

TOWNSHIP OF LAKE OF BAYS

PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION STRATEGY

MARCH 2023

Prepared by thinc design in association with Mehak, Kelly & Associates, TCI Management Consultants, and Oraclepoll Research Ltd. for the Township of Lake of Bays.

March 2023

Land Acknowledgement

Aaniin (hello),

We recognize that we gather here on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (An-ish-in-aabe) and Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee) Nations, acknowledging we are settlers here. We make our homes today on land bound by Treaty 13.

It is through the long stewardship over thousands of years and the forced sacrifices of the original inhabitants that we are able to make this beautiful place our home. The ongoing stewardship of the environment is a legacy we must strive to treasure and preserve.

We invite everyone to investigate the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, and the treaties that still bind all of us so that we may share this land with honour and respect, learning from one another and listening to their story, so we may better grow together. Because it is our collective history.

Miigwech (thank you)

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Parks and Recreation Steering Committee

Scott MacKinnon, Superintendent of Parks and Facilities

Bryan Brown, Chief Administrative Officer

Strategy Consulting Team

thinc design (Mike Tocher, Leandra Correale Ferguson, Danielle Lenarcic Biss, Kara Singbeil, Gelila Mekonnen)

Mehak, Kelly & Associates Inc. (Mary Catherine Mehak)

Oraclepoll Research Limited (Paul Seccaspina)

TCI Management Consultants Inc. (Jon Linton)

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Dwight Beach

1. 0 Introduction

This Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy was developed to identify culture, recreation, parks and facility service priorities in the Township of Lake of Bays and guide Council and staff on park planning, facility redevelopment, facility expansion, partnership development and the delivery of programs, events and services. It is a short- and long-range planning document that provides direction over a 20-year period.

The Strategy relates directly to the Township's economic goals. The Lake of Bays Official Plan acknowledges the Township's role as a destination for recreation and tourism, envisioning a community that offers **"an outstanding combination of economic opportunity, peaceful living and recreation" (A.4)**. The Official Plan's objectives include the following:

- To recognize and support the development of the tourist commercial, service commercial, cultural arts and associated business, and recreation sectors as vital components of the Township's economic base (B.4).
- To encourage the identification, maintenance and establishment of recreation and community facilities, parkland and trails as well as natural areas and open space (B.11).

The rationale for development of this Strategy is outlined in Policy C.34 of the Official Plan:

"A comprehensive public open space, parkland and recreation strategy should be developed by the Township in order to:

a. Identify public land and facilities;

b. Identify needs for active and passive public open space and recreation;

c. Create an action plan to address open space needs;

d. Identify potential locations for future trails, parks, water access points and natural open space;

e. Establish land acquisition and disposition options and procedures; and

f. Identify minimum standards for public parks, trails and other open space and recreational facilities."

This Strategy is thus a key tool for implementing the Township's strategic priorities and directing investment in recreation services.

1.1 Process

The process of developing this Strategy spanned the following five phases:

Phase 1: Project Initiation

The project kicked off with the review and analysis of background material and development of the Community and Stakeholder Consultation Strategy.

Phase 2: Background Review/Study

The next phase involved developing a socio-demographic profile, service inventories (facilities, parks and trails, programs and events), park conditions assessments, mapping and initial research on the tourism and recreation market in Lake of Bays and the surrounding area. A Background Report detailed the findings of Phase 2.

Phase 3: Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Next, a suite of engagement activities was conducted to discuss with community members and stakeholders the current and future state of programs, events, public facilities, parks, trails, open spaces and water access points in the Township. Residents were consulted through a telephone survey, online survey, focus groups and dedicated project page on the My Lake of Bays website while user groups were engaged via an online survey and municipal staff and Council were interviewed over Zoom. A Consultation Report detailed the findings of Phase 2.

Phase 4: Preparation of Strategy and Recommendations

Phase 4 focused on developing recommendations for programming and events, recreation facilities, parks, trails, water access points and open spaces through analysis of the background research, consultation findings and emerging trends. An initial set of strategic priorities supported by an implementation strategy with detailed timeframes and costing are proposed for stakeholder and community comment.

Phase 5: Final Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy

The final phase involves revising the draft Strategy and presenting to the community, stakeholders and municipal staff and Council and preparing the final deliverable.

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Oxtongue Rapids Park

2.0 Context

2.1 Geographic Context

The Township of Lake of Bays is a rural community located two hours' north of Toronto in the District Municipality of Muskoka. Muskoka spans 3,839.5 km^2 and includes the following Area Municipalities: Town of Bracebridge, Town of Gravenhurst, Town of Huntsville, Township of Georgian Bay, Township of Lake of Bays and Township of Muskoka Lakes. Figure 2 - 1 shows the Township of Lake of Bays in the context of the District Municipality of Muskoka.

The Township of Lake of Bays is situated just east of Huntsville and beside Algonquin Provincial Park. The Township contains over 100 lakes and contains four main hamlets: Baysville, Dorset, Dwight and Hillside. Figure 2 - 2 shows the Township of Lake of Bays and its settlement areas.

With a land area of approximately 667.5 km^2, the Township comprises a mix of land uses including rural areas, waterfront areas, Community Areas (Hillside, Dorset, Dwight), crown land, Provincial Parkland, an Urban Centre (Baysville) and a Special Policy Area (Echo Valley development).

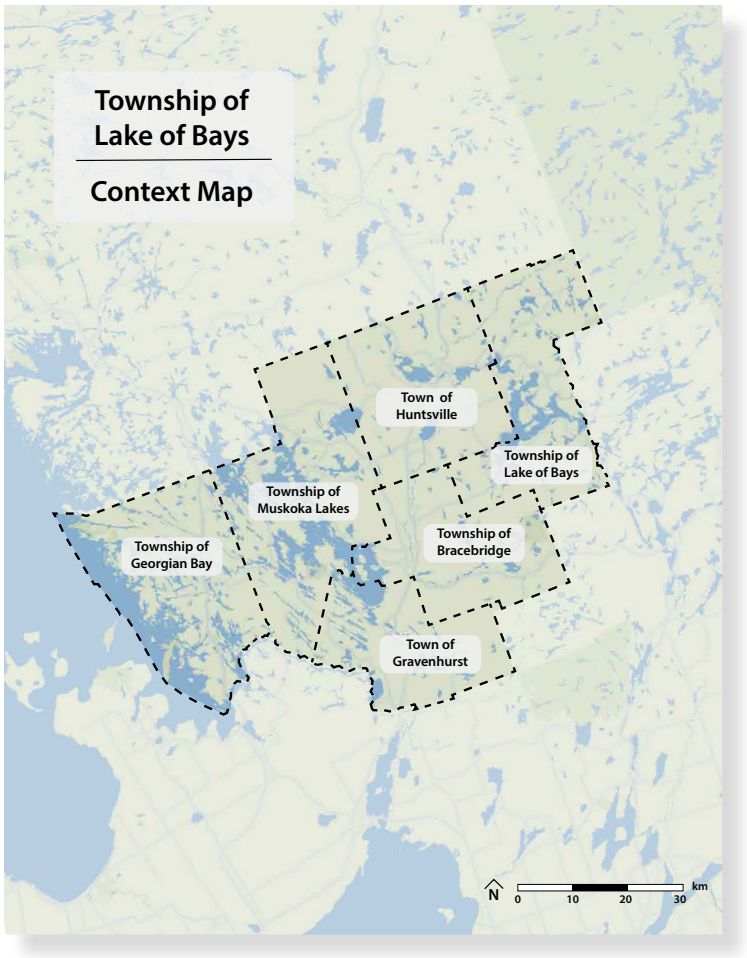


Figure 2 - 1: The Township of Lake of Bays Within the District Municipality of Muskoka

