they shut down for the entire winter, they are in poor shape, and are not kept clean.
- I have lived in Pickering since 1966, and have watched it grow - I am proud of this city, but very disappointed in our toilet facilities.
- It is important that the city make every effort to keep parks clean. This includes placing more trash and recycling receptacles in parks, and emptying them on a timely basis. It would also include facilities for pet owners to pick up after their dogs. If the city is concerned about people disposing of trash or otherwise dumping items on city property low cost cameras could help with compliance. Additionally, the city should work with local civic groups to source volunteers to clean up parks, particularly in spring when trash is revealed after the snow has melted.
- To balance human usage with the need for environmental protection, parks with forests and wild areas should have clearly marked, well drained trails. For greater enjoyment, the city should consider interpretive signs highlighting subjects of local historic, scientific, and civic interest. Wherever possible trails should be linked between various parks with map boards and signposts including distances to orient the visitor. This would extend to linkages with the park systems in neighbouring jurisdictions as well as the rouge national urban park.
- The capital plan should contemplate the construction of fixed washrooms in parks, along with service buildings that will serve as a park focus. These buildings could also house other community services such as community centres and may feature coffee shops or snack bars, in partnership with local businesses. As noted above, having such services open year round would include winter use and enjoyment of our parks. I applaud the city's effort to undertake this consultation process. As a frequent user of park systems throughout the region and in Toronto, I believe that Pickering's facilities do require upgrading and improvement. I and all other Pickering resident will benefit.
- Parks are wonderful civic assets but the reality is that they go essentially unused for six months of the year. The city should therefore attempt to make our parks more attractive for winter activities. This includes efforts to sand and clear paved pathways with city snow

clearing equipment, and making washrooms and other indoor facilities open year round. Both of these things are currently done in Ajax. It might also include creating trails for snow shoeing and cross country skiing.

- Parks and other areas of town need more garbage containers. While it's easy to blame kids, dog owners, fast food restaurants, you can't expect people to carry their trash for miles. Also should consider more resources (cash and facilities) for the arts. Sports seem to be well supported; the arts, not so much.

Trails

- You need to plow and salt the trail in the winter. Also you need to ensure that the washrooms are open all year round. We are never able to walk in Pickering outside the short time frame when the washroom facilities are open. This is such a shame when there are so many people who want, and need, to be more active.
- So our suggestion to you is to increase funding for year round washrooms and trail accessibility.
- Recreation and parks in Pickering can be improved by providing winter maintenance on the Waterfront Trail. My husband, mother-in-law and I moved back to Pickering (West Shore area) in 2012 because we love being so close to the beach and trail. Previously we lived in Ajax, where the trails are maintained year-round. We like to stay active year-round, but without a cleared trail, it can be very icy and dangerous to walk or run safely in the winter months. I often drive to Ajax Waterfront for my walks and runs, as their portion of the trail is maintained and free of ice. Seems a little ridiculous to have to drive to use a trail when we have one here!
- It would be convenient if there was a connection bridge from east shore to west shore along the waterfront trail instead of going out to Bayly.

Quality

- Fill the low, mucky, wet parts of paths (especially by Nuke station and Bay) they are trip hazards.
- Clean up garbage littering out roads and paths.
- Cleanliness
- Better maintenance of hiking trails
- Clean up the parks more regularly; promote the parks (on the city website there are only mentions of park names and not the location or major intersection they are located near.
- By keeping them garbage free
- Replace dead trees on Altona Road

Design

- More benches for seniors and the disabled.
- More pathways so those with disabilities can enjoy too.

- Construct continuous sidewalks on ALL streets. This is not the case on Kingston Road, Finch or Bayly. Ajax has paved paths and sidewalks on all streets.
- Continue the path in Diana, Princess of Wales Park all the way to Kingston Road so we get a longer walk circuit and can enjoy the gardens.
- Improve trails with a lane divider
- Keep more open spaces. Closed areas ask for trouble
- Encourage fishing- don't close banks off at Liverpool/Hwy
- Improve Lake/Bay area on west side of Frenchman's Bay. Washroom facilities, canoe/kayak launch
- Get rid of the current skatepark in favor of a safer one
- A focus on trail networks that connect parks/open spaces with communities
- Incorporate the 'Waterfront 2001 Parks Vision' approved by council into the recreation and parks vision.
- More parks with washrooms
- \$200,000 was budgeted towards a new park in 2014. Use that to renovate the current park
- Keep dogs off of the trails
- Keep west side of Frenchman's Bay Natural

Cost/parking

- Remove admission charges to Petticoat Creek Park and use as gateway to waterfront
- Free parking down by the lake on both sides
- Parking is a big issue at the bottom on Liverpool Road
- More parking by the lake

Promotion

- Hiking trails need to be advertised. Add trails in Parks and Recreation Quarterly Magazine.
- Yoga in the park
- Free, public splash pads in all large parks e.g., David Farr Memorial Park
- Expand the number of community garden plots

Improving Recreation Programs and Activities

General Programming

- When registering for family day- use online app/website.

- More programs offered at different times (morning, afternoon, evening).
- More programs in smaller facilities.
- Need to spread out activities across all of Pickering (live in west end and it's hard to go to central in rush hour).
- Classes; how to use exercise equipment properly, correctly and safely.
- A lot more needed in this area. Providing many other learning experiences for housewives.
- Expand the programs that have always been popular so those on waiting lists can enjoy them too (have them held in more than one place).
- Need more dedicated program staff to work with the community.
- Offer more programs that keep up with the times. Offer mini tryouts that are lower priced so residents can try out facilities/programs rather than registering long-term for something they may not like.
- Dedicated lane swimming that doesn't have swimming lessons or Aquafit at the same time.
- Family nights, similar to family day activity programs.
- Need a variety of good, qualified instructors.
- How to grow your own food programs- to improve food sustainability literacy.
- Try putting programs in more community centres not just the PRC.
- Need to have a variety of staff! If you don't like one you have very limited options.
- Promote Pickering as a place for families to live and play. If our population is getting older, we need new/younger people.
- Join forces with local community groups and senior's homes to set up programs that they would like to attend.
- Public access to school gyms in the evening (needed in Westshore community).

Affordability / Inclusiveness

- More affordable classes.
- Cheaper day passes.
- Affordable drop-in fitness classes at Dunbarton and St. Mary.
- More affordable memberships
- Offer some free activities so that everyone can feel welcome and part of the community.
- Free family oriented activities (hiking, water sports in Lake Ontario etc).
- Cheaper fitness classes
- Need lower cost options; promote subsidy programs.

- Gender neutral programming—boys can dance! (description for program said must wear tights).
- Accessible recreation.
- More activities for special needs children
- Inclusive gym membership should include all classes.

Older Adults / Seniors

- Include a Strategy for seniors—there are a lot of us (26%)
- Strategies related to seniors.
- More activities for active seniors (refer to the amazing programs in Ajax, Whitby and North Oshawa).
- Daytime seniors space for programs and social time.

Children and Youth Programs

- Provide things for teenagers to do in the evenings.
- Acro classes for kids
- Accessible high performance programs for kids.
- Spread out summer camp locations (not just at PRC).
- More recreation programming for the young adult group (20-34).
- Need to stop rolling over the same programs. Very little variety for <6 years old. Should focus on 'learn to' activities (skate, swim, arts).

Fitness

- Fitness activities at the beach like in California (Ropes, bars, courts etc.)
- We need an improved yoga studio in the Recreation Centre- the present one has to endure the noise of the next-door class. Yoga is supposed to be calming.
- Larger studio for yoga and classes with less noise from other classes.
- Hot yoga
- More dance programs
- More exercise programs.
- Newer gym equipment, resistance training and weight machines.

Waterfront

- Non-motorized boat access to several points to Frenchman's Bay.

Programs or Activities that bring you to the Pickering Recreation Complex

Seniors Programs

- Seniors programs (2)

Courts

- Pickleball courts.
- Tennis (2)
- Squash (2)

Fitness

- Spinning Class (2)
- Yoga (4)
- Fitness class (3)
- Gym/exercise equipment (2)

Swimming

- Swimming (9)

Skateboard

- The skateboard park (3)

Arts/Culture

- Art classes

Hockey / Skating

- Skating (6)
- Hockey

Thoughts on Skateboard Parks

Safety

- Keep youth and teens off the streets. Riders have been forced to ride street/private property in our town due to the poor layout of the park therefore street spots are better than the skate park.
- Remove that pot hole (dangerous)
- More skateparks, but make them safer.
- Visible to the public and supervisors watching the park during the summer
- We need it visible to the public or a rec. centre

- Needs to be monitored-keep drugs out!
- The current skatepark is unsafe to new skaters and everyone. The creaks and unlevelled obstacles are dangerous to learn new tricks and progress

Design

- Indoor park, or a covered concrete park (don't make one out of metal or wood).
- Parks should be highly visible and in well let areas.
- Lots of concrete like the A.R.C., regular maintenance, night lights and designated graffiti spots
- Separate areas for different abilities/ages in the same park
- London, Kitchener and Vancouver B.C. all have great Skateboard Strategies. Refer to Seattle Skate park Strategy
- Picnic area/shade areas for parents/kids and water bottle stations.
- We need to move it to an open area so that more people can come and get involved with action sports and get the kids off the streets. Put them in a place where they can feel welcome.
- JWP design. If you have any questions about skate park design, let me know
- All inclusive! Skate, scooter, bmx, inline. Could potentially attach to the rec centre as a multi-use facility (washrooms, concession, splash pad etc.). Build more than one!
- A larger and more advanced skate park than what Pickering has. Look at park examples from other cities including: Markham, Burlington, Ajax, Toronto, Newmarket etc.
- Skate parks are customizable now and can be looked at as a piece of art like the Ajax park on Taunton and Audley.
- Lots of ramps and things to jump.
- We need to move it to that open lot on Kingston road in-between valley farm and Brock or core downtown Pickering (by old Nobhills farm).
- We need a park with more space and obstacles ranging from the starter level to a semi-pro level. Also including bowls/half pipes with correct dimensions and maintenance so we don't have to fix it ourselves!
- A park with a good mix of street obstacles i.e. stair sets, rails, boxes, hand-rails, blocks. Also, Park obstacles (i.e. half pipe, ¼ pipe, bowls, banks and box jumps) and lights for when it gets dark.
- New half-pipe with upgraded dimensions (height/width)
- Needs for obstacles for beginners and intermediate skaters (e.g., small and big stairs)
- Covered on Indoor Park as soon as opportunity allows

- Have an area that boarders can use without too much trouble and with some benches residents can watch. Hold competitions in the park and make it a place for young people to have fun.
- Build a standalone indoor skate park and youth centre like Newmarket.
- The current skate park needs to be re-done. Potentially build a new park in the west shore area
- Visit our petition about a new skate park www.change.org
- Safe area to sit for bystanders, avatar pipes/bowl, possibly more smaller parks to accommodate those who live far from central pickering and proper coping
- Sheltered benches and more places to sit
- Sheltered area for summer camp
- Options for beginners and more advanced skaters
- We need to keep up the existing one until a new one is developed. Don't demolish it until a new one is established.
- Skateboard, BMX, Scooter, Quadskate Inline are all users of park that require different obstacles. In full view of the public to allow for passive observance (not hidden)
- Custom designs based on public input and skate park users
- Skate-able items in small parks with bench/ledge
- Washrooms at skate park
- Washrooms and drinking fountain at skate park
- A park for skateboarders, roller blades and BMX.
- London, Vaughan and Markham have multiple smaller sports through the city. Pickering is split by the 401 and ravines so it is better to have local skate spots.
- Community integrated skate parks/spots along playgrounds, basketball, splashpads etc.
- Lighting at the City Centre skatepark
- Skate spot at Westshore community centre
- Be able to accommodate skateboarders, BMX bikes and roller-bladers
- Skate bowl- accommodate for skateboards, BMX, roller blades, half-pipe
- Different types of skate parks spread around Pickering

Engaging Youth

- Pickering needs more places (like the skate park) for youth and teens to have fun and stay active.
- We need a new, safe place where youth can grow, learn from others, make friends, have a good time and most of all be active.