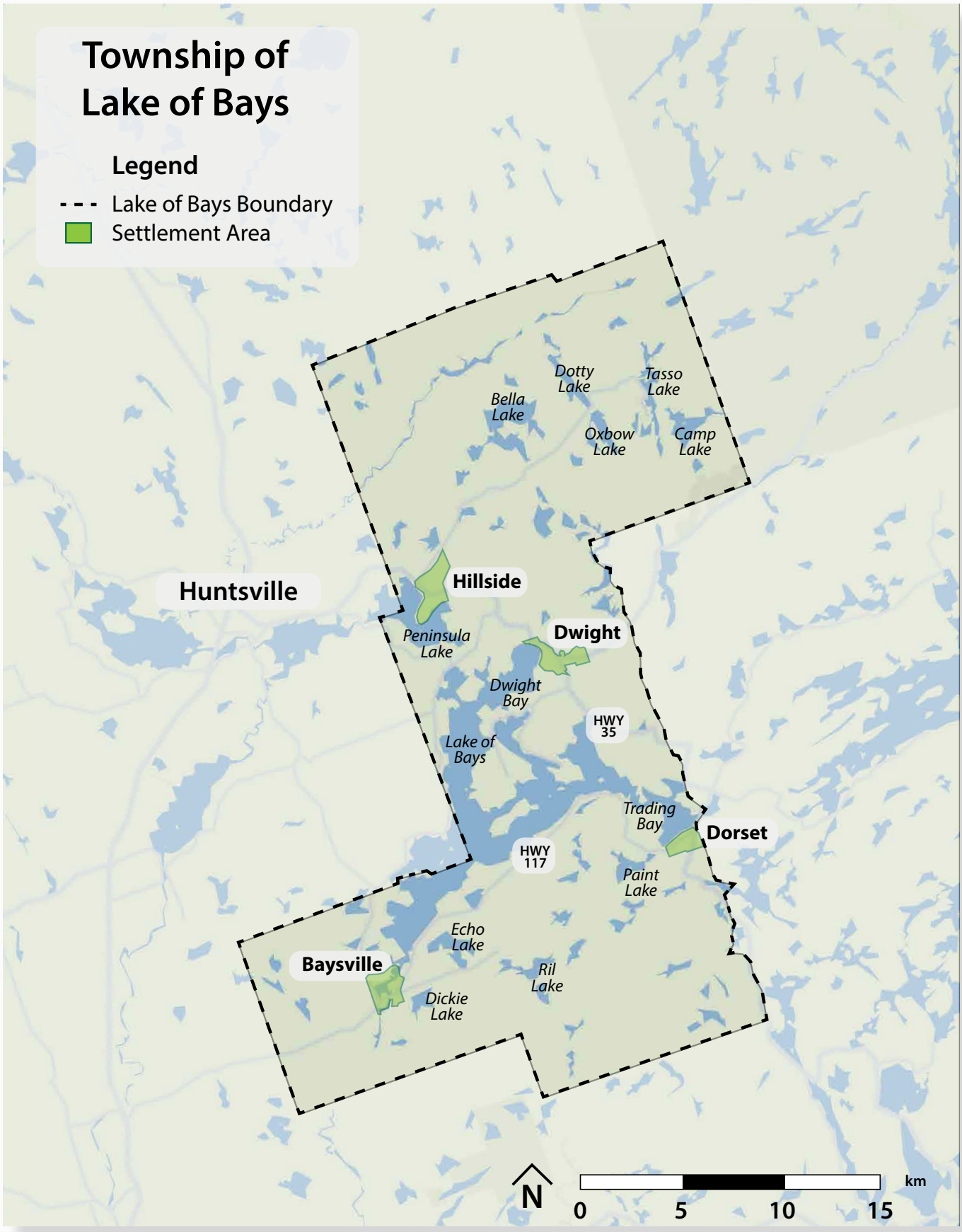


Figure 2 - 2: The Township of Lake of Bays' Boundaries and Hamlets

2.2 Socio - Demographic Profile

The Township of Lake of Bays' socio-demographic profile was compiled using data from the 2021 Canadian Census, the Ontario Population Projections 2019-2046, and the 2019 District Municipality of Muskoka: Growth Strategy Phase One. The socio-demographic profile discusses the findings for the Township of Lake of Bays' current and projected population, age distribution, and permanent and seasonal populations. This profile also includes socio-demographic data for the District Municipality of Muskoka (District of Muskoka).

2.2.1 Lake of Bays Population and Income Highlights

Table 2 - 1 shows a comparable prevalence of low income in the Township and District of Muskoka. At the same time, the median after-tax income in Lake of Bays is 6.2% higher than that in the District of Muskoka.

Table 2 - 1: 2021 Canadian Census Population and Income Data for the Township of Lake of Bays and the District of Muskoka

	Township of Lake of Bays	District of Muskoka
Population	3,759	66,674
Median after-tax income of household in 2020 ($)	$77,500	$73,000
Prevalence of low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%)	8.7%	9.8%

2.2.2 Township of Lake of Bays, District of Muskoka and Province of Ontario: Age Distribution

Table 2 - 2 provides the age distribution for the Township of Lake of Bays and the Province of Ontario as of 2021. The data indicates that Lake of Bays comprises an older population than both the District of Muskoka and the Province of Ontario. Percentages in the 45 to 59 year old age group are relatively comparable, while proportions in each age group below this category increase with the size of the jurisdiction. Conversely, the age groups older than 60 to 74 years decrease as the size of the jurisdiction increases.

Table 2 - 2: Age Distribution for the Township of Lake of Bays, the District of Muskoka and the Province of Ontario in 2021[1]

	0-4	5-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-74	75+	Total
Lake of Bays	110	240	405	440	805	1,280	490	3,770
Percent in Ontario	2.9%	6.4%	10.7%	11.7%	21.3%	34%	13%	100%
District of Muskoka	2,480	5,695	8,875	10,475	13,665	17,365	8,115	66,670
Percent in Total	3.7%	8.5%	13.3%	15.7%	20.5%	26%	12.2%	100%
Ontario	683,515	1,568,280	2,672,455	2,819,400	2,876,010	2,471,070	1,133,210	14,223,940
Percent in Total	4.8%	11%	18.8%	19.8%	20.2%	17.4%	8%	100%

1 2021 Canadian Census

2.2.3 Township of Lake of Bays and District of Muskoka Current and Projected Populations

Table 2 - 2 presents the estimated current and projected populations of the Township of Lake of Bays and the District of Muskoka. From 2016 to 2021, the population increased by 592, or 18.7%.

During the term of this Strategy (2021 -2041), the population of Lake of Bays is anticipated to grow to 4,679. The Township will review these projections at the end of every second year moving forward in order to ensure that they are keeping with pace of population growth in population of Lake of Bays.

Table 2 - 3: Current and Projected Populations for the Township of Lake of Bays and the District of Muskoka from 2016 to 2041[2]

Year	Township of Lake of Bays	District of Muskoka
2016	3,167	60,614
2021	3,759	66,674
2026	3,989 *	69,742
2031	4,219 *	73,276
2036	4,449 *	75,593
2041	4,679 *	77,766

* Estimated value calculated by thinc design

2 2021 Canadian Census and the Ontario Population Projections 2019 - 2046

2.2.4 Township of Lake of Bays Permanent and Seasonal Projected Populations

Table 2 - 4 illustrates the permanent and seasonal projected populations for the Township of Lake of Bays from 2016 to 2041.

The permanent population of Lake of Bays is estimated to increase by 920 to 4,679 by 2041 based on estimated calculations. The seasonal population of Lake of Bays is projected to increase by 1,000 between 2021 and 2041. It was anecdotally mentioned during consultations that seasonal and permanent populations differ in economic profile and interest in municipal recreation, however data was not available to substantiate this.

Table 2 - 4: Current and Projected Permanent and Seasonal Populations for the Township of Lake of Bays from 2016 to 2041[3]

Year	Permanent Population	Seasonal Population	Total
2016	3,167	11,900	15,067
2021	3,759	12,200*	15,959
2026	3,989*	12,500	16,489
2031	4,219*	12,750*	16,969
2036	4,449*	13,000	17,449
2041	4,679*	13,200	17,879

3 2021 Canadian Census, 2019 District Municipality of Muskoka: Growth Strategy Phase One

2.3 Relevant Plans and Studies

A number of relevant plans, policies and other documents were reviewed to provide essential contextual information for the Lake of Bays Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy, including:

Township of Lake of Bays

- Community-Based Strategic Plan, 2009
- A Tapestry of Place: A Place-Based Cultural Tourism Strategy for Huntsville/Lake of Bays, 2013
- Capital Asset Review, 2013
- Cultural Tourism in Huntsville and Lake of Bays Fact Sheet, 2014
- Huntsville/Lake of Bays Cultural Tourism Strategic Plan, 2015
- Municipal Building Reviews – Public Use Buildings (Summary Report), 2015
- Dorset Waterfront Plan & Downtown Study, Dorset, Ontario, 2016
- Township of Lake of Bays Official Plan, 2016
- Township of Lake of Bays Economic Development Strategy, 2017
- The Township of Lake of Bays Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2018-2023
- Strategic Work Plan for 2019-2022
- Use of Trails in Lake of Bays Bylaw Number 02-39
- Public Parks Bylaw Number 12-096

District of Muskoka

- Muskoka Master Aging Plan, 2016
- Growth Strategy Phase 1, Forecast and Growth Allocation Report, 2019
- Muskoka Official Plan, 2019
- The District Municipality of Muskoka 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan, 2020-2030
- The Muskoka Assessment Project: Premier-Ranked

These were summarized in the project's Background Report and taken into consideration while preparing this Strategy.

2.4 New and Emerging Trends

2.4.1 Healthy Active Living

A broad definition of healthy active living encompasses two aspects. The first, "traditional" position focuses on individual lifestyle choices that contribute to health, such as increasing physical activity, eating healthier foods and/or spending more time outdoors and away from screens. The second aspect has emerged in recent years and focuses on providing a healthier physical environment for all through initiatives that contribute to, for example, cleaner air and water, and restoring, protecting and/or enhancing natural ecosystems. This perspective aligns with more global imperatives around environmental sustainability and also takes some of the onus off individuals.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015) provides an approach to addressing healthy active living – in its fullest sense – in parks and recreation services. The Framework includes five goals and priorities: foster active living, increase inclusion and access, connect people and nature, provide supportive physical and social environments and sustain capacity in the recreation sector.

The priorities that address people-oriented initiatives align well with health-promoting frameworks put forth in other national and provincial initiatives. At the same time, the Framework recognizes the importance of the built and natural environments in influencing health and well-being:

- Built form, street networks, and neighbourhoods can be designed to encourage walking and cycling, making it easier for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines. The design of outdoor spaces can improve accessibility to increase their use and enjoyment by people of all ages and abilities. Beyond physical health, recreation facilities, parks, and public spaces also help people to achieve socially connected lives.
- The health and quality of the natural environment can be improved through tree planting, removal of invasive species, planting native plants, restoring habitat, restoring shorelines, introducing organic community gardens, etc. These actions have a direct impact on air and water quality and create an overall healthier environment in which to live, work and play (providing of course that they do not infringe upon established recreation activities, for example, naturalizing a well-used beach). They also create beautified, animated spaces that draw people to spend time in them. In addition, studies have shown greater stress and anxiety reduction in people when they spend time around trees and naturalized spaces as opposed to urban environments. This encompasses the eco-health approach discussed above.