- We need a new skate park to encourage youth to be active and stay out of trouble.
- Teens are being discriminated against by the older folk. We need a newer park as many people around the area are unhappy

Partnerships

- Look at LeTaz Indoor Park (Montreal) and the outdoor park in Markham. Get sponsors (Jibbs Action Sports, West 49)

Priorities for Recreation and Parks

- Providing safe and clean parks to children in our community and a variety of classes and activities of fitness and creativity.
- Over the next ten years, my biggest recreation and parks priorities in Pickering are additional indoor facilities as our winter season is so long. Access to indoor sports courts including basketball courts, climbing walls and tennis. Another indoor pool with waterslide and / or more diving boards.
- More ways to engage citizens. Currently the park infrastructure is on the basic side. It would be nice to have more creative options rather than the standard jungle gyms. Also the potential for refrigerated ice skating rinks outdoors.
- Over the next ten years, my biggest recreation and parks priorities in Pickering are affordable child and youth programs as well as; baseball diamonds, swimming pools and curling rinks as my young family will want access to those venues.
- Over the next ten years, my biggest recreation and parks priorities in Pickering are... to stay as fit and active as possible and get outside daily, preferably by foot and bicycle (as opposed to car). My husband and I are both in our sixties. He has vision issues, I have back and hip issues, so walking along a hazardous trail is rather foolhardy for us. Please don't make us consider moving back to Ajax, we LOVE it here!
- Programs for seniors. Nice to see many seniors moving into our City's downtown... hope we have the programs and services they require
- Taking care of our green spaces. While I understand that the Seaton development was inevitable, it's a shame/ tragedy to see the Seaton trail/ the surrounding green space being destroyed. Have lived in Pickering for 20 years and have loved going up the trail and seeing fish, beavers, deer. My kids/ and others are likely not going to be so fortunate!

Appendix B – Random Sample Household Telephone Survey

1. a) In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following recreation activities? By participation, we mean situations where you or a member of your household actively participate at home, at a public or private facility, or outside of Pickering, not simply attending or watching others.

	#	%		#	%
Walking or Hiking for Leisure	315	82%	Baseball or Softball	74	19%
Gardening	271	71%	Tennis	63	16%
Fitness Programs and Classes	198	52%	Organized Teen Programs	63	16%
Leisure Swimming	168	44%	Organized Seniors Programs	59	15%
Running or Jogging	153	40%	Indoor Soccer	51	13%
Use of Playground Equipment	150	39%	Volleyball	50	13%
Cycling or Mountain Biking	141	37%	Field Sports such as Rugby or Football	44	11%
Golf	130	34%	Badminton	44	11%
Weight-training	121	32%	Skateboarding	29	8%
Recreational Skating	108	28%	Lawn Bowling	28	7%
Splash Pads	101	26%	Curling	23	6%
Outdoor Soccer	97	25%	Squash	13	3%
Children's programs	90	23%	Pickleball	13	3%
Hockey or Figure Skating	84	22%	Cricket	11	3%
Lane Swimming	76	20%	Racquetball	9	2%
Basketball	75	20%	Total Respondents		384

- b) How many people in your household go skateboarding?

Response	#	%
1	18	62%
2	11	38%
Total Respondents		29

- c) On Average, how often do the people in your household go skateboarding?

Response	#	%
Once a day	2	7%
A few times a week	18	62%
Once a month	2	7%
A few times a month	5	1%
A few times a year	2	7%
Total Respondents		29

d) When you go skateboarding, do you go to....

Response	#	%
A Park	4	14%
Another Location (e.g., home, etc.)	13	45%
Both	12	41%
Total Respondents		29

2. a) Are you and members of your household able to participate in recreation and parks activities as often as you would like?

Response	#	%
Yes	272	72%
No	108	28%
Total Respondents		380

b) If no, why not?

Barrier	#	%
Lack of personal time / Too busy	68	52%
Health Problems / Disability / Age	21	16%
Lack of money / Too expensive	13	10%
Lack of desired facilities or programs	11	8%
Program not offered at convenient time	9	7%
Lack of information / Unaware of opportunities	3	2%
Lack of transportation	3	2%
Total Respondents		105

3. a) Generally, what percentage of your household's recreation and parks needs are met within Pickering?

Proportion	#	%
All (100%)	188	50%
Most (67-99%)	102	27%
About Half (34-66%)	43	11%
Some (1-33%)	30	8%
None (0%)	14	4%
Total Respondents		377

b) What recreation and parks activities do you or members of your household participate in outside of Pickering?

Top Activities	
Hiking / Walking / Running	Tennis
Hockey / Skating	Basketball
Swimming	Biking
Soccer	Skiing / Cross Country Skiing / Snow Shoeing
Fitness Centre	Canoeing / Kayaking
Fitness Classes / Weight Training / Yoga	Parks
Baseball or Softball	Splash Pads
Cycling / Mountain Biking	Volleyball
Golf	Pickleball
Dance	Curling

c) Why does your household participate in these activities outside of Pickering?

Response	#	%
Facility/program not available in Pickering	55	26%
Quality of facility / program is superior	35	17%
Connected to the other community / Used to live there	24	11%
Closer to work or school	17	8%
Tournaments / Special Events / Travel Teams	15	7%
Facility/program not available at the preferred time	13	6%
Less expensive	13	6%
Closer to other activities or shopping	7	3%
Total Respondents		196

4. a) Are there any recreation facilities or park amenities that you or members of your household would like to see offered in Pickering that are not currently available?

Response	#	%
Yes	103	27%
No	272	73%
Total Respondents		375

b) What facilities and amenities would you like to see offered?

Top Facilities Requested	Top Amenities Requested
Tennis Courts	More Parking at Sports Fields
Basketball Courts	Washrooms Along Trails
Indoor Swimming Pools / 50m Pool / Warm Water Pool	
Outdoor Skating Rinks	
Pickleball Courts	
Walking and Cycling Trails	
Dog Park	
Splash Pad	

5. a) Are there any community recreation and park activities that you or members of your household would like to see offered in Pickering that are not currently available?

Response	#	%
Yes	75	20%
No	297	80%
Total Respondents		372

b) What activities would you like to see offered?

Top Activities Requested	
Fitness / Yoga Classes	Organized Sports
Seniors Programs, Cards, Fitness, Shuffleboard, etc.	Badminton
Arts and Crafts Programs	Bowling
Dancing	Outdoor Skating
Swimming (public swim, lane swim, swim classes)	Public Skating

6. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all satisfied” and 5 means “very satisfied”, please tell me your level of satisfaction with the recreation and parks opportunities in Pickering for the following age groups.

	Unsatisfied / Strongly Unsatisfied		Neutral		Satisfied / Strongly Satisfied		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Children (0-12 years)	19	7%	38	15%	203	78%	260
Teens (13-18 years)	28	11%	74	30%	142	58%	244
Adults (19-54 years)	31	10%	56	18%	222	72%	309
Older Adults (55-69 years)	20	8%	40	15%	199	77%	259
Seniors (70+)	19	8%	54	22%	168	70%	241
Families	22	8%	54	18%	216	74%	292

7. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all important” and “not at all satisfied” and 5 means “very important” and “very satisfied”, please rate how important the following items are to your household as well as your general level of satisfaction.

	Not Important / Not Important at All		Neutral		Important / Very Important		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
How important are parks for passive uses such as walking and green space preservation?	11	3%	15	4%	356	93%	382
How important are parks for active uses such as sports fields and playgrounds?	16	4%	37	10%	320	86%	373
How important are indoor recreation facilities?	22	6%	52	14%	308	81%	382

	Unsatisfied / Strongly Unsatisfied		Neutral		Satisfied / Strongly Satisfied		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
How satisfied are you with parks for passive uses such as walking and green space preservation in Pickering?	28	7%	71	19%	281	74%	380
How satisfied are you with parks for active uses such as sports fields and playgrounds?	28	8%	73	20%	261	72%	362
How satisfied are you with indoor recreation facilities in Pickering?	36	10%	91	25%	238	65%	365

8. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “strongly oppose” and 5 means “strongly support”, to what degree do you oppose or support the City spending additional public funds on the following types of facilities?

	Oppose / Strongly Oppose		Neutral		Support / Strongly Support		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Parks and Open Space	19	5%	50	13%	309	82%	378
Playgrounds	28	7%	62	17%	284	76%	374
Multi-Sport Gymnasiums	31	8%	69	19%	269	73%	369
Dedicated Seniors’ Space	32	9%	72	20%	265	72%	369
Indoor Swimming Pools	36	10%	75	20%	264	70%	375
Dedicated Youth Space	31	9%	89	24%	244	67%	364
Fitness Centres	49	13%	74	20%	248	67%	371
Community Vegetable Gardens	51	14%	77	21%	242	65%	370
Soccer Fields	48	13%	81	22%	238	65%	367
Splash Pads	56	15%	92	25%	220	60%	368
Baseball or Softball Diamonds	49	13%	103	28%	216	59%	368
Arenas	55	15%	105	28%	210	57%	370
Outdoor Swimming Pools	61	16%	101	27%	212	57%	374
Outdoor Basketball Courts	62	17%	100	27%	208	56%	370
Outdoor Tennis Courts	56	15%	116	31%	201	54%	373
Football or Rugby Fields	67	18%	108	30%	189	52%	364
Community Halls or Banquet Rooms	79	22%	110	30%	175	48%	364
Off-Leash Dog Parks	110	31%	98	28%	148	42%	356
Skateboard Parks	102	28%	122	33%	144	39%	368
Squash Courts	108	30%	124	34%	131	36%	363
Racquetball Courts	111	31%	121	33%	131	36%	363
Curling Rinks	113	33%	113	33%	120	35%	346
Pickleball	121	39%	106	34%	81	26%	308
Cricket	137	40%	124	36%	85	25%	346

9. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not willing at all” and 5 means “very willing”, if the City were to substantially improve the quality of its recreation and parks facilities, how willing would your household be to consider the following options to help pay for this?

	Not Willing / Not Willing at All		Neutral		Willing / Very Willing		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Pay an increased fee	124	33%	105	28%	149	39%	378
Donate funds	177	47%	107	28%	96	25%	380
Pay higher property taxes	289	76%	56	15%	36	9%	381

10. Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree”, please tell me your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Disagree / Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Agree / Strongly Agree		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Your household is generally satisfied with the location of outdoor sports fields in Pickering.	26	7%	57	15%	288	78%	371
Your household is generally satisfied with the location of parks and open spaces in Pickering.	26	7%	61	16%	293	77%	380
Your household is generally aware of the recreation and parks opportunities that are available in your area.	32	8%	61	16%	286	75%	379
Your household is generally satisfied with the location of indoor recreation facilities in Pickering.	44	12%	51	13%	284	75%	379
Recreation and parks facilities, services, and programs should be a high priority for City Council.	22	6%	73	19%	283	75%	378
There are enough community recreation activities in your area to meet the needs of your household.	56	15%	64	17%	258	68%	378
In general, fees for recreation programs are affordable in Pickering	35	10%	100	29%	214	61%	349

11. What language is most regularly spoken in your home?

	#	%		#	%
English	371	96%	Tamil	1	0%
French	5	1%	Greek	1	0%
Other	2	1%	Hindi	1	0%
Italian	1	0%	Bulgarian	1	0%
Urdu	1	0%	Latvian	1	0%
Tagalog	1	0%	Total Respondents		384

12. How long have you lived in Pickering?

	#	%		#	%
Less than 5 years	15	4%	21 – 30 years	104	27%
5 – 10 years	46	12%	More than 30 years	101	27%
11 – 20 years	114	30%	Total Respondents		380

13. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

Number of Persons	#	%
1	40	11%
2	116	31%
3	60	16%
4	106	28%
5	44	12%
6	9	2%
7+	2	1%
Total Respondents		377
Average Household Size		3.1

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

	Number of People	Proportion of Sample	2016 Census
Under 10 years	98	8%	10%
10-19 years	169	14%	13%
20-34 years	183	16%	19%
35-54 years	329	28%	28%
55-69 years	212	18%	20%
70 years and over	189	16%	9%
Total Number of Persons	1,180	100%	100%

15. In what year were you born?

	#	%
1929 or earlier (88 yrs or older)	2	1%
1930 to 1939 (78 to 87 yrs)	20	6%
1940 to 1949 (68 to 77 yrs)	52	15%
1950 to 1959 (58 to 67 yrs)	100	29%
1960 to 1969 (48 to 57 yrs)	96	28%
1970 to 1979 (38 to 47 yrs)	49	14%
1980 or later (16 to 37 yrs)	21	6%
Total Respondents		340
Average (Median) Age		57 (58)

16. What are the first three digits of your postal code?

	#	Proportion of Sample	Canada Post Distribution
L1V	215	59%	56%
L1W	84	23%	20%
L1X	51	14%	21%
L1Y	12	3%	3%
Total Respondents		362	100%

17. As an optional question, what is your household's total annual income before taxes?

	#	%
Under \$40,000	18	8%
Between \$40,000 and \$59,000	24	11%
Between \$60,000 and \$79,000	29	13%
Between \$80,000 and \$99,000	38	18%
Over \$100,000	107	50%
Total Respondents		216

18. Gender

	#	%
Male	153	40%
Female	231	60%
Total Respondents		384

Appendix C – Stakeholder Group Survey

Stakeholder Group Survey Participants	
Indoor Sports Groups	
1st Pickering Pickleball Club Durham West Girls Hockey Association Pickering Hockey Association	Pickering Panthers Jr. A Hockey Club Pickering Squash Club Pickering Swim Club
Outdoor Sports Groups	
Claremont Mens Slo Pitch League Durham Recreational Sports League Eastshore Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League Frenchmen's Bay Kiteboarding Association Ontario Hydro Soccer League Pickering Baseball Association Pickering Cricket Club Pickering Fastball Association Pickering Lawn Bowling Club	Pickering Men's Slo Pitch League Pickering Soccer Club Running for Your Life and The Gazelles Track and Field Club Sandy Beach Tennis Club Solstice Sport Royal City Soccer Club West Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League West Rouge Blues Soccer Club
Service Groups, Social Clubs, and Other Stakeholders	
Big Brothers and Big Sisters of South-West Durham Claremont and District Lions Club Girl Guides of Canada- Ontario Council Girls Incorporated of Durham Pickering Ajax Italian Social Club Pickering Italian Seniors Association Pickering West Shore Community Association	Pine Ridge Secondary School Rouge Hill Seniors South Pickering Seniors Club St. Martins Bayview Seniors Association Whitevale and District Residents' Association YMCA of Greater Toronto / YMCA Early Years

Indoor Sports Groups

1st Pickering Pickleball Club

The 1st Pickering Pickleball Club was organized to provide an opportunity for beginner and skilled participants to participate in recreational pickleball in a social environment. The Club currently has 75 members, although non-members may also drop-in and play. The Club has tripled in size since its inception in 2016 and plans to continue growing given the popularity of the sport.

The Club currently plays at the Pickering Village United Church (in Ajax), although it was indicated that the Club has quickly outgrown the two courts available at this location due to the growth in membership. While there is currently no suitable municipal pickleball courts in Pickering, the Club is currently working with City staff to locate an appropriate venue. Potential locations that have been considered included facilities such as the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre and East Shore Community Centre, although the Club determined that they

are not suitable for their needs. The Club requested the use of dedicated outdoor and indoor pickleball courts (a minimum of four), preferably at the Pickering Recreation Complex. The Club indicated that they are open to contributing to the cost for providing dedicated pickleball courts through payment of drop-in fees collected by the Club (exclusive of Club costs for consumables).

Durham West Girls Hockey Association

The Durham West Girls Hockey Association is a volunteer-based non-profit organization that provides hockey opportunities to girls of all ages. The group reported 545 participants and that memberships is steadily declining, although they are not aware of the cause. The Association utilizes Pickering's arenas and while they did not identify any improvements, it was suggested that a restaurant be provided at one of the arenas.

Pickering Hockey Association

The Pickering Hockey Association provides community-based hockey for location youth. Learn to skate programs are offered as well as house league and representative play. The group has 804 players, which is a decline of nearly 200 members from the past three years, although the group expects growth will occur over the next few years.

The Association uses both of Pickering's arena locations, including the office boardroom, and banquet hall at Don Beer Arena. Suggested improvements included more storage facilities, and larger and more dressing rooms at Don Beer Arena. The Association also requested 20 additional prime time hours.

Pickering Panthers Jr A Hockey Club

The Pickering Panthers Junior A Hockey Club provides high level hockey for local players with a mandate to move participants to higher levels of hockey including, but not limited to, the OHL, CIA, and NCAA. The team roster current has 22 members and while there are many potential players on the waitlist, the Club is unable to accommodate additional individuals.

The Club uses the arena at the Pickering Recreation Complex and on occasion, the Club will also use associated meeting rooms. The only suggestion was to offer year-round ice in Pickering as the Club currently spends a large amount of money for summer ice in adjacent municipalities.

Pickering Squash Club

The Pickering Squash Club promotes the sport and provides organized play at all levels in an engaging environment. The Club currently has 109 members for the current year and does not foresee any major changes to its membership over the coming years.

The Club uses the six squash courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex and offered a number of suggestions to improve the facilities including, but not limited to, renovating the dressing rooms and showers, providing a members lounge, towel service, and undertaking repairs to Court #5. The Club requested municipal assistance in promoting the sport to assist with attracting new members.

Pickering Swim Club

The Pickering Swim Club provides a friendly, supportive, and challenging environment where youth can develop fundamental and advanced skills in swimming. The Club has 250 competitive and fundamental swimmers. It is expected that membership will remain the same as they are unable to accommodate additional participants due to limited pool time. The Club currently uses the pool at the Pickering Recreation Complex, Dunbarton Indoor Pool, as well as other indoor pools in adjacent municipalities. Potential improvements to Pickering's pools were not offered, although requests were made for a new 25 and 50 metre pool. The need for additional pool time within Pickering to accommodate the current number of participants was identified as the Club's primary concern.

Outdoor Sports Groups

Claremont Men's Slo Pitch League

The Claremont Men's Slo Pitch League is an adult league that plays once a week on Sundays. The League reported 60 members but anticipates membership to increase over the foreseeable future. The League utilizes the ball diamond at the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre and identified areas for enhancement including drainage improvements and replacing the backstop and outfield fencing.

Durham Dolphins Football Club

The Durham Dolphins Football Club provides opportunities to learn, play, and to develop their skills in preparation for professional football sports including the CIS, NCAA, or CJFL. The Club has maintained a membership of approximately 340 players over the past three years, three-quarters of whom are residents of Pickering. Over the next few years, the Club expects to increase membership on the basis that there are a limited number of competing regional teams (as well as throughout the GTA), allowing the Club to continue to draw interested participants.

The Club uses the artificial and natural grass sports fields at Beverley Morgan Park on a regular basis. The Club expressed that access to another field would be beneficial, with an interest in booking an additional four days. Additionally, the Club made requests for access to supporting amenities including water, change rooms, and electricity as the leagues the Club plays in require these facilities. Given the absence of these amenities at present time, the Club indicated that they are currently renting off-site facilities to accommodate these needs.

Durham Recreational Sports League

The Durham Recreational Sports League provides encourages active participation for adults through recreational sports programs such as soccer, baseball (all forms), ball hockey, football, volleyball, and more. The organization has over 1,200 members across the Region, which is nearly double the membership from three years ago. Growth in participation is expected to continue as the group feels that there are many adults who are looking to play recreational sports.

The group utilizes a number of recreation and park facilities in Pickering including soccer fields, volleyball courts, and baseball facilities; specific locations were not mentioned. The primary

concern raised by the League is the availability of facilities as booking regular local community users take priority leaves limited opportunities for the organization to rent space.

Eastshore Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League

The Eastshore Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League is a casual group ball group that utilizes the ball diamonds at Kinsmen Park. The League reported 100 members and intends to continue growing their organization. The high cost of diamond rentals was identified as their primary concern.

Frenchmen's Bay Kiteboarding Association

The Frenchmen's Bay Kiteboarding Association is a group of kiteboarding and water sport enthusiasts that who are committed to cleaning and maintaining Frenchmen's Bay (West Shore Park). In an effort to raise awareness and to promote conservation, the group organizes regular community events that are open to members and non-members such as beach clean-up, educational seminars, and friendly aquatic competitions. The Association reported 46 members, which is four-fold increase from the past three years. It is expected that membership will increase in the future as more residents are interested to kiteboarding and other aquatic-based activities.

The Association utilizes parks and waterfront locations that are suitable for kiteboarding and other water activities to hold recreational and educational sport training sessions. Given that access to the water is imperative for the Association, the group indicated that a safe launch area, with supporting anchor points for watercrafts should be provided where there are no obstructions or tangling hazards. Installing a webcam at Frenchmen's Bay was also suggested to allow users to view the water conditions over the internet. Signage was also suggested to be erected around the Bay to raise awareness about safe water usage.

Ontario Hydro Soccer League

The Ontario Hydro Soccer League provides an opportunity for Ontario Hydro employees to play organized soccer. The League has maintained approximately 240 players over the past three years and hopes to increase membership as new staff come online. The League plays at Kinsmen Park and suggested improvements including providing netting behind the goals to prevent the ball from leaving the area of play.

Pickering Baseball Association

The Pickering Baseball Association provides an opportunity to grow and develop baseball skills for local and regional youth. The Association reported that membership has grown to 854 members and it is believed that the growing popularity of baseball will continue to drive registration.

The Association identified that they use a number of ball diamonds in Pickering. Suggested improvements included overall diamond quality (e.g., grooming and maintenance), lighting diamonds, and more washroom facilities. The Association also requested the use of additional hardball diamonds to accommodate their growing teams.

Pickering Cricket Club

The purpose of the Pickering Cricket Club is to elevate the visibility of the sport in Pickering and to foster relationships between members and the greater community through cricket. The Club currently has 40 members and expects that continued immigration and newcomers in Pickering will contribute to higher participation levels. The Club currently uses the cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park and suggested the use of a clubhouse and associated amenities to support activities held by the Club.

Pickering Fastball Association

The Pickering Fastball Association provides organized fastball at the recreational and competitive level. The Association has grown to 200 members for the current year and expects to add more players over the future. The Association uses the ball diamonds at Dunmore and Kinsmen Park, and suggested improvements included improved screening, drainage, and more frequent grass cutting.

Pickering Lawn Bowling Club

The Pickering Lawn Bowling Club encourages, promotes, and facilitates organized games in the City in addition to related social activities. The Club has maintained approximately 156 members over the past three years and anticipates that membership will remain unchanged over the future as the new members is generally offset by former members who are no longer active.

The Club plays at the South Pickering Seniors Club and uses associated facilities for other social activities. Suggested improvements included new wall paint, improved outside deck, control over heating and cooling of the clubroom, and internet access. The greatest concern raised by the group is the ability to pay for security when the facility is being used.

Pickering Men's Slo Pitch League

The Pickering Men's Slo Pitch League has maintained approximately 1,100 players over the past three years and it is anticipated that membership will remain unchanged over the future due to the inability to secure additional diamond time. The League uses the ball diamonds at Dunmore Park, Kinsmen Park, Centennial Park, and Forestbrook Park. It was suggested that new adult-size ball diamond complex be constructed (a minimum of six) given that the existing diamonds are undersized for suitable adult play.

Pickering Senior Men's Slo Pitch

Pickering Senior Men's Slo Pitch is a league for adults over the age of 40. The league has maintained a consistent membership of 90 players over the past three years and it is expected that the number of participants will remain unchanged over the planning period. The league plays at Dunmoore Park on a weekly basis and suggested improvements to consider included equipment storage boxes and painted foul lines and poles.

Pickering Soccer Club

The purpose of the Pickering Soccer Club is to create opportunities to enhance, develop, and excel in the sport, while promoting an active lifestyle for all ages. The Club offers indoor and outdoor organized and recreational drop-in soccer programs reported. A membership of 3,500

adult and youth players were reported for the current year and it is expected to attract new participants over the next few years by implementing new strategies that target grass roots development and U13-U18 player growth. A plan to introduce indoor adult recreation leagues is also being considered, as well as plans to increase drop-in soccer programs and programs for persons with disabilities. Other strategies include promoting the elite development program, as well as soccer-related physical activity and literacy programs.

The Club currently uses a number of outdoor soccer fields, some of which were identified to be in need of improvement such as even play surfaces, appropriately-sized fields to meet mandated requirements, more parking, accessible field access, a storage facility, and more. In addition to these suggested improvements, the Club expressed the desire for two full size, accessible sports fields that are flexible to accommodate a range of field sizes, with adequate parking. This was a top priority identified by the group in order to grow their organization and to attract new players.

Running for Your Life and The Gazelles Track and Field Club

Running for Your Life is dedicated to enhancing and providing opportunities for members to participate in fitness, physical development, healthy lifestyles, and positive self-image through running-based programs. The organizations has 600 members and plans to increase membership in the future as more individuals are becoming aware of the importance of health and wellness and physical literacy. The group uses the running tracks in Pickering, such as at St. Marys high School, and feel that more high quality track and field facilities should be offered in the City.