Case Study: Healthy Community Network - Town of Wasaga Beach, ON

The Healthy Community Network is a committee of Council with a mandate to "act as a link between Council and the citizens of Wasaga Beach and advise Council on matters relating to active and healthy living, the environment – natural, physical, social, economic – and the creation of a sustainable and healthy future for the town." Committee members from various sectors of the community are appointed and must have knowledge of healthy active living -related spheres. They inform Council on current topics, develop awareness campaigns and develop strategic goals and objectives based on best practices to be submitted to Council annually.

2.4.2 All-Season Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor programming provides a critical benefit to the health and well-being of people, particularly children and teens. Time spent outdoors has been shown to improve physical and mental health, boost confidence, reduce stress and build understanding of, and respect for, the natural environment. Outdoor learning and activities are common aspects of life for children in many other countries (e.g., tropical and Nordic countries), and as awareness of the benefits have become more mainstream in Canada, there have been increased efforts by municipalities and schools to offer more outdoor programs for children and teens.

The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth (2020) recommends promoting and supporting "outdoor – and, when possible, nature-based – play opportunities given their association with both increased physical activity levels and improved mental health outcomes" (p. 48). Among others, the report's recommendations for governments include promoting healthy movement by increasing access to recreation centres and public spaces outside of school hours, supporting families' participation in sport and recreation activities and investing in no-charge active play spaces (especially outdoors) for families with children of all ages

In practical terms, parks are significant assets that are often not optimized from a usage perspective and so they offer the potential to increase recreation activity relatively inexpensively. While not supported by a review of available research, it is also reasonable to suggest that an active park is more likely to motivate onlookers to "join in" than one that sits empty and idle.

For some time, municipalities in North America have been trying to encourage outdoor recreation in the winter, emulating approaches taken in many Nordic countries. Examples of initiatives include 8-80 Cities' Wintermission project and Winter Cities Toolkit, and activities and events organized through Edmonton's Winter City Strategy, which have been successful with winter recreation. "Winterizing" cities in North America is not a new topic, but the uptake has been slow, for a number of reasons that mostly fall outside of the mandate of parks and recreation departments (e.g., perceived or real conflicts between designing for pedestrians

versus snow clearing and emergency vehicles, liability concerns, insufficient staff or resources, etc.).

One way municipalities can contribute to encouraging people to recreate outside in the winter is to help change the prevailing negative view of winter's cold and snow. Working across departments, municipalities can set the tone by framing winter as a season to look forward to, with many positive and fun opportunities for recreation.

On the other hand, with average summer temperatures increasing due to climate change, considerations must also be made for making outdoor activity in extreme heat safer and more comfortable.

2.4.3 Adult Programming

Historically, municipalities have focused on providing parks and recreation services to children, youth and seniors, with this last group becoming a much larger consumer of services as our population ages. The focus on children is rooted in the early days of organized recreation that began with the Playground Movement of the late 19th century in urban North America, which was intended to save poor, immigrant and homeless children from unhealthy, crowded tenement neighbourhoods. Over time, and with the development of recreation as a formal public service, the combined health and social objectives of these services retained an emphasis on those who were least likely to have the private means to purchase their leisure activities. Those with no or limited income included children, youth and seniors. Since adults were in their earning years and the primary purpose of public services was to fill gaps in the market, services for this age group were limited. At the same time, in terms of social support, all children and youth were provided with recreation regardless of the household's ability to pay.

In recent years, however, we have seen a noticeable increase in adult interest in municipal recreation services for themselves. Anecdotal reasons for this trend are likely a blend of increased awareness of the importance of physical activity for long-term health, overall declines in disposable income and growth and greater sophistication in the provision and delivery of public recreation services. At the same time, current research indicates that adults are not achieving this awareness and interest through action. A recent ParticipACTION report card on physical activity among Canadian adults (December, 2021) shows much higher "grades" in the areas of conceptual and environmental indicators than in activating, daily behaviours. The report suggests that beyond individual and environmental characteristics, there is a progressive decline in participation in activities that require a time commitment, specific movements and/or intense physical effort. Sport participation, muscle strengthening activities, balance activities and active transportation all scored grades D to F. The F grade in active transportation is a particularly interesting finding, given the promotion of active transportation and the increasing efforts of municipalities to make it safe and easy to access so people can integrate it into their daily lives.

The highest behavioural grades achieved are for light to medium-intensity activities that can be integrated into daily life. If the evolution to a highly active culture is viewed as a long-term social goal, and these findings are indicators of current progression to that end, it appears there is more work to do in the Bs and Cs before the Ds and Fs can improve. In terms of municipal programming for adults, therefore,

progress in the foreseeable future may need to focus on additional ways to translate the desire to be active into introductory "first steps" that provide flexible access to low to medium intensity activities.

2.4.4 Cultural Tourism

Tourism is an essential sector of today's service economy, creating a competitive environment in which communities must secure their place in the market. Moreover, as the world becomes progressively more homogeneous on many levels, people are expressing greater interest in that which remains different. Every community is different in some way from all others, and these differences are the foundation of its unique story.

Given these factors, there needs to be something unique or special that differentiates the community from others – and it must be different enough to provide a reason or reasons for people to visit. To this end, a unique identity that captures the essence of this particular place needs to be developed, fostered and aggressively marketed.

The notion of "place-based" attractions is typically tied to cultural tourism in building destination-related visitor experiences.[1] It comprises those elements of culture and heritage that are intrinsically tied to a geographic place, and so cannot be replicated elsewhere.

A Hill Strategies Research report summarizes the findings of online surveys of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Member States and cultural tourism experts around the world, and provides the following definition of cultural tourism:

> "Cultural tourism is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions."

Almost all responding countries to the survey indicated that their definition of cultural tourism includes both "tangible (e.g., national and world heritage sites, monuments, historic places and buildings, cultural routes, and others), and intangible heritage (e.g., crafts, gastronomy, traditional festivals, music, oral traditions, religious/spiritual tourism, etc.)." Most countries also consider cultural tourism to include "contemporary culture (e.g., film, performing arts, design, fashion, new media, etc.)."

1 Thorne, S. (2012). Place-based cultural tourism: A new planning paradigm. Economic Development. org

2.4.5 Declining Volunteerism

Volunteerism is a key feature of thriving communities across Canada. For many, the contribution of resources often in the form of time, labour, skills or charitable donations is a demonstration of community and civic engagement. According to the 2018 General Social Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (GSS-GVP), Statistics Canada reported that 8 in 10 (or 79%) of Canadians aged 15 years and older, reported volunteering either formally or informally.[2] In addition to the social benefit volunteers provide, other research has also reported that volunteers feel an enhanced sense of worth, self-confidence and self-esteem.[3] However, although the public, non-profit and grassroots sectors continue to expand, and the demand for volunteers remains, formal volunteering has steadily declined in Canada over the last decade.[4]

Volunteer Demographic and Engagement Trends

Demographically, volunteer trends have largely remained consistent. According to the same 2018 survey by Statistics Canada, younger generations are generally more likely to participate in both formal and informal volunteer opportunities than older generations. However, although older Canadians within the 73 to 100 year age cohort were less likely to volunteer formally, they were the most likely to contribute the most volunteer hours.[5]

The underlying motivations for volunteering notably differ among age cohorts. Key motivating factors for younger generations, namely Generation Z (ages 15-22) are related to improving future employment prospects. The completion of education and graduation requirements which mandate volunteering through co-op and community service is a notable factor. For Millennials (ages 23-37), Generation X (ages 38-58), Baby Boomers (ages 53-72) and Matures (ages 73 +), the development of skills, and "a desire to support a political or social cause, or religious or spiritual beliefs" are more relevant motivational factors for volunteering.[6] The GSS-GVP 2018 also provides interesting insight into what types of organizations attract high levels of volunteer engagement. Sports and recreation organizations were identified as having the third highest levels of engagement, with hospitals and religious organizations ranking the highest.

2 Formal volunteering is defined as: "Activities conducted without pay on behalf of a group or organization, at least once in the 12 months preceding the survey." Informal volunteering is defined as: "Activities conducted without pay not on behalf of a group or organization, at least once in the 12 months preceding the survey." https://www.volunteertoronto.ca/news/news.asp?id=572191

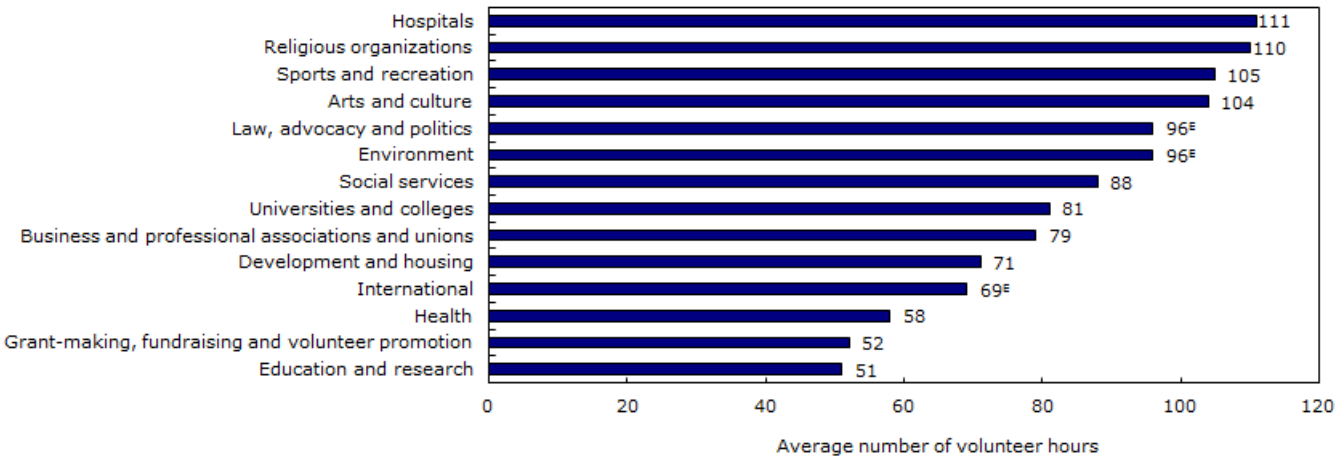
3 S. Baines and I. Hardill, "'At Least I can Do Something': The Work of Volunteering in a Community Beset by Worklessness," Social Policy and Society 7, no. 3 (2008): 307–17

4 https://www.cardus.ca/research/communities/reports/vulnerable-sector-check-costs-remain-a-barrier-for-volunteers/

5 https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/210423/dq210423a-eng.pdf?st=le01pufO

6 https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/210423/dq210423a-eng.pdf?st=le01pufO

Chart 2
Average annual volunteer hours, by organization type, among formal volunteers aged 15 and over, 2018



E use with caution
Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, Giving, Volunteering, and Participating, 2018.

Figure 2 - 3: Average Annual Volunteer Hours,

Barriers to Volunteer Engagement

The volunteer sector exhibits some notable barriers that have been identified and documented by researchers and practitioners. Commonly identified factors for volunteer engagement as described by Volunteer Toronto, Canada's largest volunteer centre include:

> "Language: a role may require a specific level of a certain language skill
>
> Physical: a role may require sitting, standing, moving quickly or other physical requirements
>
> Skill Level: a role may require (or perceived to require) a certain level of proficiency with a skill
>
> Time: a role may require much more time than might be needed, or not enough time for volunteer interest
>
> Location: a role may take place in a location that is not easily accessible, or limited to those with access to personal transportation
>
> Financial: a role may require a certain level of wealth for a volunteer to be able to give their time
>
> Expectation: a role may have expectations that are unrealistic to some or many volunteers"[7]

In addition to these factors, administrative and AODA accessible barriers are also identified as key challenges by researchers. Administrative barriers refers to the process of obtaining the necessary vulnerable sector checks that prospective volunteers are required to present to the organization they are interested in volunteering for.

7 Volunteer Toronto, Removing Barriers to Volunteering: Resource Guide and Workbook, pg 2

"Volunteer screening is an important process for charitable organizations, to protect the clients they serve and to ensure the legitimacy and integrity of the organization. Volunteer screening is a broad, ten-step process that Public Safety Canada recommends charitable organizations use for screening prospective volunteers. These ten steps include safeguards such as completing reference checks for volunteers, engaging volunteers in safety and policy training, and maintaining regular and ongoing volunteer supervision as they perform their roles."[8]

Research conducted by Cardus (2022) identifies that although vulnerable sector checks are important, the processes present barriers for both volunteers and charitable organizations associated with cost and accessibility. For example, applicants are often required to pay out of pocket for vulnerable sector checks, sufficient proficiency in English is essential, and the limitations of the justice system on the reporting and prosecution of sexual assault can limit the effectiveness of vulnerable sector checks. When compounded, these barriers can limit the eligibility of minority immigrant and refugee populations, and present liability concerns for interested volunteer employers and charitable organizations.

COVID-19 and the Volunteer Sector

In recent years, the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic on the volunteer sector are also notable. Interestingly, some practitioners reported that in 2021 they experienced an upswing in volunteer interest. However, a year later interest in volunteerism has declined almost 20% and experts have cited pandemic fatigue, the fear of getting infected, and financial barriers as main contributing factors.[9]

8 Source: Vulnerable Sector Check Costs Remain a Barrier for Volunteers, Vanhof, 2022

9 https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/volunteering-decline-canada-vulnerable-sector-checks-1.6525374#:~:text=CBC%20News%20Loaded-,Number%20of%20volunteers%20dropping%20just%20as%20demand%20is%20spiking%2C%20Toronto,all%20contributing%20to%20the%20drop



Baysville Riverfront Trail

3.0 What We Heard

3.1 Consultation Activities

To leverage the community's knowledge, ideas and expertise on current and future delivery of the Township's parks and recreation services, a multi-faceted engagement strategy was conducted from fall 2021 until winter 2023. In keeping with Public Health's recommendation of physical distancing and limited gatherings to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all meetings, interviews and discussions were held remotely using telephone/Zoom.

Consultation activities focused on the following groups:

- Residents
    - » A survey of residents was administered through two formats:
        - – a self-selected online survey promoted on the Township's website, My Lake of Bays engagement webpage and social media channels, accessed by 155 respondents.[6]
        - – a random telephone survey of 200 resident households.[7]
    - » Three focus groups were held with community members on special interest topics (Arts, Culture & Heritage; Passive Parks and Trail Users; Adult Programming) that ranged from 3-4 participants.
    - » Residents were also engaged through the My Lake of Bays online engagement platform, serving as a hub for community contribution with tools such as an online ideas board, discussion forum and Q&A panel. A questionnaire for households with young children was completed by 7 respondents.
- User Groups
    - » An invitational online survey was administered to 85 user groups that facilitate programming and/or use Township facilities or parks to provide their programs and activities, to which 11 representatives responded (see Appendix A).

6 The survey did not require every question to be answered. Thus, although there were 155 participants in the online survey, not all chose or were directed to answer all of the questions. As a result, the total number of respondents per question varied from 25 to 155 respondents.

7 Results from the telephone survey are considered more representative than results from the online survey, since online survey respondents self-selected to participate. As such, they may have prior or above-average interest or involvement in parks and recreation. It is also important to note that telephone survey respondents were primarily (92%) permanent residents; in contrast, 44.6% of online survey respondents indicated they were permanent residents, 34.7% were seasonal residents and 20.7% were residents in a community outside of Lake of Bays.

- Municipal Council and staff
    - » Interviews were completed with 14 municipal representatives including the Mayor, Council members and senior staff.

The draft Strategy was posted on the Lake of Bays website from January 16-31, 2023. A press release and social media posts were issued. Community members were invited to review the document and submit their feedback via email or an online survey. In total, 43 comments were received. The consultant team reviewed the feedback with municipal staff and made changes to the Strategy accordingly.

3.2 Consultation Findings

3.2.1 Existing Recreation Service Uses

Residents and Visitors

Online survey respondents largely indicated that they use parks within their neighbourhoods, use Township trails and access public waterfront areas in Lake of Bays (70%, 71% and 83% respectively). The survey also revealed that respondents (or others in their household) use recreation services within the Township and/or in surrounding communities (53%). Notably, the communities of Huntsville and Baysville were commonly identified as locations where respondents often participate in organized programs and activities.

The random household telephone survey also provided additional insight on residents' existing parks and recreation uses. A majority of respondents (65%) reported that they are satisfied with the available recreation programs in Lake of Bays. Of the respondents who were not satisfied, interest in additional active and non-sports related activities for elementary school age (5-12 years), and high-school age (13-19) children were identified. A majority of respondents (71%) indicated that they would travel to and participate in programs located in Baysville, Dorset and Dwight.

Interestingly, a majority of random household telephone survey respondents identified that they (or others in their household) do not use public waterfront areas, parks and trails (61%, 64%, and 66% respectively). Among the respondents who indicated they do use public waterfront areas, Cedar Narrow Heritage, Baysville Dam Park and Dwight Beach were the top three waterfront areas accessed, all of which were reported to experience peak-time use issues by some respondents. Furthermore,

frequently identified reasons why respondents do not use parks within their neighbourhood includes no interest in using parks (46%), lack of time (31%) and lack of amenities (27%).

In 2021, the Township conducted a Service Delivery Review and surveyed residents regarding improvements to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Township's operations. The results found that citizens are overall satisfied with the services Lake of Bays provides. Eight services received a rating of 4/5 stars or above including indoor recreation, outdoor recreation, parks and trails, library, social media communications, website communications, cemetery, and fire services. The majority of services received a 3.5/5 stars.

User Groups

Almost half (44.4%) of user group survey respondents indicated that their groups provide both seasonal and ongoing programs/events. Outdoor nature-based programs, club socials and learning programs were among the most identified types of programs offered by user groups. A majority (64%) of user groups facilitate programming and events for all age groups/families.

Regarding facilities, respondents largely agreed that the existing indoor and outdoor facilities within the Township are suitable for their programming (71% and 67%, respectively). The most used indoor facilities include the arena ice in Baysville and the hall in Dorset. The survey also revealed that less than a third of groups (27%) use indoor facilities at Irwin Memorial Public School. Commonly used outdoor facilities include dock/boat launches and beaches in Baysville, Dwight and Dorset.