Sandy Beach Tennis Club

The Sandy Beach Tennis Club is a recreational tennis group with 105 members, which is expected to remain stable during the next few years. The Club uses the tennis courts at Kinsmen Park and suggested that a paved walking be provided from the parking lot to the Club entrance.

Solstice Sport

Solstice Sport provides youth and adult beach volleyball programs in Pickering. The organization has 100 members and it was noted that membership is cyclical as participation bumps are experienced during the Olympics. The group uses the beach volleyball courts in Pickering and while no improvements were offered, it was suggested that a splash pad would be beneficial to their camps.

Royal City Soccer Club

The Royal City Soccer Club is a summer camp that provides soccer instruction for youth in a safe and encouraging environment. The Club reported a membership of 58 members, which is a drop from 92 members from the previous year, although the group anticipates that membership will remain stable going forward. The Club primarily uses the soccer fields at Glengrove Park and did not identify any improvements. The cost of permits was the primary concern for the group, particularly as the Club is a non-profit organization that seeks to keep the cost of registration affordable.

West Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League

The West Pickering Ladies Slo Pitch League offers friendly exercise and competition for women. The League has 140 members, which is expected to remain the same. In order to maintain current participation levels, the League reported that they have accommodated teams from Ajax and Uxbridge. The group uses the ball diamonds at Dunmore Park and Kinsmen Park. Suggested improvements included replacing the light posts at Kinsmen Park.

West Rouge Blues Soccer Club

The West Rouge Blues Soccer Club is a competitive and recreational soccer club for adults. The Club reported 46 players and intends to maintain registration levels given the availability of soccer fields. The Club uses the soccer fields at Diana, Princess of Wales Park and Kinsmen Park. The only suggested improvement to the fields was the need to improve field drainage.

Service Groups, Social Clubs, and Other Stakeholders

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of South-West Durham

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of South-West Durham provides mentorship services to youth and children in the Durham Region. The organization's mission is to work with the community to give children a better opportunity to become healthy and confident members of society through mentorship. The organization currently serves over 1,200 children and youth with the support of 140 volunteers. At present, the organization does not use any municipal facilities in Pickering.

Claremont and District Lions Club

The Claremont and District Lions Club is a volunteer group that helps residents and other organizations in need through donations and local sponsorships. The Club holds various fundraising events such as Christmas dinners and social BBQs. The Club reported 12 members and plans to increase membership as they are actively seeking interested members of the community who are looking to get involved in the community.

In partnership with the City, the Club oversees facility rentals of the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre, including the gymnasium and meeting rooms. Suggested improvements to the facility included updating the washroom and kitchen. The desire for a larger parking lot was also identified, particularly to accommodate concurrent functions. Accessibility retrofits were also suggested, some of which are currently being undertaken by the City.

Girl Guides of Canada- Ontario Council

Girl Guides of Canada provides a safe and friendly environment for girls and women to develop important life skills, relationships, interests, and to challenge themselves. The Ontario Council alone has over 30,000 members and it is expected to continue growing over the foreseeable future. The organization uses the East Shore Community Centre and requested the use of additional space at an affordable rate to allow the group to accommodate more members in the Pickering area.

Girls Incorporated of Durham

Girls Incorporated of Durham is a social services agency that provides assistance to underserved and at risk girls in Durham Region. A number of programs are available, which are designed to help newcomers, visible minorities, girls living in low-income and single-parent households, and other disadvantaged groups, build self-confidence and connections, while developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make healthy life choices. The organization serves over 1,500 girls and while there is a waitlist of about 300 girls the ability to accommodate new members in the future is uncertain as it is dependent on available funding. The organization utilizes a variety of recreation and park facilities and did not identify any areas for improvement.

Pak-Canadian Society of Durham (Friends Indeed Canada)

Pak-Canadian Society of Durham's mission is to foster community partnerships in order to create opportunities for social interaction and to advocate positive change in Durham Region. The organization currently boasts 38 members and there are plans to attract new members through holding more events and raising general awareness of the group. The group currently uses space at the Pickering Library for monthly meetings. No improvements were suggested, although the group expressed that as the population continues to grow, there will be a need for more high quality community meeting spaces. The most pressing issues identified by the group was the cost of renting facilities and limited resources available (e.g., funds and volunteers).

Pickering Ajax Italian Social Club

The Pickering Ajax Italian Social Club provides an opportunity for members of the Italian community to gather and participate in a number of social events such as bocce. The group current has 93 members and plans to expand as a result of greater efforts to promote the Club and its activities. The Club is based out of Centennial Park and did not mention any areas for improvement.

Pickering Italian Seniors' Association

The Pickering Italian Seniors' Association is a weekly social group where Italian seniors can gather and socialize during events such as bingo, dances, day trips, picnics, and other activities. The group has declined modestly to 100 members for the current year as past members have gotten too old to participate. The group uses the Pickering Recreation Complex and Petticoat Creek Community Centre, and have made suggestions to improve the user experience including more storage space and warmer temperatures in the facilities, particularly after 8 pm.

Pickering West Shore Community Association

The Pickering West Shore Community Association promotes and protects the interests of the West Shore community as it relates to cultural, recreational, civic, and social opportunities. The Association assists with the delivery of a number of activities in the community including, but not limited to, Spring Festival, Easter Parade, Adopt a Park, Neighbourhood Watch, Outdoor Film Night, and more. The Association has 75 members and hopes to increase membership in the future through outreach programs and raising awareness in the community.

The Club uses a number of parks in the community and while no improvements were suggested, the Club requested the use of a community room hold meetings and other indoor activities. It was reported that there are currently no meeting rooms available in the community as they tend

to be unavailable. The Club estimates that the meeting room would be used about 16 times per year. A facility at the Rotary Frenchman's Bay West Park was also suggested to be used as an environmental education and stewardship centre. The Club's primary concerns was the need to develop a master plan for the waterfront from Rouge Park to Frenchmen's Bay. The desire to expand the West Shore Community Hall was also expressed.

Pine Ridge Secondary School

Pine Ridge Secondary School has approximately 1,100 pupils and uses Pickering's recreation and park facilities before and after school hours. No improvements to the City's facilities were identified, although the school expressed interest in continuing to expand or seek new partnership opportunities.

Rouge Hill Seniors' Club

Rouge Hill Seniors' Club provides fellowship and recreation activities to its members. Such programs include, but are not limited to, darts, carpet bowling, arts and crafts, bingo, billiards, potluck, monthly meetings, and day trips. The group currently has 148 members with plans to expand membership as they intend to attract recently retiring baby boomers in the area.

The group primarily uses the facilities located at the Petticoat Creek Community Centre. The group's primary concerns was the desire for additional storage, wall space to display club information, and the use of a dedicated office.

South Pickering Seniors' Club

The South Pickering Seniors' Club provides a number of social, recreational, and health activities and services for residents over the age of 55. Programs and activities includes cards, pickleball, fitness, dancing, arts and crafts, shuffleboard, table tennis, badminton, and more. Membership has grown year over year and has currently reached 1,000 members. The Club anticipates that membership will continue to grow as Pickering's population continues to age. The Club uses the multi-purpose spaces at the East Shore Community Centre and has indicated that more space is required to continue providing popular activities.

St. Martins Bayview Seniors' Association

St. Martins Bayview Seniors' Association is a group dedicated to enabling the participation and interaction of the building's tenants in social activities, events, and meetings. The Association currently has 36 members and indicated that growth is limited given that the group is comprised of tenants who live in the building. The Association reported that they do not use any municipal facilities.

Whitevale and District Residents' Association

The Whitevale and District Residents' Association was formed to protect, promote, and enhance the social, cultural, and recreational interests of the Whitevale community. The Association is comprised of approximately 250 residents who live in the Whitevale community. The Association uses the Whitevale Community Centre, park and the Whitevale Arts and Culture Centre. No improvements to these facilities were suggested, although it was indicated that the Association

is currently in the process of preparing a proposal that will speak to local community improvements.

YMCA of Greater Toronto / YMCA Early Years

The YMCA of Greater Toronto provides a broad range of social support services for residents, including programs for new families, newcomers, immigrants, at risk groups, and more. In Pickering, YMCA Early Years offers programs at the East Shore Community Centre and the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre. Some programs are also delivered at parks and along the waterfront throughout Pickering.

Appendix D – Written Input from Key Community Groups

What do you value most about the recreation and park facilities, programs and services offered in the City of Pickering?

- Where do my family and I spend our time within Pickering? Community garden, walking the Duffins Creek area up Valley Farm Rd and at the foot of Liverpool are the most trafficked places for us. Why, well, the community garden draws us as a responsibility. The walks along Duffins Creek is good exposure to nature for the distance traveled. The Foot of Liverpool is more structured but still a nice walk. Having public washrooms available is important to my family so, the foot of Liverpool is appreciated.
- They are great. They are free, low cost, affordable and accessible to the community.
- I value mostly about physical activities which involves children especially in recreation and park services. More specifically, Soccer, Tennis, Badminton, Swimming and many more.
- I value programs like arts and crafts class, dance class and exercise class. I love tennis and wish we have more indoor tennis facility than just the one in Pickering complex and of course the outdoor sport facilities must maintain.
- As the mother to a young child, having the spaces that are clean, safe and fun for my child to play and learn in is very important. Especially with the economic times we are in, being able to take my child to a park that I don't have to pay to visit is an important resource. AS well as family swim times and library activities these are all programs and services that my family uses a lot.
- Variety of programs – 55+ programs, including fitness, regular fitness, bridge lessons, photography, recreational swimming, recreational skating, Pickering Museum Village, East Shore Recreation Centre (for South Pickering Seniors Centre), etc.

What improvements are required in the provision of recreation and parks services in Pickering to ensure that the needs of the residents and stakeholders in Pickering are met?

- Facilities should be inviting to the public without an implied need to spend money when entering facilities. Public access washrooms and sit down areas should be available. Yes, I know the main complex has this but it would be nice if it were more inviting.
- A number of years ago, I visited the Claremont multi use facility. I believe it had a fire station, small library and some open rooms for use. This is an excellent scaling and cross use of space within this building.
- Park system needs to have clusters of cross generational focuses. Having a park for children with a couple benches for the adults is a poor cross generational focus. Adults should be enticed to engage in some type of activity while children play. Youths should also be encouraged to be around but not in children's areas. The more eyes the less mischief is the thought. Seeing police or city staff (Bi-Law Enforcement) walking would be good.

- There is a lack of free skate rentals at skating rinks. In Toronto, that service is offered at some locations. The ground's keeping of our forests and parks needs to be more upheld such as more cleaner and efficient parks where there are ample waste bins in the vicinity (garbage/recycling bins) and where there is limited waste thrown around on the ground. As well as, making more wheelchair accessibility ramps in parks.
- Suggested improvements to Glendale Park:
 - Install a gated metal fence facing Liverpool Road some where the gate is in the middle of the lot. A similar fence also to be installed on Glendale Drive.
 - Provide a safe crossing on Liverpool Road from East to the Gate, could include Zebra crossing with flashing lights, speed breakers on both the North and South side of the Zebra crossing.
 - Plant a mixture of Trees around the Fence line of the property and elsewhere in a plan.
 - Provide some benches around the park for park users to relax.
 - Provide proper garbage disposal bins either side of the Park.
 - Provide a drinking water fountain and amenities somewhere in the Park that will not give rise to disturbance to neighbors.
 - Provide sufficient lighting in the Park layout.
 - Install Glendale Park Signs on both side of the Park. Liverpool and Glendale Drive.
- I would like to see more space in parks, more exercise equipment for every age, more fun activities equipment which I don't see in many parks in Pickering. I have seen some very great playing equipment for children in Scarborough parks such as park at rouge hill station. I want to see something like that in Pickering parks. As Pickering population is growing fast, we need more items in parks. For example, some parks have only two swings and both are for babies, some parks have none but only slides.
- To ensure the facilities are kids and seniors family, keep up with time, a place encourage young and old to go to.
- I would like to see mores swim and activity times that appeal to working mothers of toddlers. I often want to take my child swimming or to story time or other activities but work 9-5 hours and his bed time is at 7:30 it is hard to find times during the week that accommodate these wishes. As well as babysitting time, since the only times I often feel I can go to the gym are on Sundays or very early morning. I often wish that working mothers were more considered in planning of recreational services.
- The Pickering Recreation Complex could use some updating – change rooms, studio A, etc.

Please share any information that would benefit the development of the Recreation & Parks Master Plan in supporting assessments and ultimately recommendations?