3.2.2 Future Recreation Needs and Use

Residents/Visitors

The majority of online survey respondents indicated interest in additional recreation programs and/or activities if provided (51%); however, a notable proportion indicated feeling "uncertain" (42%). When asked to specify what types of program offerings would be of interest, a majority of survey respondents identified both active sport/fitness and non-sport related activities (see section 5.1 for further details). Programming that caters to all ages was also highlighted as a key consideration. Of those respondents who were uncertain or not interested in using additional recreation programs, factors such as the type of program, cost and location were identified as reasons.

When asked to indicate their opinion on how the Township of Lake of Bays should build on local recreation assets, random household survey respondents largely agreed (73%) that more major events should be held by the Township to attract visitors and tourists, and the Township should solicit support from local businesses. The lowest level of agreement among respondents (14%) was for the Township to acquire waterfront properties to expand and create larger lakefront beaches.

The 2021 Service Delivery Review Survey indicated that respondents were very satisfied with Lake of Bays parks and recreation services and are interested in improved recreation activities at arenas and community centres, notably for winter recreation. Improvements to walking and hiking trails were also frequently mentioned.

User Groups

Looking ahead to future growth opportunities, a third of user group survey respondents indicated that they anticipate that participation in organized events and programming will increase by 30% in the next five to ten years. The survey also revealed that 45% of user groups anticipate that growing attendance and participation will require additional access to facilities within five to ten years.

A majority of user groups also indicated that the Township of Lake of Bays could better assist them in developing and providing their programs, activities or events (64%). Notably, assisting with marketing and promotion, communicating with the municipality and assistance with funding applications were identified by user groups as the top area in which the Township could provide better assistance. A large majority of respondents (73%) agree that the Township could better solicit the business sector to improve community attractiveness.

Focus Groups and Interviews

The need for additional staff was identified as a key step forward in improving recreation activities, such as reinstating a Recreation Director or Coordinator position. Given anticipated population growth, interviewees emphasized it is necessary to unlock the potential of existing senior centres that are currently underutilized and to secure more financial investment to sustain existing provision of other facilities.

Similarly, additional funding investment for the expansion of parks and the maintenance of trails were also identified. Identified enhancements included park signage, expanded/updated play equipment, development of self-guided tours, and connectivity between municipal trails, parks, and facilities. Additional consensus building regarding the development of new trails and the permissible uses (e.g., pedestrian, cycling, ATVing) of these trails requires further deliberation.

Overall, waterfronts and beach access points were identified as a key feature of the Township of Lake of Bays. Although there is interest in enhancing these features, there is also interest in naturalizing these waterfronts, which has presented some conflicting ideas (e.g., Norway Point).

Policy-related improvements were also offered by respondents. Suggestions included the development of policy to identify historical Indigenous portage sites on current open road allowances, policies that address the growing concern surrounding short-term rentals in the Township and policies that address insurance fees for user groups.

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Dwight Community Centre

4.0 Service Delivery

4.1 Introduction

The Township of Lake of Bays functions as a facilitator in delivering recreation services. Its role focuses on providing and maintaining parks, facilities, beaches, waterfront access points, etc. to support community-based programs, self-directed activities and events. Enabling and helping others to deliver their services with this support makes the Township an indirect service provider.

Municipalities that operate as facilitators or indirect providers rely on many different non-municipal organizations that provide a diverse range of services to their communities. Providers range from local volunteer groups to other formal agencies and organizations. Many of Lake of Bays' non-municipal providers participated in consultation activities as part of the Strategy's preparation. Appendix A contains a list of the organizations/groups that were invited to participate and identifies those that engaged.

The Strategy anticipates the continuation of an indirect role for the Township in service provision. The assessments and recommendations on service delivery are directed to improving and strengthening the capacity of the municipality to fully implement this role.

Sustaining and growing parks and recreation services requires sufficient resources, sources for which need to be developed as part of the Strategy. Table 4 - 1 shows responses to the resident surveys on willingness to support recreation service development through a variety of methods.

Both resident household surveys revealed a relatively positive response to several suggestions on ways to support future service development, including paying more fees to use services, donating an amenity for a park, and donating to a capital campaign. For other options, there was generally more interest expressed by online survey respondents. Those who participated in the random household survey showed limited support for an increase in property taxes, joining a stewardship group, assisting with local fundraising events, and volunteering to source private sector assistance. In contrast, a relatively large proportion of online survey respondents reported they would accept an increase in property taxes.

As shown in Table 4 - 2, user groups most often reported disagreement or uncertainty about the two options related to direct payment for facilities (i.e., higher fees or capital contributions). The majority responded positively to helping with fundraising for facility development.

Sections 4.2 and 4.3 discuss approaches to securing resources - financial and human - to support implementing the Strategy's recommendations. Sections 4.4 through 4.7 consider the potential for collaboration with other providers, the need for policy and planning processes, and directions on program development.

Table 4 - 1: Resident Household Contributions to Service Development

Type of Contribution		Random Survey (200 respondents)	Online Survey (87 respondents)
Paying	Paying more fees to use services	56%	41%
	Accepting an increase in property taxes	4%	40%
Volunteering	Volunteering to work to source private sector grants/donors/sponsors	7%	14%
	Volunteering to help run programs/ activities	18%	15%
	Joining a volunteer stewardship group (e.g., Friends of "X" Park)	5%	21%
	Organizing/assisting with local fundraising events	6%	29%
Donating	Donating an amenity for a park (e.g., bench, tree, picnic table)	43%	33%
	Donating money to a capital campaign	26%	44%

Table 4 - 2: User Group Level of Agreement with Options to Supporting Service Development

Options	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Our organization would start paying/would pay higher user fees to improve the quality of recreation facilities we use	10.0% 1 group	40.0% 4 groups	50.0% 5 groups	10 groups
Our organization would contribute to the capital costs of developing new facilities for our use	30.0% 3 group	40.0% 4 groups	30.0% 3 group	10 groups
Our organization would help with fundraising activities for facility development	63.2% 7 groups	18.2% 2 groups	18.2% 2 groups	11 groups

4.2 Service Capacity Development

4.2.1 Marketing Parks and Recreation Services

Existing facilities and assets are not optimally used and, for those that generate (or could generate) revenues, increasing their use will grow income. Marketing the Township's parks and recreation services in a coordinated, comprehensive manner will help ensure all assets are leveraged to their potential. Consultation results indicate majority support or neutrality to the statement, "The Township should engage professional services to develop marketing and promotional tools for specific attractors (e.g., trails, local history/ heritage, facility/park rentals for wedding, parties, etc.)":

- Among 200 telephone survey respondents, 31% agreed with this statement, 35% were neutral, 19% disagreed, and 15% were uncertain.
- Among 93 online survey respondents, 38% agreed with this statement, 26% were neutral, 25% disagreed, and 12% were uncertain.
- Among 11 user groups, 55% agreed with this statement, 36% were neutral, and one disagreed.

Section 5.0 on facilities notes specific areas for improved marketing of the Lake of Bays Community Centre & Arena in Baysville. More generally, the following considerations should be incorporated in a system-wide marketing strategy:

- Individual components of both Baysville and Dwight Community Centres (e.g., ice, arena floor, halls and commercial kitchens) should be marketed/promoted
- Targeted promotions should be part of the overall strategy to attract users/user groups that may not be adequately served in the regional market
- Promoting key parks, waterfront locations, and trails suitable for welcoming visitors
- Developing a program to purchase advertising space in appropriate locations

The strategy will need to be sufficiently detailed to enable Township staff to implement its directives in order of priority and distinguish between those that are one-time and those that are ongoing tasks.

The strategy should include mechanisms for self-promotion, to inform the community about the Township's work/progress in improving parks and recreation services, and responses in terms of use levels/revenue generation, etc. The Municipality of Port Hope, for example, produces an annual graphically portrayed Parks, Recreation and Culture Year-in- Review[8] that summarizes the past year's work in developing, operating and maintaining these services. As monitoring activities are instituted using recreation management software (section 4.2.3), much of this information will be readily available and can be used to produce an "annual report" for Township residents or more frequent social media updates on specific initiatives, as appropriate.

8 https://www.porthope.ca/en/your-municipal-government/prc-year-in-review.aspx

The community provided suggestions to be considered as part of the Strategy including:

- centralized community calendars for Baysville and Dwight, that are comprehensive in content with respect to groups, programs and events, are easily accessible and regularly updated (e.g., a large community calendar at the Lake of Bays Community Centre, an LED sign).
- a digital and printed booklet with the location of park, facilities, public access points to lakes for motorized/ non-motorized watercraft, etc. (online for free maybe a charge for a printed copy).
- significant improvements to signage at all locations.
- locations and access points to Crown Land within the Township should be published and appropriate signage provided.

4.2.2 Staffing

The Library is currently the de facto recreation program provider in Lake of Bays. While its contributions now and in the future are essential to a fulsome program/service supply, it cannot respond to many of the interests expressed by the community. As noted in section 3.0, survey respondents indicated they are interested in additional recreation programs being provided in Lake of Bays - in both sport/fitness and non-sport areas.

Existing staffing for parks and recreation, as noted in the Township's organization/reporting chart (2021) focuses almost exclusively on the maintenance of infrastructure. The Parks and Facilities department Superintendent is supported by a Lead Hand, three full time Facility Operators and periodic part time hires. This core staff is essential to providing and maintaining parks and facilities, which is the foundation for enabling others to deliver services in an indirect model. At the same time, parks and facilities staff do not have the capacity to assume additional work in programming nor is it their area of expertise.

The Township's previous program coordinator position was discontinued in 2009. The Strategy recommends reinstating a position with responsibilities for program development/coordination. This position will be key to implementing many of the program/service recommendations and, therefore, can be viewed as a prerequisite to the Strategy's success. Stakeholder interviewees noted the need to reinstate this type of staff position, and 2013 the Capital Asset Review recommended creating a Recreation Coordinator position.

A Program Developer/Coordinator position will facilitate program and event development and the administrative aspects of coordinating their provision. It will involve responsibility for existing services, and determining/confirming community need for additional programs and facilitating their provision through volunteers or paid instructors. Section 4.5 of this Strategy details areas for potential program development and options for provision.

Lake of Bays staff are proactive and deliver services effectively with the current systems and tools in place:
Staff are consistently looking for opportunities to proactively improve service delivery within their department. Easily implementable opportunities are adopted, allowing for service delivery to continually improve as the Township develops. While this is the case, there is room from growth and improvement with more effective and efficient systems and tools in place.

Service Delivery Review - Executive Summary Report. MNP. November 2021.

A related task to program development is implementing the recommendations from the above-noted marketing strategy. Township assets (indoor - arena ice and floor, community centre halls, commercial kitchens - and outdoor) need to be marketed to both permanent and seasonal residents and non-residents, local and area volunteer groups, and to visitors to increase community awareness and use, and to leverage revenue potential. It is anticipated that, with sufficiently detailed recommendations and working with the Communications Officer, this position can integrate marketing directions.

In addition to qualifications related to training, skills and experience, a key personality trait to success in this type of work is self-motivation with a genuine interest in reaching out to, and meeting new people, relationship building, inquiry and creative problem-solving to overcome obstacles to delivering innovative programs and services.

4.2.3 Recreation Management Software

Anticipating the development of services over the term of the Strategy supports investing in software to manage all aspects of the parks and recreation function: planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting, and budgeting. This direction is in line with that of the 2021 Service Delivery Review (Executive Summary Report. MNP.), which recommended the Township "Leverage existing or new technology to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery."

This platform can initially be used to create a comprehensive, current system of existing assets, services and their use, which will be further developed as programming and facility use increase in response to marketing and service development.

In terms of tracking service use, the software should be employed to document: indoor and outdoor facility scheduling/use in prime and non-prime times by program providers; facility rentals for other uses (e.g., social events), participation in all organized programs/ activities; requests for programs/facilities that are currently not provided. This information will be central to service planning and evaluation, which is discussed in more detail in section 4.7.

Recommendations:

SD 1. Contract professional services to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Township's parks and recreation system.

SD 2. Hire staff to take responsibility for program development/ coordination and, working with the Communications Officers, implementing services/ marketing assets.

SD 3. Purchase and implement a recreation management software system.

4.3 Financing Service Development

Grants from outside sources, and primarily upper levels of government, are key financing mechanisms for municipal parks and recreation services. At the same time, grants are periodic, specific in terms of project eligibility, and time limited. In many cases, they also require a matching contribution on the part of the municipality. While the Township will continue to apply for relevant grants in developing its parks and recreation services, there is a need for community-based sources of funding to provide access to resources to pursue projects not covered by grants or their availability when needed. The discontinuation of development charges as of March 2020, and the apparent resistance to property tax increases in the Township, suggests the need to look to other approaches to develop a funding base.

As noted above, marketing the Township's parks and recreation assets should increase revenues that can be directed to financing operations. Other mechanisms for revenue generation, and those focused on capital funding are discussed below.

4.3.1 Parks Foundation

There are many groups and individuals that now contribute financially to parks and recreation service development in Lake of Bays. Most of these efforts focus on individual parks and small projects or components of projects. Grist Mill Park and Robertson Parkette are local examples of municipally owned parks that have been developed with private donations. While it is anticipated that location-specific programs such as these will continue, they can be supplemented by a more general funding mechanism. A single foundation for all parks and recreation services would enable larger projects to proceed by bringing the various contributors together to build one 'account' from which to draw. In relation to the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy, a foundation account can be used to implement recommendations as outlined in herein.

A cursory web-based review revealed that parks foundations are more prevalent in western Canada and in the United States than in the mid/eastern provinces. The few that were identified in Ontario were park-specific, as opposed to collective funds. In Lake of Bays, a foundation should comprise a general account, with the option for contributors to direct funds to 'most needed' or specific projects in each relevant area of service: parks, recreation, public waterfront/access, trails, etc.

It is often assumed that seasonal residents do not use the public recreation services available in their municipality, recreate exclusively on their own properties, and, therefore, are 'unanimous' in their resistance to financing these services through the tax base. This position is challenged by a 2017 District of Muskoka Second Home Study, which includes information on the characteristics, and use, of recreation services by seasonal residents in Lake of Bays Township. The survey conducted as part of this study was mailed to 21,399 second home households in the District, with a response rate of 16.1% (3,444 completed surveys). Of total surveys, 3,338 were mailed to households in Lake of Bays, with a response rate of 17.4% (580 completed surveys).

Appendix B contains information from the Study that details second home households' use of recreation assets in the District and shows that seasonal residents make use of various recreation facilities, and particularly public parks/beaches and libraries. As might be expected, large majorities also enjoy boating, canoeing/kayaking, and hiking/walking/jogging, which may also involve the use of municipal services. In addition, the majority of second homes in the District (62%) are either winterized or may be winterized in future (21% of owners reported plans to winterize), which suggests a greater year-round presence of seasonal residents than may be assumed, and possible plans for a change to permanent residency in the District. Consultation results for the Strategy indicated that 39 respondents to the online survey, and 49 participants in the random telephone survey, had moved to Lake of Bays within the past five year or plan on moving to the Township within the next five years.

Consequently, although it may be true that seasonal residents are less likely to use public parks and recreation services and are more likely to object to property tax increases to support these, it cannot be assumed that all hold the same view. A parks foundation would provide all residents who are willing and able to support service development a vehicle to do so. The 2017 Study presented 2016 Statistics Canada data on annual household incomes of permanent and seasonal population for the District. Approximately 3/4 of each segment of the population occupied opposite ends

of the household income scale. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the District's second home households' income exceeded $100,000 per year. Seventy-two percent (72%) of permanent resident households earned less than $99,000 annually (p.14). A parks foundation would offer a new way for residents to contribute to initiatives aimed at improving the quality of community life in Lake of Bays. The Township can investigate the interest and willingness of residents to lead and serve in this capacity.

4.3.2 Donation Program

A general donation program could be considered to support parks and recreation service development. The City of Toronto includes an opportunity to donate to specific service areas with its property tax bills.[9] Through the Voluntary Contribution Option on Property Tax Bills, "donations can be made in any amount from $1 up to $50,000... for which a receipt for tax purposes is issued."[10] At the time the program was instituted, areas that were identified for contributions included children's services; cultural services and museums; parks, forestry and recreation; public libraries.

Currently, there are a number of year-round initiatives and programs specifically related to parks and recreation and the environment listed on the City's website to which donors can contribute. These include PollinateTO; Urban Forestry; Cultural Vibrancy (includes public art); Senior-Friendly Outdoor Fitness Equipment; Seniors' Centres (Recreation Material). The City's Policy on Donations to the City for Community Benefits governs the collection and processing of all donations.

A donation program similar to Toronto's might be easier to institute than a parks foundation, or could run parallel to it, although it would likely need to include areas other than parks and recreation services for contributions.

Potential categories for the Township of Lake of Bays could include recreation services in general (i.e., most needed) as well as allowing contributions to be directed to specific

9 https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/property-taxes-utilities/property-tax/voluntary-contribution/

10 Source: Staff report P:\2011\Internal Services\rev\gm11018rev (AFS 14621). October 25, 2011.

infrastructure improvement projects in parks, facilities, waterfront areas, and trails, or program areas that require development.

4.3.3 Commemorative Tree and Bench Program

These types of programs are designed to encourage citizens to commemorate people or events through donations that "purchase" parks-based amenities, some of which are eligible for charitable tax receipts. These programs typically publish fee schedules for the purchase and installation of the amenities from which donors can select.

A sample of municipal programs reveals some that encompass a potentially broader scope for community support, while others are more specific. The City of Greater Sudbury's Parks Services Donation and Memorial Program allows the public to "make donations to commemorate a special person, a momentous occasion or simply donate as a philanthropic gesture to beautify a community park. Donations towards the purchase of park enhancements or memorial gifts can include park benches, trees (hardwood and conifers), bike racks, picnic tables, sun shelters, sports equipment (basketball standards, tennis nets, soccer goals, etc.), playground structures, other options to be discussed with Parks Services."[11] The policy also notes that donations for parks are guided by site-specific plans.