- Much talk is made of Sustainability and people's perceptions of what it is, is all over the place. Over the last decade, the traction of "Permaculture" and "Food forests" have

become more prominent. Some communities have actively engaged in these concepts and have started to transform respective areas into more habitable environments.

- A Park is not just a strip of grass that is maintained by parks and rec staff, it is a pocket of nature for habitants to seek refuge from sterile infrastructures of society. Nature should be allowed to thrive. The need for the Master Plan to set things up right is paramount. If things are implemented correctly, little follow up is needed.
- I started a petition a little late and had some technical problems once created. I've few signatures but intent on keeping the petition active. I believe over time, the signatures will come. I've provided a link below. <https://www.change.org>
- I visited Istanbul, Turkey two years ago and amazed to see their recreation and park services. They have the exercise equipment, running tracks and other fun and physical activities for every age of their citizen. I would like to see that services in Pickering. I would love to share some of the photos I took during my visit to that park.
- I think Pickering needs a focal point where people can meet and have fun, instead of cookie cutter style mall, we need to have a unique place in Pickering like St. Lawrence market in Toronto, farmers market in St. Jacobs not only local residents come, it also draws people from outside of Pickering.
- An indication of any significant changes in programs

What should the City's top priorities be in meeting the recreation and park needs of stakeholders and residents in Pickering?

- Garbage/littering/cigarette butts
- Wheelchair accessibility
- Maintain free, affordable and cost efficient resources
- Be sure the people feel safe within the recreation and park facilities. The more people using these places, the more eyes are watching. People have to feel that the parks are a worthwhile destination for them to use them. If Pickering residences don't see value in going to the park, they will not. If people don't go to the parks, no eyes are watching leads to possible bad things happening. You need to create the need or a draw that pulls residence to the parks on a regular basis. No need or draw, no people. Then, waste of tax payers' money.
- Developments of Parks and saving green space in the city should be a number one priority and same concepts as above should be applied to other parks.
- Recreational Facilities and services should be designed in such a way that they should be self-funding with Initial support from other levels of government thus reducing the burden on the general population.
- Safe and clean environment. Dog walk area for dog owners. Exercise equipment for every age. Also, we need skate boarding area and some open area for play anything kids want, such as cricket and hockey.

- I wish we have a world class performance center in Pickering, where it will cultivate and keep local talents home, a place the local residents can enjoy all kind of performances locally...perhaps we build it the whole Durham region will benefit and we might draw people from GTA to come too...just a wish.
- With the current plans of the liberal government the desire to create local jobs is in question. I would like to see local development using local and environmentally smart choices that benefit our economy now but also help create a healthy and sustainable future for our children.
- Regular surveys about the programs being delivered or contemplated to determine if they are useful and of interest to the community

Is there any additional advice you would like to give to the City and/or Consultants as the Recreation and Parks Master Plan is developed?

- It is a master plan that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Don't shut the door to new issues that may crop up over the next 5 years.
- Our family recently listened to a presentation by Land over Landings. Interesting perspective they give and if Pickering ends up having no airport, then much of what the City of Pickering has been pushing for Seaton is in question; however, what Land over Landings is pushing could transform Pickering into a very hot focal point. You think you have a success with the foot of Liverpool? The tourism they could create with a series of micro farms along the Rouge Valley would be huge if supported properly. Please note, our family do not wish to get into the ~~Politics~~ of all of this.... We are just looking and listening. And applying what we've observed through our travels to the options opening up within Pickering.
- Continue to provide and have these resources available to the community whether it be indoor or outdoor resources and the maintenance and cleanliness of them.
- I can't emphasize more enough to create and healthy and physical activities environment in the parks. People will love to come to the park, not only for walking but also enjoying and keeping their health strong. They will be motivated by seeing exercising equipment in their park. I am aware that city of Pickering website has the "parks and trail maps" however they are in pdf, I would like to see them on interactive map such as google map, easy to access.
- Of all of the communities that I have lived in, Pickering has the best recreational program. It also has the best library program.

Appendix E – Public Open House Summary

The following is a summary of input that was received. Where necessary, resulting changes to the Draft Master are identified.

The following comments were received regarding new recreation and community facilities.

- New community centres should be available to all ages to accommodate multi-generational activities, events, etc.
- I see a lot of facilities are being proposed for Seaton. Who is going to pay for all of this? Hopefully developers. Please no increase in our taxes.

Master Plan Response: To ensure that future recreation centres in Pickering are truly multi-use, the indoor facilities recommended in the Master Plan include facility components that appeal to all ages. By doing so, these multi-use recreation facilities will serve a broad demographic market to create a one-stop destination where families and friends can gather to play and socialize.

With respect to funding the construction of future recreation facilities, Section 7.3 of the Master Plan identifies several potential capital funding sources including, but not limited to, reserves and reserve funds, development charges, debt financing, grants, user fees, partnerships, and sponsorships.

The following comment was received regarding outdoor tennis courts.

- New tennis courts should be a minimum of four court pods, as recommended by Tennis Canada. 2 courts does not lend itself to good programming.

Master Plan Response: Two pod tennis courts is the preferred court design in many municipalities as it sufficiently facilitates simultaneous neighbourhood level tennis games. The Master Plan identified that Pickering currently has a limited supply of public tennis courts and as a result, future tennis courts should be provided in two pod court configuration to support neighbourhood level play. Four pod courts are generally the preferred layout for tennis clubs in order to support league play and programming; however, it is recognized that there are currently multiple tennis clubs with four pod courts in Pickering. No additional club-style tennis courts are recommended during this planning period.

The following comments were received regarding parks and open spaces in Pickering.

- Keep flowers and trees in parks.
- We need more trees.

- Washroom facilities are needed at Shadybrook Park and many other areas. Ideally, community centres should have outdoor access to washrooms.
- I think the plan is forward thinking. Please allow greenspace in the downtown Pickering area.
- Very good – be sure that there will be lots of green space in the City Centre
- I would like to see more green space allocation for the downtown plan. Lots of buildings need green spaces in between.

Master Plan Response: From a geographic distribution perspective (Figure 8), Pickering is providing a sufficient level of parkland in most of the City’s established areas. As Pickering’s City Centre is already built up, it is a challenge to acquire and develop parkland, although the importance of parkland in this area is recognized, particularly as this area is expected to undergo intensification over the long term. As a result, the Master Plan recommends that on an opportunity basis, the City should pursue opportunities to acquire parkland over and above the 34.8 hectares planned for acquisition to address the needs of areas under growth pressures and service gaps (**Recommendation #2**). Through future park development, the City will consider amenities such as shade, trees, seating, and access to parking and washroom facilities.

The following comments were received regarding indoor pools.

- The proposed pool in Seaton is inadequate. Don’t build a 6-lane – check out Oshawa. Need a minimum of 8 lanes. I have 3 competitive swimmers in Pickering’s swim club and we already struggle for decent pool time. I have a 10 year old that is up at 4:30 am 3 mornings a week to train. It’s absolutely ridiculous. The City needs to support their community swim team with adequate facilities so the growth in Seaton needs to be better planned for.

Master Plan Response: The 25 metre, six lane rectangular pool recommended for the Seaton multi-use recreation facility is consistent with the designs used in many municipalities to support community-level programming. Additional opportunities for public input are typically provided as municipalities move forward with the architectural design phase for future multi-use community centres.

The following comments were received regarding pickleball courts.

- I have read the captioned document and highly support recommendations #24 and #25 which, in my opinion, are long overdue in Pickering.

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in North America and living directly across from the Pickering Recreation Complex, I find myself having to drive to Ajax to play. The two existing courts at the Seniors’ Center are restricted to members only and therefore only residents of Pickering. I have several friends I play with who live outside of Pickering, so

this facility is not suitable. I am also a member of the Probus Club and have played and am a member of the 1st Pickering Pickleballers. They play in the basement of a church which has only two courts. With the number of members, you're lucky to get in four games in two hours. At least Ajax (ARC) has four courts and I find that I am able to get in a good work out there.

I'd also like to put my support behind recommendation #26, golf simulator. The closest ones are either in Markham or at Carruthers Creek. It would be nice to be able to keep one's skill level up during the off season.

- Pickleball courts should be constructed adjacent to the existing tennis courts at Shadybrook Park. Additional amenities should be provided (e.g., trees and benches).
- Comment sheets should be posted at Pickering tennis courts for input such as using the courts for pickleball. The sport is definitely very much enjoyed by older people.
- I've been a Pickering resident for over 40 years. My husband and I raised 3 children and used the recreation facilities, parks and programs for the children and our family during these years. We were very active and appreciated the opportunities available to us in the community. Now that I'm retired, I'm seeking out programs and services for older adults, including the sport pickleball. I've been surprised by what seems a difference in available court times compared to the neighbouring municipalities of Ajax, Whitby and Markham for this sport. I had never heard of Pickleball until last year even though it's been deemed the fastest growing sport in North America according to NBC1. I'm not surprised by this as wherever I have played, more and more new players are joining and seeking out places to play. Courts are busy and wait times can be lengthy.

My experience has been that there are only a few courts to play in Pickering. Players I have encountered are going to other municipalities to play. I recently tried the Markham Cornell Centre which has 9 multi use courts. They offer a very reasonably priced drop in program. There were over 60 players on one afternoon and as soon as the session was over, the courts were changed for badminton. Another large group of players, older and youth were setting up. This was amazing to see. The Audley Centre in Ajax and the Abilities Centre in Whitby are also popular locations for Pickering players to go.

I've read the master plan and executive summary and I'm pleased to see that newer facilities are being considered in the future with seniors in mind. Whitby and Ajax seem to be far ahead of Pickering for currently available facilities. While we wait for new facilities, we are making do with aging, over crowded facilities in Pickering. Interim solutions are imperative to keeping seniors healthy and active right now.

I attended Pickleball lessons offered by the City of Pickering this spring and it gave me the basics of play. This popular sport is helping me be active in a way I thought was not possible. I'm now seeking out places to play as the sport has helped me physically, mentally and socially. Again, in order to play regularly, it means going to other municipalities. The 1st Pickering group operates at the Pickering United Church and due

to popularity it is over crowded with only 2 courts. The East Shore Seniors Centre is also very popular and crowded at times with only 2 courts and the court size is not ideal.

I used the outside courts at Village East this summer. It was incredibly hot, noisy (401) and windy there. The wind makes it impossible to play properly as the ball for Pickleball is very light compared to a tennis ball. As well, with no shade, it becomes dangerous due to overheating as a senior. The location is not ideal unless conditions are good.

I understand that the City is allowing the 1st Pickering group to use the two salons once a week. This is wonderful news. Unfortunately, it requires labour intensive set up and take down each time. Taping and removing the tape each time will be tiring and time consuming, especially for aging participants and organizers.

If the indoor tennis courts at the recreation complex are currently underutilized, pickleball players could use the courts and generate income, making it more financially feasible for the City. Empty courts are not money generating.

As an aging resident, I must consider the services available to me as a resident. If I downsize from my current house, the neighbouring cities are very attractive for seniors right now without waiting several years for programs and facilities.

I'm sure that you are already aware that Statistics Canada indicates that the "Seniors exceed children for the first time. For the first time ever, seniors made up a bigger share of Canada's population than children. According to Statistics Canada projections, this trend will only increase. By 2031, the agency predicts that nearly one in four Canadians will be over 65."

- I just wanted to let you know how Pickleball is taking off in Pickering. For many of us seniors tennis, squash and racquetball have become too hard on the body and Pickleball is the perfect solution. It gives great exercise without the added stress to the joints. It also plays a vital role in socializing which is so important for health and well-being as we age.

For many of us playing, we don't have 5-8 years to wait for a new facility - we need accommodation now! With tennis enrollment on the decline and courts sitting empty, what a perfect solution to mark up 2 courts (which gives 4 Pickleball courts which we desperately need with numbers rising weekly). Grateful for the temporary use of East/West salon but it is not a good long term solution.

This is a win/win for the Recreation Complex and the City getting revenue, and for us Pickleball players getting exercise and companionship.

- Pickleball is the perfect sport for those of us over 50. By now we have given up Tennis, Squash etc. for obvious reasons. Now we need a facility to house this up and coming sport for the large group of seniors coming up the ranks. The Pickering Rec Centre has the facilities we need. All the recommendations above are viable and would make good use of the underused tennis courts. So hopefully all these points will be reviewed by the executive as I see it as a win-win for everyone.

- I've had a chance to briefly look over some of the decision being made in my City, specifically around pickleball.

I feel my voice might be of use because I represent a different demographic. I am a 36 female teacher on a mental health leave. The first couple months off I stayed indoors. I didn't feel physically fit enough to join sports of my age. Finally, I looked into pickleball, initially created as a senior game, as a mid-level fitness sport I could join.