Strathcona County's (Alberta) Parkland Memorial Program notes: "The Parkland Memorial Program provides individuals, groups and organizations with the opportunity to beautify Parkland in Strathcona County by planting trees or installing Parkland Amenities in remembrance, observance or acknowledgment of an appropriate event, occasion or individual. Approval of applications will be based on aesthetic considerations, improvements to the level of

11 https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/?pg=feed&action=file&attachment=5992.pdf

service to our Parkland users and with the intention of facilitating planned development in our Parkland. "Amenity" means any bench, table, park furnishing or other structure or development that increases the physical or material comfort of the park. It may include a memorial plaque."[12]

4.3.4 Last Minute Ice Program

Last Minute Ice rentals can help generate revenue to offset arena operating costs. The City of Owen Sound lists these parameters for its program[13]:

- Last minute ice is considered within 24 hours of the time of booking
- Will not apply to statutory holidays unless the facility is scheduled to be open
- Is not and cannot be used to replace regular bookings
- Regular bookings cannot be cancelled to book Last Minute Ice. All requirements of the City's Ice Allocation Policy will apply (e.g., conditions of use, insurance)
- A rental contract provided by the City must be signed and proof of insurance must be provided prior to use
- Bookings are final and are non-refundable
- Bookings are for minimum of one hour
- One hour rental is equivalent to 50 minutes of ice time and 10 minutes for ice resurfacing
- City reserves the right to limit last minute ice bookings where it is considered to be used for profit or gain or is being abused to replace or in the place of a regular ice booking
- Is booked on a first come, first serve basis
- City reserves the right to cancel or amend the implementation of last-minute ice at any time at its discretion

12 https://www.strathcona.ca/community-families/community-programs/parkland-memorial-program/

13 https://www.owensound.ca/en/exploring/ice-rental.aspx

4.3.5 User Fees

There are very limited revenues coming to the Township through user fees. Rentals to the community at large and lease-based rentals to single community groups are both subsidized. Lease rents are low and any money generated by groups with leases appears to go to the lessees. The Curling Club donates $6,000 annually to contribute to cooling costs, and this arrangement should be formalized in an agreement.

The final budget figures for 2019, for example, show the following operating expenses and revenues for the Township's two main community facilities:

- Dwight Community Centre $40,717 operating expense and -$5,500 revenue
- LOB Community Centre $277,502 operating expense and -$119,500 revenue

Improving services will require more financial resources while limiting reliance on tax increases for consistent funding. Although fees for facility rentals must be competitive with other options in the market, several consultation participants indicated the Township currently has the lowest facility user fees among all the District of Muskoka municipalities. The above-noted discussions recommend options to creating larger income streams for service provision. User fees are another vehicle to consider. As noted in Table 4.1, respondents to both resident surveys supported increases in fees. In view of these considerations, the Township has recently reviewed and adjusted its rates and fees for parks and recreation services. Periodic reviews in future will allow for necessary incremental adjustments in rates and fees over time.

Recommendations:

SD 4. Investigate the community's interest in establishing a parks foundation, and facilitate its development if there are volunteer leaders/residents who are interested and willing to serve.

SD 5. Develop programs related to revenue generation to help finance parks and recreation services, such as a general donation option with taxes, commemorative bench and tree, and last minute ice.

SD 6. Conduct periodic reviews of rates and fees for parks and recreation services to determine need for incremental adjustments.

4.4 Partnerships, Collaborations and Agreements

4.4.1 Township of Lake of Bays and Trillium Lakelands District School Board

Dwight Outdoor Rink

A memorandum of agreement exists between the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and the Township of Lake of Bays for the maintenance and operation of the Dwight Outdoor Rink, which is on the Irwin Memorial Public School property. The agreement runs from February 2021 to February 2025. Terms of the agreement are summarized below:

- Township leases the rink and area for priority use outside the regular school day and other scheduled school uses.
- Township staff and school Principal coordinate schedule of use outside regular school day, as required, and notify the Township in advance of planned use.
- Township is responsible for all costs related to the maintenance of the rink and rink area, maintains ice surface, and pays for electrical service use.

The facilities section includes recommendations to upgrade the rink/area that is covered by the agreement, which will require amendments to include these improvements in its scope and terms.

Future Collaborations

The Irwin Memorial School property is large and includes a forested area with a trail, a ball diamond and a soccer field. The size of the site, its central location, the recreation amenities it supports and the existing relationship between the Township and the School Board merits considering an expanded agreement to cover the entire outdoor area of the property used for recreation. The intent of this agreement would be to create a community recreation hub in Dwight through shared improvements and use of the site and its facilities. The Township's supply of outdoor recreation facilities does not include ball diamonds or soccer/playing fields. Although there is minimal apparent demand now for these facilities, if it should emerge over the 20-year term of the Strategy an agreement with the School Board that allocates responsibilities for upgrades and ongoing maintenance and shared use could make better use of existing resources - especially if the soccer field was redeveloped as a multi-sport playing field. Other outdoor facilities on the site could include a playground for both school and community use.

An agreement could also encompass use of indoor facilities at the school such as the gym, classrooms, etc. for community programming. The Board has recently updated its Community Use of Schools Procedure (2021)[14], which outlines priority groups, available facilities, time of availability for community use, and fees for use. Community Youth Groups (18 years of age or under on June 30) and Community Centred Groups are second and third priority for rentals, with fees discounted from 50% to 75%. In addition to a fixed $20.00 permit fee, hourly facility rental rates for these groups range from $10.00 to $50.00 depending

14 https://www.tldsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Community-Use-of-Schools-Procedure-BU-2046-AODA-2021.pdf

on time of week and whether it is a classroom or a gym. An additional fee for set-up and take-down time by the custodian is required and added to the fee. Summer evening, weekend and holiday use is subject to additional overtime custodial fees.

While the Procedure offers well discounted hourly rates, it may still be difficult for community-based programmers to afford the cumulative expense of several facility hours, permit fees and custodial costs. Some municipalities negotiate reciprocal use agreements with their respective school boards to reduce the cost of access to school facilities for community organizations. The Township of Lake of Bays could consult with the Board to determine its interest in reciprocal use of the Irwin Memorial School gym/classrooms in recognition of school use of the skating rink, particularly in view of recommended improvements to accommodate year-round activity. While custodial fees would still apply to use, it would reduce the overall cost of access.

Recommendations:

SD 7. Amend the Township/School Board agreement for Dwight Outdoor Rink to include any upgrades/improvements the rink and area undergoes.

SD 8. Consider the future need/ opportunity to extend the agreement to cover the entire outdoor area of the school property used for recreation.

SD 9. Consult with the School Board about the possibility of a reciprocal use agreement for access to Irwin Memorial Public School classrooms and gym.

4.4.2 Dorset Pavilion and Community Park

The Township of Lake of Bays leases Dorset Pavilion and Community Park in the Township of Algonquin Highlands from a private landowner, and is responsible for maintenance, repair and upkeep of the park. The lease was recently renewed for a period of ten years, to expire in July 2031.

This lease requires the Township to invest in assets it does not control, and to which there is no guarantee of continued access in the long term. Moreover, since the park is not located within the municipality's boundaries, adding it to Township-owned parks properties at some point in the future is very unlikely. While this type of arrangement might be appropriate if it was the only way to provide a park to area residents, this is not the case in Dorset where the Lions Centennial Park is nearby and provides sufficient park space, facilities and amenities for this area of the Township.

As the Strategy indicates, there is much work to be done on parks and recreation services within the Township itself. In the interests of focusing on this work and directing investment to Township-owned assets, Lake of Bays should withdraw from the Dorset Pavilion and Community Park lease. Although the lease has only recently been renewed, there is a clause stating, "The Lessor or the Lessee may, notwithstanding anything herein contained, whenever it deems necessary or appropriate in the public interest to do so, terminate this agreement upon six (6) months' written notice to the other party subject to this agreement, by prepaid registered mail addressed to the address, shown in this Agreement."

If the Dorset community is interested in retaining the Park, the potential for the Township of Algonquin Highlands to assume the lease should be investigated. If the Park is retired, structures and amenities that can be moved should be relocated to other parks.

Recommendations:

SD 10. Terminate the Dorset Pavilion and Community Park lease and, if the community is interested in retaining the Park, investigate the potential for Algonquin Highlands to assume the lease.

4.4.3 Agreements with Township of Algonquin Highlands

The community of Dorset is bi-sected by the Townships of Lake of Bays and Algonquin Highlands. Residents of this community and its environs live in both municipalities. Lakes and trails also cross municipal boundaries, to which certain agreements apply. The following relates to waterways:

- Haliburton Highlands Water Trails: portions of these backcountry canoe routes, which span three municipalities, are in Lake of Bays. Algonquin Highlands manages these through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) portions are in Lake of Bays – have Memorandum of that allows the Township to maintain the trails, charge user fees, and enforce by-laws

The following discusses the potential for future collaboration in the Dorset Recreation Centre and reviews existing joint responsibilities of the Townships for Dorset Lions Centennial Park, with a view to potential improvements.

Dorset Recreation Centre

The Dorset Recreation Centre is located in the Township of Algonquin Highlands. It comprises an air-conditioned squash court, weight and fitness room, meeting rooms, two kitchens, showers and a gymnasium equipped with volleyball, basketball, floor hockey and pickleball equipment.

The Recreation Centre has been closed for approximately two years since mould was discovered in the building. Work to address this problem is going ahead and the Township of Algonquin Highlands anticipates reopening in late 2023. The total cost for the work is estimated at $900,000, and includes other upgrades (insulation, waterproofing, pandemic-related provincial directives on ventilation) with $100,000 funding coming from the Canada Infrastructure Grant for the ventilation portion.

This project presents an opportunity for both municipalities to benefit from joint investment. The Dorset Recreation Centre provides facilities that are not currently available in Lake of Bays and could continue to provide access to additional recreation opportunities to Township residents including a squash court, weight and fitness room, showers and a gymnasium equipped with volleyball, basketball, floor hockey and pickleball equipment. At the same time, Algonquin Highlands would benefit from financial contributions to repair/upgrade or operate the Centre.