I was not able to find a Pickering location. So I began driving to Audley Recreation Center. This drive took me almost twenty minutes each way. I began to lose interest and going back to my couch.

Then one day I googled Pickering pickleball and found the probus group that was playing outside of a church. I went and I couldn't have felt more welcome. It worked for a while but there are only two courts and I end of up sitting on a chair waiting for my turn more than being able to play.

So now I'm stuck. I just wish that Pickering had courts that I could use and play. That would mean at least 4 courts.

I would hope they would be open at a variety of times. My 12 year old boy has learned the sport at his school and loves it. On PA days he comes to the church location for me. He would love for it to be open occasionally to families/all ages for him to play at Pickering too.

- Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in Canada.

Seniors are the fastest growing segment of the population. It makes sense that this growing sport aimed at maintaining the health, agility, and activity of seniors and others, becomes a growing and integral part of the Pickering Recreation Complex and the recreation plan of the city.

"The 4 indoor tennis courts at the Recreation Complex, are noted to not be viable with only 41% utilization in prime time." The recommendation to examine alternative uses is made and we should be promoting the lining of at least 1 -2 courts to allow for pickleball on a daily basis. We can do this now! Much can be done in the future. Let's be forward thinking and engage our seniors and others, in this healthy pursuit. Pickering has nothing to lose and much to gain in action!

Master Plan Response: No response has been provided as these comments are generally in support of the pickleball recommendations contained in the Master Plan.

The following comments were received regarding community gardens.

- More community gardens are needed.

- I want to stress the need for accessible parking at the Valley Plentiful Community Garden. We are concerned that when the road work is completed on Highway 2 next to the park that the gardeners using walkers will no longer be able to access their beds. As to the size of the garden and ability to expand – we feel that we have reached the maximum size to maintain a “friendly” community atmosphere where the gardeners all know each other. We have a lot of theft in the garden and it is imperative that the community friendliness is returned and maintained. We have over 100 gardeners and do not wish to expand any larger.
- For the garden proposed for the Rotary Park. If the City is not going to maintain it, who would pick up the tab if anyone is injured there. Has the Rotary Club been apprised of the proposal? Have real gardeners, e.g. Durham Master Gardeners, been asked for their advice/suggestions?
- I feel that before more expansion of the community gardens takes place, the need for a small parking lot should be addressed in the masterplan. Most of the gardeners park on the south shoulder of Highway 2 to access the garden. I feel the City in cooperation with Hydro One should install a 10 car parking area using the existing roadway of crushed limestone. The lot could be installed on the east side of the current Hydro One roadway. The fencing would have to be extended to enclose the new parking area. This would improve the safety of all people who use the garden.

Master Plan Response: Recommendation #5 was revised to recommend the City to investigate the potential to provide parking near the garden plots to offer gardeners convenient and accessible access. Opportunities to explore the potential to expand the number of garden plots at the Valley Plentiful Community Garden continues to be supported as it is anticipated that pressures for this facility type will continue in the City Centre, particularly as intensification continues and Pickering’s population continues to age. The ability to expand the number of garden plots should be carefully considered between the City and the Valley Plentiful Community gardeners.

The following comments were received regarding leash free areas.

- I came to the drop-in to discuss and comment on the leash free parks section. As per your survey, it has been assessed as low priority with needs being met by community pressure. I reside in Forestbrook and although we have a large park available that dog owners have been using for the past 20 years as off-leash, I feel uncomfortable trespassing by-laws/offending my fellow community members. Many of us were given tickets last June 2017. I feel very uncomfortable and unable to enjoy my neighbourhood now. Personally, my dog is afraid at the Grand Valley Park area, where she is not familiar with the dogs. Also, there is a rise in tick populations in these areas. Other concerns from members are not wanting to drive after a long day at work. I propose 2 solutions, either a set time designated for dog play (e.g., 10 am to 11 am and 8 pm to 9 pm) or band together

to create a collectively funded small off-leash dog area in the lower part of Silverthorn Avenue.

- A new off leash dog park should be considered. Forestbrook Park has responsible dog owners, many of them are retired. Driving to the one off leash dog park is not feasible. I would like to see some consideration to having morning and evening hours each day where dogs can run free. There are areas in the park that are away from the walking paths and playgrounds. We have watched usage at Forestbrook Park and 90% of the time it is not in use. Many dog walkers are elderly people who benefit from the social interaction and are an asset to the community.
- I was hoping to see some information on new leash free areas. The dog community needs some more leash free parks that we can walk to not get there by car. Maybe something can be done about the use of ball diamonds during the off season or summer hours not being used by baseball.

Master Plan Response: The leash free area at Grand Valley Park is centrally located in Pickering and as these facilities are generally considered to be drive to destinations, it is expected that it is sufficient to serve the community over the planning period. As identified in **Recommendation #7**, should the City receive significant requests and a support study determines the need for additional leash free areas, potential locations and partnerships should be considered at that time.

The following comments were received regarding the waterfront and water-based activities.

- A comment was received questioning why the Pickering Rouge Canoe Club was not considered. The City responded that it is now a City owned facility or program.
- With Frenchman's Bay being used by so many hikers, dragon boaters, etc., parking is very difficult – washroom facilities are presently very much to be desired. The more people enjoying sporting facilities, the more amenities are required.
- It would be great to have more parking at the waterfront. It's such a beautiful spot but no (or very limited) parking for visitors.
- There needs to be better access to the lakefront at Liverpool Road.
- Public parking at the lakefront; not everyone walks or bike there.
- Parking at the lakefront.
- Although the waterfront is not within the scope of the plan, we believe it is important to connect the findings and recommendations to plans for the waterfront.

Master Plan Response: Pickering's waterfront was beyond the scope of this Master Plan as development of the waterfront is guided by the City's 2012 Rotary Frenchman's Bay Master

Plan, which was recently updated in 2017. Additional language referencing this Master Plan has been included in Section 4.3.

The following comments were received regarding racquetball courts.

- I am a Pickering resident and Racquetball member at the Pickering Recreation Complex. I would be happy to see this sport grow and develop, which the club is attempting to do through school letters and open clinics. However the removal of one court would seriously undermine the future growth and prevent the annual club tournaments to continue. I have seen the low numbers presented regarding our utilization of these courts however they do not take into account the pay as you go members or perhaps not the handball players that use these courts.

I have observed more squash courts idle during our games. I would suggest a loss of a squash court would have a minimal impact on the program in comparison to the larger impact to racquetball. What are the numbers specific to the last squash court located opposite the racquetball court in question?

The comprehensive study appears well done and is well intentioned but I believe misses an impact comparison. I hope a relook at preserving court 7 for future growth is possible.

- We have been racquetball members for 2 years. Our use is sporadic however we have enjoyed the opportunity to exercise together as a family, and have brought friends with us from time to time. The sport is low-impact, which suits our needs well. I would like to provide our feedback to the ongoing review of the master plan that we believe that the City would not be serving the public or the membership by re-purposing one or both of the only 2 racquetball available for public use. Racquetball is in fact a terrific fitness option for persons not at the fitness level required for tennis or squash. Please retain the racquetball courts as is.
- This is in response to repositioning the purpose of one of the racquetball courts. I've been a member of Pickering Rec for more approximately 15 years. Myself and many other racquetball players came from Fit For Life Fitness in Scarborough. At around that time. Some of our players have retired from the sport but we have several new people playing the sport. This is a sport that is very inexpensive to play, it's a great overall fitness workout and it provides a social aspect to our lives. The social aspect of the sport is very important to many people especially newcomers to our City. It's a great way for them to meet new friends quickly. We held a tournament a couple of weeks ago and we had to start very early in the morning to accommodate everyone that wanted to play. Most players play in the evening from 4:00 pm on, because of employment commitments. However, there are a few of us that play from 3-5 on Tuesday and Wednesday. Obviously I am not aware of the scheduled play of all of our racquetballers but I know the courts are used. I'm sure squash and tennis get more use in the evening and on weekends than they do throughout the daytime hours, it's the same with racquetball. It would be a tragedy to take any of our

courts for another use. Surely there is an area in our Rec centre that could be utilized for other things.

- I am a Pickering resident and Racquetball member at the Pickering Recreation Complex. I would be happy to see this sport grow and develop, which the club is attempting to do through school letters and open clinics. However the removal of one court would seriously undermine the future growth and prevent the annual club tournaments to continue. I have seen the low numbers presented regarding our utilization of these courts however they do not take into account the pay as you go members or perhaps not the handball players that use these courts. I have observed more squash courts idle during our games. I would suggest a loss of a squash court would have a minimal impact on the program in comparison to the larger impact to racquetball. What are the numbers specific to the last squash court located opposite the racquetball court in question? The comprehensive study appears well done and is well intentioned but I believe misses an impact comparison. I hope a relook at preserving court 7 for future growth is possible.
- I would like to say a few words about the Repurposing of the RB courts item 26 on the Master Plan Summary. We feel like we have been blindsided once again by some of the staff at the Pickering Rec, Centre. Below is a note I just sent to a few members who are trying once again to organize a protest against the repurposing of court 7. Some are new to the group and others part of a group who moved from another club almost 10 years ago and have been volunteering ever since to promote Racquetball at Pickering. For example I have been running a house league and we have been working as a group doing projects such as high school clinics, fun mixed tournaments, provide Family Day clinics, develop the Facebook page on the Pickering website.

This weekend we are offering free clinics to the families that are coming to the swim meet. I am attaching a copy of the flyer that was sent to the parents before hand and a one page note on costs to play. We continue to try and promote racquetball as a fun and inexpensive family sport at the Pickering Rec Centre in spite of all the roadblocks that have been put in our way over the years.

Several members will also respond but it takes time to organize our protest and we only found a couple of days ago that the repurposing had resurfaced again. Most of the material on display in the lobby talked about skateboard parks that the rest was almost over looked and we just happen to notice the small comment on the one board.

We are more than just 23 members (not sure how that number was derived from the staff) who just want the status quo of 2 courts and I hope you can see that we support the sense of the Pickering community and what it should offer to its residents and people nearby. I hope that we as a group get an opportunity to address our concerns before court 7 is altered.

- I browsed through the online system and looked at the bookings. There are a lot of squash evening bookings for leagues but the doubles are comparable to ours and even the

squash are not that much better since they have 6 courts that are basically empty until about 4 PM and they supposedly do all stats from 6 am to closing.

It is difficult to compare RB to squash because they have had an executive committee almost from the beginning of the rec centre, a full time squash pro, mandatory squash membership to play in the league. We on the other had none of the above when we came to Pickering almost 10 years ago. There were no leagues, not sure who the pro was but I went out for the Thur. evening round robin at 8 or 9 PM and no one was there.

They did not let us block book for house league, put so many road blocks in the way for a proper pro, did not share any info, refused assistance from us when they bought the equipment for the front desk they asked Nicole the squash pro for advice, refused assistance from us even though they continued to hand out the wrong equipment at the front desk.

Didn't even have the courtesy to mention their first attempt to repurpose the courts all the while they continued to ask me what we were doing.

They were forced to back off from that attempt but Michael is right they can hide behind the study and what I think are questionable stats.

- I am writing to voice my concerns relating to a part of your Executive Summary that was published in November of this year. As a racquetball player, it was disturbing to me that the "repurposing" of one of the courts was included in the Master Plan's recommendations.

I am a pay as you play guest and often cannot book desired times because of courts being booked. It also seems that the squash courts do not get as much play as the two racquetball courts when I am at the rec centre. I find the recommendations that are listed in the master plan are mostly positive moves for all listed sport and social clubs. Except Racquetball. The words - Investigate, Integrate, Construct, Develop, Design, Monitor, Explore Opportunities, Evaluate Opportunities, are all used except when it comes to the racquetball court. Why is that court the only REPURPOSE suggested? Can a rock climbing wall or a golf simulator not be put in an area that is labeled as Construct or Develop? There must be an alternative to taking away one half of the racquetball courts in Pickering and Durham Region.

- The City of Pickering Recreation & Parks Master Plan with regards to the racquetball/handball court is both a tragedy and travesty. Players from both games are always promoting their sport to attract new participants. The biggest problem we have are the lack of training provided to the staff at the Rec Centre, and the lack of adequate advertising for both sports. I'm sure you have heard about staff handing out squash racquets for people asking to play racquetball. And nowhere in the facility is there any signage regarding handball. Even the program magazine never mentioned handball, and the article for racquetball had the player swinging a squash racquet.

Personally I have played handball for 45 years and racquetball on and off for about 25 years. The benefits of both sports are: inexpensive, great for fitness, improves hand eye

coordination, anyone can play they are lifetime sports. A friend of mine (a member of the Rec Centre) is 93 and he just recently stopped playing. In a government study comparing swimming, walking, bicycling, etc., handball is ranked #1 for cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength and endurance, flexibility, and balance.

To take away one or worse, both of our courts would be a huge disservice to the members who currently play and to the games of racquetball and handball. I am sure you are aware that courts are disappearing. Where else can we play? Please do not repurpose a minimum of one racquetball/handball court.

- I would like to express my outrage and disappointment about the city's plans for the racquet ball courts. My spouse and I have been playing for over 15 years and we brought in members who travel from Mississauga to play. I do realize that the game is not as advertised as squash but members have started clinics to invite the younger generation to become involved. It is a great game for seniors for enhancing their hand eye coordination and focus. I feel like the games (racquetball and handball) are always being shown discrimination. I would be disappointed if I have to go out of my neighbourhood to become members in another city. My spouse and I would like you to reconsider putting so many people out of their form of exercise to stay healthy.
- I'm writing this in hopes you will consider leaving both racquetball courts where they are. I know it's difficult some evenings to get a booking time that is convenient. If 1 is taken away I do believe I'll be getting a lot less exercise. I need all the help I can get in that department. Please consider this.
- I come from Bowmanville to Pickering just to play Raquetball every week and pay a yearly membership which I use it only for that purpose only. Getting rid of one court will basically destroy everything because it would be a waste of time to cram all Raquetball and handball players on one court and basically destroy my membership. Raquetball is a great game and lots of people who play have memberships. Why doesn't a squash court go when they're only busy one night a week and they have like 5 courts. Don't ruin this for us and the sport please and thank you.
- I just became a member at Pickering Rec Complex for the sole reason to play racquetball. I have been playing at the complex on a pay-as-you-go-basis for the past several years finding it more economical to pay that way on a weekly basis. I have been able to join now via senior citizen rates, and have been looking forward to playing on a more regular basis as well as taking advantage of playing at different times of the day. The plan of reducing the availability of racquetball courts ignores the value the courts hold to the group of largely seniors who use them. Times of play range throughout the day – in part because seniors often can play outside the rush hour timeslots. If Pickering Rec Complex proceeded with this plan it would be a significant loss health-wise and activity-wise to our group.
- Please be advised that I have just recently become aware of the City of Pickering's desire to remove one of two racquetball courts and wish to express my concern and opposition

to this decision. The Master Plan makes mention of the fact that those surveyed placed little priority on squash or racquetball.

Were questions asked of those surveyed whether they have a membership at the Pickering Recreation Complex or whether they are involved in physical exercise of any nature? Surely the answer to this question would differentiate the degree to which those involved in the planning process would rely on their response in reaching a conclusive response to pursue a plan of action.

As a long time member of the Pickering Recreation Complex and a resident of Pickering since 1987 I am appalled that those who have the charge of creating opportunities for physical exercise and the promotion of healthy lifestyles would remotely consider taking out a racquetball court and replacing it with a virtual reality simulator game. We have a generation that has grown up with video games that have numbed both their mind and their body. Surely we can rise above mediocrity and challenge the next generation by promoting physical activity and exercise rather than complacently, passively continue to feed the blatant disregard for physical health and fitness that a virtual reality simulator would entail.

It would appear that any activity on a racquetball court, however limited would fulfill the mandate of the Pickering Recreation Complex to nurture and encourage the residents of Pickering to be physically active to a greater extent than any virtual reality simulator would entail.

Please, please allow sanity and a refocus on the fact that the two racquetball courts are used by a devout group of adults, who are passionate about maintaining physical exercise and equally passionate about a sport that continues to provide social and physical interaction with other residents of Pickering and the surrounding community.

- After looking at the notices you displayed for City of Pickering Recreation & Parks master plan, I would like to let you know that I was very disappointed with regards to the Repurposing of the RB courts. I feel you should have advised the RB and Handball members of this prior to posting it under your master plan. Currently it is difficult to book a prime time court during week days, if you take away one court this will make it impossible to play during prime time. We need the two RB courts to accommodate everyone, please reconsider the RB courts repurposing.

The recreation centre is good at trying to encourage more people to use the gym with 'the century club' and also attend more classes with the new 'Bingo cards' why not try promoting RB to encourage more people to play.

- As a long time racquetball player, who moved to this facility after our club in Scarborough closed, I would encourage you to review carefully these decisions and their impact on the racquetball (and handball) community. Please consider:
 - Racquetball has a lack of courts east of the GTA. It is very strong in the Oakville/Burlington area, and could be here as well with some effort put in to

promote the sport. If a youth were to show promise in the game, there would be no facility within a reasonable distance to develop their skills.

- While squash appears to be much more popular (and there are obviously many more players), it is much more “prime-time” focused because of the leagues set up by the Pickering Squash Club. Not only are the racquetball courts busy during prime time, our racquetball players make use of the courts during the daytime much more than squash players. When I have stopped by during the day, the squash courts are virtually empty, so singling out racquetball over squash seems inappropriate.
- Based on the doubles tournament that was played a couple weeks ago, many new players have been introduced to the game the past couple of years. This has been done purely by promoting the game through word of mouth.
- Racquetball as a sport is much easier to play for youngsters just beginning and for seniors. You would rarely find someone in their 40s/50s picking up a squash racquet for the first time, but that is a common occurrence on the racquetball side. As one learns the game, it can be much easier on the knees.
- This is a sport that is played year around. Much of the existing facility (and possible future) facility will be very season oriented. How much will a skate park be used in December, or an indoor tennis court in July, especially when public courts are available for free?
- Before considering repurposing any courts, please make an effort to dual-purpose a court. Wallyball used to be very popular when I was younger.
- Are schools being encouraged to come to the facility as part of their gym program? This is something else that was done when I was young, and was a good way to make us of the courts during non-prime time.
- I understand that a proposal has been put forward in respect of removing one of the two racquet ball courts, one of which (court 7) is also used for handball. As a ‘play / pay’ user and a member of the RB league I can perhaps see the reasons why you are considering this proposal. RB courts are not in use from opening to close; however this can also be said of the squash courts. I have often played RB on the weekend and found most if not all of the squash courts empty; although squash may have a wider audience and membership than racquet ball, I would suggest that in terms of % ‘s many of the squash courts remain empty except, for certain times of the day or evening. While perhaps only one RB remains empty there 3 times as many squash courts empty during the same time period, so why isn’t the use of squash courts being examined? Is this simply because of the membership ratio to RB membership? I know that several members of the squash fraternity also play RB, have you included these members in your calculations of memberships? Or are you simply looking at court booking times?

While many of the RB members and Pay/ Play users are retired or semi- retired, RB provides an avenue for them to get out and exercise, have fun and meet other members.

This is a great way to keep older members of the community active. The RB members are trying their best to promote the sport and bring younger members to the Centre, but rarely do I see any advertising from the Rec Centre to also increase membership and ultimately increase revenue to the Rec Centre.

I understand that the Rec Centre is looking at other activities that can use at least one of the RB courts and generate additional revenue for the Centre. Has the Centre looked at one of the courts being used as a dual purpose space rather than simply deciding to remove one court entirely? I am sure there are a number of activities that can be utilized when both squash and RB courts remain idle, especially during the day and on certain times during the weekends. At times it has been difficult to book either of the two RB courts, especially in the evenings, doing away with one or both of the courts (if rumors are to be believed) will lead to the demise of the RB community in Durham as well as the health benefits to the older community who enjoy their activities.

Here are some reasons via an article from Health Fitness Revolution why the notion of closing one or both of the RB courts should be reconsidered.

Rain or shine, racquetball is a great indoor sport that offers tremendous benefits for the whole body, inside and out. The best part of it is that it can be played by yourself, against an opponent or with a partner against another team of two players. Here are the Top 10 Health Benefits of Racquetball:

- Burns calories and fat: During a 20-minute game, the player runs approximately 3,650 feet, according to U.S. Olympic training center. In one hour of play, the player runs more than two miles and burns between 600 to 800 calories. Playing racquetball regularly will decrease body fat levels and maintain healthy weight.
- Strengthen bones and muscles: A weight-bearing exercise, racquetball makes your bones and muscles stronger, while slowing bone loss. You can develop and maintain muscle tone throughout your body as you use all your major muscle groups in a racquetball game.
- Good for heart health: Because you're in constant motion, racquetball benefits your most important muscle — your heart. One hour of play is equivalent to running 2 miles.
- Improve balance, coordination and flexibility: In order to run across the court and dip low to hit that returning ball, you need balance, coordination and flexibility. You may stumble and miss that shot in your first game, but through practice, your hand-eye coordination and balance improves. You use a wide range of motion in racquetball, forcing your body to stretch, in turn increasing your flexibility.
- Improves hand-eye coordination and mental agility: Besides the musculoskeletal benefits, racquetball improves mental clarity and quickness by making quick and strategic decisions. It helps with neural adaptation by stimulating a faster connection between brain and muscle movements, which improves a player's

reflexes even off the racquetball court. Hand-eye coordination and eyesight are enhanced as well.

- Offers both aerobic and anaerobic benefits: The endurance aspect of racquetball improves the body's aerobic capacity, while the short bursts of quick sprints improve the anaerobic capacity.
 - Works the whole body: Racquetball taxes nearly every muscle group, including the lower body for running, the core for balance, and the upper body for hitting and controlling the ball.
 - It's fun: Racquetball is fun and competitive, and it will make people return to the court as often as they can. A sport you enjoy is a strong lure to get moving on days when you're tempted to skip your fitness regimen.
 - It's social: Friendships are formed through racquetball. When you play against an opponent or with a partner on a doubles team, you start finding other racquetball players in your area, and your social circle grows. This will guarantee you'll always have a workout partner to make your exercise fun!
 - Reduces stress and lowers other health risks: Any physical activity can reduce stress by increasing your endorphins, but racquetball can especially erase your worries. When you're caught up in the intense back-and-forth of racquetball, you're not thinking about the day's problems or tomorrow's to-do list. Regular physical activity through racquetball can reduce or eliminate your risk for many health problems, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. Racquetball can also reduce your risk for coronary heart disease by reducing your triglyceride levels and increasing your "good" cholesterol.
- The recommendation for 'repurposing one or more of the racquetball courts' must be pulled from the draft of the Recreation & Parks Master Plan and Skateboard Park Strategy before it is sent to council for the following reasons;
 - Usage; the usage of the courts presented in the draft does not give the proper picture of the real usage; it only includes prime time (namely 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.). The Handball players normal usage is during the day time; and a good number of the racquetball players (I being one) prefer playing in the afternoon as well. Again, I don't have access to data, but courts 7 and 8 (the racquetball and handball courts) would show up with very high usage when compared to other 4 indoor courts beside them. I dare to say that court 8 would be at the top if you counted the number of times used in the hours that the Centre is open, compared to the other courts.
 - Number of members; granted, we haven't seen the increase we have strived for. But, and again we don't have access to the data, a number of racquetball/handball players have tried to add up who we know are members and come to a figure that is at least 10% higher than the figures in the Draft. There are also a fair number of

'pay as you play' members. They prefer this as they do not use any other of the Rec facilities. And it's hard to convince them to become members when you do the math.

- Racquetball/Handball Committee/communication; would have to give this a nil. None of us knew anything about the 'repurposing' being in the draft except by chance. It certainly would have been appropriate to contact us that this was back in the draft before it was published.
 - 'over 500 people directly participated in consultations'; alas, don't know how this was done but again, I don't know of any racquetball/handball players who participated.
 - Awareness is improving and should continue to improve. This takes time and takes a bit more than 2 years.
 - family day; all the time slots for both courts (since Family Day was introduced) are filled, with people being turned away. Racquetball and Handball members are volunteering the day to demonstrate the sports.
 - tournaments; there are now 2 tournaments a year and the one just held November 18th had more teams than ever before (12 teams)
 - a dedicated website has been started. This should improve visibility. Going on-line and seeing some of the pictures from Racquetball/handball event will demonstrate the enthusiasm.
- They are the only courts in Durham (except the 1 in Oshawa) and what they are proposing re-purposing them for are both activities that could be placed somewhere else in or outside the facility without ruining a court. If they do re purpose a court and then decide that it's not working out it will cost so much money to repair, etc.
 - I could speak on behalf of many who would be devastated if the handball courts were to be replaced by golf simulators. My kids play in these courts, as well as several National and Internationally ranked handball players. We call the Pic Rec facility our home courts. Please reconsider. Thank you.
 - We are hearing word that the closing of one or both of the Handball/Racquetball courts is under consideration. I want to give my support for leaving the courts as they are and in fact encourage the Rec Centre to promote court sports. Handball itself is the worlds oldest sport and is considered by the Presidents Council on Fitness as the number one fitness sport in the world. Many professional athletes play both sports in the off season and for alternative training. The movement, skills, anaerobic and aerobic benefits are very transferable. More importantly is both games are fun and challenging for recreational players to stay fit and enjoy many social benefits and most people can play long into their senior years. The Rec Centre long ago made the capital commitment to these courts. I

would strongly encourage looking for alternative sites for other uses considering this space and instead promote and open up these fantastic sports to your membership.

- I was very disappointed to read the Rec center is possibly going to repurpose one or both of the Handball/Racquetball courts. Both sports offer a wonderful way to keep players strong, agile and cardio fit, while having so much fun. And two major pluses are that there is rarely any injuries and both are very economical to play. I have always been disappointed that the Rec Center did so little to promote either sport. Now would be a good time to start that instead of putting the courts to other use.
- As a pay as you go player, I just found out that there is a proposal to reduce the number of courts from 2 to 1 or even none. As a Ajax resident I have used this facility off an on for many years for racquetball along with another pay as you go member. We have played both day time and evening slots, and have shifted to more early morning daytime court times as it best fits our schedule. Reducing the availability of courts to only 1 would certainly prohibit us from playing at our desired time, or perhaps even at all. We have booked court times in the past and have been fortunate to get a court as both have been in use. We do not play every day and the day of the week will vary due to activities.

There are certainly more squash courts than racquetball courts and perhaps the repurposing of one of them makes sense and wouldn't harm squash membership or playability.

- I would encourage the Pickering Rec Center to investigate alternative uses for the Handball/Racquetball courts that would still allow Racquetball and Handball to be played in the courts. I have personally been to hundreds of health clubs, YMCAs and community centers that have introduced new programs that utilize the court space, but don't require costly permanent modification of the courts spaces. Games such as pickleball and walleyball are specific examples of low cost games that could be played, but also using the large, bright and relatively sound-proof rooms to practice Stretching, Yoga, Tai Chi and similar disciplines. The court flooring lend themselves to be used for practice by dance groups, etc.

The focus should be on improving the utilization of the existing asset, while preserving the use of the asset by it's current users.

- I am very dismayed to learn Pickering Rec Centre is considering repurposing the handball/racquetball courts at the facility! Community centres are not designed to be money making enterprises, they are there to serve the community and are paid for by the community. Tax dollars paid for those courts and to decommission them would be mean spirited and an admission those tax dollars were improperly spent. The Director of the facility needs to do a better job using the resources available and stop throwing good money after bad chasing the latest fad. Subsidised centres like this should not be trying to compete with local businesses but instead should be providing opportunity and options for youth to experience recreation they may not have access to elsewhere. Run programs to utilize what you already have there! There are not many options for courts in the area, please don't make thing worse!

- There have been many submissions to date already from individuals and also a recent collective response from the racquetball and handball communities. I wanted to share mine with a few different points that I think are important for the City of Pickering and the PRC (Pickering Recreation Centre) to consider when deciding to remove recommendation #26 from the Master Plan draft.

I think the game of racquetball and handball (I will imply handball as well for the remainder but being a racquetball player I'll refer to it only) has become an afterthought at the PRC over the years. I have been playing at the PRC for almost 10 years and became more involved with the committee over the past few years when the previous attempt to repurpose our court (#7) was raised.

Sadly, there have been too many incidents over recent years that gave me this overall sense from the staff and management. There have been attempts to work with us in the past and we had a year of monthly meetings back in the 2015 or 2016 time frame, where we reviewed usage and membership stats and also gave updates on some initiatives that we were working on. There were efforts made by management to post some events that we were running in their various methods but it was all initiated by our own committee. At one point we asked about high schools being informed of programs related to racquetball and they assured us that they were all informed regularly. I made a point of contacting two high schools in Pickering and spoke with the heads of Phys-Ed, and neither were aware of racquetball being available at the PRC nor that Friday evenings is the Free Teen day dedicated for racquetball. We have had repeated issues with the rental gear at the front desk having issues - either providing the wrong equipment or not knowing the difference between racquetball and squash rackets and balls. We have offered several times, to spend time with the front desk staff ourselves to ensure they are clear but it was resisted by management - claiming they have already. I don't blame the front desk staff, but they need to be informed and make a point of understanding what the required equipment is. They are front-facing and representatives to potential members and need to understand that this experience could make or break whether we gain a member or lose a prospect entirely.

There were many exchanges of emails between our concerned committee and members, and management at the PRC which provided us with additional insight into what they claimed in the Master Plan draft and what they meant. There were many communication lapses along the way, with the first one being that not none of our racquetball or handball members or players knew anything about the impact on our courts from this plan draft. It wasn't until the date of the open house - November 27th - that we got a glimpse of it tucked in the bottom corner of one of the display boards. It very swiftly become known to all within hours, which was to everyone's surprise. There were a couple issues with this in particular. The first that the open house was November 27th when the announcement in the various methods and media was done November 16th. This was 11 days after announcing the short period for the Pickering community as a whole to review the draft and provide feedback by December 6th. The second is that the PRC management claim they sent the racquetball committee a "personal" email to inform us of the Master Plan draft, although not a single word was written about our court(s) being at risk. I would think if an effort was made to send a personalized email to our group that

there would be some mention, or heads-up, that our court(s) were in jeopardy again. Especially since we had been meeting almost monthly about it a year or so prior.

We understand that squash is a more popular sport, relative to racquetball and handball combined, which allows for an onsite pro and some special considerations in terms of court bookings. In light of that, I find it surprising that the usage for squash - we're still waiting for more comprehensive usage data - is as low as it is. Is it better than racquetball/handball? yes, but marginally and in my opinion very low given the popularity of the sport and the focus given by the PRC. The interesting fact with there being 8 squash courts (6 singles and 2 doubles) is the unused percentage is much more concerning to me than what we have for our courts. The amount of free squash court time by square footage at the PRC is significantly higher with squash. We don't want any courts to be repurposed but it's not clear to us how they so soundly concluded that our courts should be on the chopping block.

In terms of membership, this ties back to our support from the management again. They initially provided 2017 membership numbers as we wanted to know how our efforts were affecting it since 2016, given all the work we have invested in new programs and initiatives in the last couple years. They said we dropped drastically from 49 members in 2016 to 23 in 2017, without any regard for validating whether there may be an issue based on recent trends. When we pressed them, there was an error and the membership in actuality increased to 51. This tells a different story for us and is worth factoring into the equation. Not only have we sustained our membership numbers but they have actually increased, not sure other racket sports could claim this. Another interesting fact is if you measure memberships per court, in an attempt to compare apples to apples, we have a greater ratio than squash does. Again, we're not suggesting a squash court be repurposed instead but why was a racquetball/handball court chosen so readily? The consultants can only work with the data and other information they are provided and we have several reasons to believe that we are not getting fair support from the PRC in the assessments that have been taking place over the last year. One last thing is the delineation of Pickering residents, in terms of members. It's unclear as to the relevance because the obvious reason would be having subsidies for Pickering members, over members outside of Pickering, but I am unaware of any special fees for Pickering members. Our sport in particular is more regional based on availability of courts in the neighboring cities, and this should be celebrated and embraced to get more exposure to the PRC to expand membership overall, rather than diminished as a type of contamination among membership.

We started a Facebook page (Pickering Racquetball) a couple years ago and it's evolved into a very informative page that connects the community and others from abroad have also appreciated our content and efforts. I have been a contributor to the page and have received a significant amount of positive feedback from those that have visited / used it. This is one of the things we're doing to raise more interest and awareness, and ultimately more membership to our club.

We have been interlocking with Racquetball Canada and Racquetball Ontario and have resounding support from them, including a letter of support from Racquetball Canada

(included in the submission from the collective team) as well as strong support from Handball Ontario. They stated the importance of keeping the courts in Pickering for the growth of our sports. To run clinics and tournaments, you need a minimum of two courts, and taking one of our courts is a 50% impact. Not only that but we have heard from members already that they may not renew if there is only one court because the availability will become an issue and soon we'll be faced with challenges we don't want to face - the demise of our sports in not only Pickering but the Durham region.

We need to grow the sports and we need to feel the support from the PRC and the City of Pickering, and the way to do that is to remove recommendation #26 from the Master Plan before it is presented to the council.

Master Plan Response: The Master Plan continues to support the Recommendation #26 as membership and utilization data suggests that there is limited demand for the racquetball courts. Additional language was added to Section 5.10 to recognize that City staff has previously worked with racquetball and handball players over the past few years to increase usage of the courts through various initiatives, which have not been successful. It is also recognized that some of the racquetball court users are non-residents, suggesting that only a small number of residents are benefitting from using the courts. With this in mind, the City should be focusing on maximizing the use of existing facilities and given the data available, alternative facility options should be considered.

The following general comments were received.

- The Master Plan will foster and encourage active lifestyles for all residents.
- I believe that it is too massive of a document and so much information to digest and understand to be able to make knowledgeable comments or suggestions in such a short period of time. I requested an electronic version a week or so ago and I worked and reviewed it full time I could not possibly comment intelligently.
- Firstly I only address the South Pickering Urban Area. Secondly, I am assuming that unfortunately, the Hydro Corridor is now privately-held land. Thirdly, that the entrances to the P.R.C. will remain where they are. Fourthly, I disagree with separating physical recreation from mental activity in planning. The report fails to address the City's intentions regarding preserving both aspects of citizens activities, or of transportation, or of the role of schools. The report is valuable but much more time must be devoted to integrating its information into the groundwork for physical planning.
- My comments will relate to Pickering south of Finch, because Seaton has been meant as a planned community and most residents there will head not to south Pickering but to Markham and Stouffville for their shopping and out-of-neighbourhood recreation. They will not be interested in seeking a sense of community with south Pickering, but will depend on what they can find within Seaton.

Pickering, as found in the south, has always been segmented: one area for shopping, one for "industry," many for strip malls, many for schools, parks small and isolated, frequently fenced off from neighbourhoods by being situated behind back yard fences. Children and youth have been programmed to go to specific places such as the recreation complex or school grounds for organized activities, rather than hang around their neighbourhoods and shoot a few hoops in the street. There is no place for people to gather informally just to be together informally. If you go on a trail, you are there to walk it and enjoy nature. If you go to a soccer field, baseball diamond, etc., you are there to do something.

In the early 1990's there was a proposal to arrange the esplanade park with a small ice rink at its centre. The idea was to use it like Nathan Phillips Square, which was deliberately planned to be too small for its purpose and served population. The proximity helped develop a sense in people that they wanted to come and be there -- not simply to skate, but to be there with everyone else. Pickering didn't do this. Instead we have a large area with too many trees and memorial plaques for people to really gather, save when there is a concert in the gazebo (but bring your own chairs because the city doesn't really want you there unless it is to attend a function). There is no physical invitation in the city to come together without an event. This gets in the way of the inclusiveness we desire regarding our residents from different cultural backgrounds -- if there is not an event, don't come together.

European cities often have squares with furniture, either permanent and provided by the government, and/or provided by surrounding commercial establishments. Sometimes there are leaning posts, pause places, furniture to which you come and around which you may meet other people. Nowhere in Pickering are there benches facing each other and close enough so that people can face each other and talk easily. There is no central place to come any time just to be. Come here only if there is something you plan to do.

Being with other people any time should be part of our concept of recreation.

Pickering pays very little attention to public beauty and whimsy. Parks tend to be grass and trees. No flowers, no sculptures, no odd things that make you pause and wonder "what the heck?". Along the main streets you will not find plants, flowers, oddities, public art (either temporary or permanent -- can you imagine a piano outdoors in Pickering as there are in other cities, just for anyone to play?) No troubadours, clowns, or buskers. Not at bus stations, not at the GO station, no pop-up whimsy, beauty, or art in our private or public parking areas. No spontaneity.

I think that healthy community life should include more opportunities to be together even if not doing anything, in places where there are beauty and whimsy, with green spaces permeating the city rather than just in distinct, separate locations fenced off from neighbourhood back yards and not surrounded by purveyors of food and music. That's my idea of "parks and recreation."