A capital contribution to the work from Lake of Bays could be made in exchange for guaranteed access for its residents on the same terms as those of Algonquin Highlands for a period reflecting the amount of the contribution. Alternatively, annual contributions to operating costs could be made under the same terms but for shorter agreement periods. Of the two options, the latter would be more flexible in application and possible future changes. A formal agreement related to the Recreation Centre could prove beneficial to both parties. Discussion with Algonquin Highlands indicated interest in this possibility as well as working with Lake of Bays in programming the Centre and park to deliver coordinated, jointly promoted services.

2009 Shared Services Agreement

The 2009 Shared Use Agreement between Lake of Bays and Algonquin Highlands Townships covers Dorset Lions Centennial Park, Ravens Landing, Paint Lake Pioneer Cemetery, Dorset Heritage Museum and the Community Policing Building.

Dorset Lions Centennial Park is located in Lake of Bays, and comprises land that was donated to Lake of Bays and Algonquin Highlands Townships to serve both communities. It is jointly owned and governed by a 2009 Shared Services Agreement between the two municipalities that stipulates Algonquin Highlands is responsible for maintenance of the parks and its amenities, and Lake of Bays contributes 50% of costs associated with the rink only. The park and its facilities should be split evenly between Algonquin Highlands and Lake of Bays asset management programs.

Many of the park's existing amenities have been contributed by the community. In the survey conducted for the Strategy, the Dorset Lions Club noted interest in installing a bocce court and a beach volleyball court in the park to increase its attractiveness to a broader demographic. The potential to locate these facilities here is discussed in the parks section of the Strategy. The addition of amenities to this park would increase maintenance requirements.

A simplified agreement could assign responsibility for both capital and operating costs, and ideally streamline budgeting and asset management for both partners. A renewed agreement could be considered by Lake of Bays. In any event, the rules around day-to-day park operations should be reviewed and clarified to ensure consistency in terms of by-law application/enforcement and procedures. This would apply to both internal responsibilities and the process whereby community groups propose intiatives for the park. Currently, volunteer groups must approach both Township Councils separately for approvals under different governance requirements. This duplicates work for volunteers and staff, and may result in no approval where rules conflict. This might be addressed through the joint development and approval of a park specific by-law, including process-related steps. This intiative would also direct community contirubtions for park development at specific sites to achieving the objectives of the Master Plan.

Recommendation:

SD 11. Review any and all current agreements between the Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands regarding recreation and parks assets that may be used by residents of both municipalities.

4.4.4 Indigenous Communities

The area in and around Lake of Bays and the Oxtongue River has Indigenous significance. Muskoka is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg, which includes the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. The Huron-Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Nations also walked on this territory over time. According to the Ontario Heritage Trust, "The area that is now Dorset was a special, spiritual place abundant in natural resources. For thousands of years the Anishinaabeg set up small camps here harvesting maple syrup and birch bark, fishing and trading in the spring and summer, and hunting and trapping during the fall and winter."[15]

The rich Indigenous history of Lake of Bays should be highlighted and shared with locals and visitors alike. The Township has an opportunity to celebrate, honour and integrate this culture and heritage through placemaking and placekeeping. Placemaking is an international movement, defined by the Project for Public Spaces as the following:

"[P]lacemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value . . . Placemaking pays close attention to the myriad ways in which the physical, social, ecological, cultural, and even spiritual qualities of a place are intimately intertwined, and

15 https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/plaques/anishinaabeg-at-lake-of-bays-the#:~:text=A%20water%2Dbased%20people%2C%20the,place%20abundant%20in%20natural%20resources

we continue to be inspired by the visionary placemakers who have worked to promote this vision for generations."[16]

The concept of placemaking has its roots in early human settlements where symbols/icons were used to represent community (e.g., totem, Inuksuk) and shared stewardship. Today's parks, trails, open spaces and public art continue these stories of place.

Placekeeping focuses on the "long-term maintenance and management of public spaces" through quality partnerships, participation and governance.[17] In comparison to placemaking, placekeeping adopts a more active role, promoting stewardship and care, "prioritiz[ing] ecological, historical and cultural relationships."[18] Initiatives rooted in placekeeping present opportunities to co-design with Indigenous communities through creative engagement, "address[ing] Indigenous worldviews, ways of knowing and methodologies that can reveal the local narratives at the heart of place... and shape a holistic environment that is meaningful." [19]

The Township of Lake of Bays actively shares truth and reconciliation initiatives on social media and recently created video content to highlight historic portage routes in the area. There is opportunity to further build relationships with local First Nations communities and integrate Indigenous traditions, knowledge and practices with recreation and placemaking. This may include art, events, activities, tours/walks, smudging ceremonies, sharing circles, informational plaques, outdoor education, etc. A good resource is the Civic-Indigenous Placekeeping and Partnership Building Toolkit, written by Tanya Chung-Tiam-Fook for Evergreen and Future Cities Canada.

When consulting with Indigenous communities, the Township should maintain a Nation-to-Nation/government-to-government approach that acknowledges Indigenous self-governance.

Recommendation:

SD 12. Work with local Indigenous groups to amplify and improve knowledge of historical significance.

16 Source: "What Is Placemaking?" Project for Public Spaces, 2007, https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking

17 Dempsey, N. & Burton, M. (2011). Defining place-keeping: The long-term management of public spaces. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening 11(1), doi: 10.1016/j.ufug.2011.09.005.

18 https://www.evergreen.ca/blog/entry/through-an-indigenous-lens-a-shift-from-placemaking-to-placekeeping/

19 Soland, P. (2020, May 20). Placekeeping. Council for Canadian Urbanism. Retrieved from https://www.canu.ca/post/placekeeping

4.5 Program Development and Delivery

Recreation programs and events are an important contributor to health, well-being and quality of life. They also play a key role in fostering social cohesion and a sense of community among residents, local organizations, government, businesses and visitors. Indeed, the Lake of Bays Official Plan speaks directly to the importance of healthy communities where residents of all ages and abilities "have access to the services and conditions that contribute to achieving physical, mental, environmental and economic health" (C.80). The Township supports a healthy and sustainable community through "offering recreational programs and accessible recreation facilities for all age groups" (C.82c).

This section addresses the need for new and/or improved recreation programs and activities in Lake of Bays. These encompass both structured/organized activities as well as unstructured/self-directed activities, including sport/physical activity, non-sport, arts, culture/heritage, general interest, social, well-being and nature-based activities.

4.5.1 Outdoor Recreation Activities

As described in section 2.0, outdoor recreation and learning is an emerging trend in communities and time spent in nature has many proven positive outcomes for physical and emotional wellbeing. From the COVID-19 pandemic there has emerged an even greater appreciation for time spent outdoors in the natural environment: a cross-country survey by Park People showed that appreciation for parks and green spaces increased over the pandemic and Canadians want to see expansion of parks-based community programming and events.

However, the need to make use of existing assets and resources – to encourage more residents and visitors to use parks and facilities – has also been apparent. These public spaces have the potential to serve all age groups. The pandemic is not over, so it is not yet possible to know if the increase in park and trail use will be permanent, but it is reasonable to expect that many people have developed new interests in spending time outdoors, and these interests will remain high. Coupled with increased awareness and concern about climate change, it is likely that interest in outdoor programs will continue to rise as people, particularly youth, seek to reconnect with nature and obtain a better understanding of ecology and the environment.

Water-Based Activities

The Township should encourage the advancement and promotion of water-based activities (e.g., canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, lake tours, fishing, ice fishing, sailing, children's beach/water safety) at existing public beaches and water access areas. Among a list of programming options, online survey participants indicated the greatest interest in provision of new water-based activities.

Canoe, kayak, seadoo, powerboat and stand-up paddleboard rentals are currently available at Robinsons Marina and Powersports in Dorset and at Baysville Marina in Baysville. Additionally, rentals are located in Huntsville and just east of Dwight on Oxtongue Lake. The Township could contact these local providers to provide equipment at 1-2 key waterfront locations (e.g., Dwight Beach, Norway Park) through a seasonal agreement. The Township's partnerships with local Indigenous groups (see section 4.4.4) could also lead to co-development and delivery of water- and nature-based activities in the long term.

Swimming Instruction

Community consultation revealed a demand for swimming lessons in Lake of Bays. Municipal interviews indicated this was a popular activity among both permanent and seasonal residents in the past, and participants in the Households with Young Children Questionnaire also signalled their interest. The Township should explore reinstituting swimming lessons in the warmer months. It is recommended these take place at Dwight Beach and/or Norway Park (following shoreline restoration completion) given the shallow water and proximity to parking found at both sites.

Staff have flagged concerns about securing staff for swimming lessons. This challenge is not unique to Lake of Bays; municipalities across Canada[20] and worldwide[21] are experiencing aquatics instructor shortages.

20 https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/lifeguards-swimming-lessons-shortage-1.6519453

21 https://slate.com/business/2022/06/swim-lessons-waitlists-pools-lifeguards.html, https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/swimming-teacher-shortage/, https://scta.org.au/news/swim-teacher-crisis-receives-lifeline-from-jobs-victoria/

These vacancies have been attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in a backlog in employee training as well as the departure of qualified swim staff to other fields. Township staff indicated that retaining swim instructors was difficult even before the pandemic as there is no year-round swimming pool in Lake of Bays for instructor training/mentorship.

To meet community need for swimming lessons, the Township should develop a dedicated strategy for hiring and retaining swim instructors/lifeguards. Methods might include recruiting students at Huntsville High School, Georgian College's Muskoka Campus and cottagers' teens with certification who are spending the summer in Lake of Bays. Providing free or reduced cost training and competitive wages may help attract instructors to these positions.

Trail-Based Programming

Most (64%) of the Township's user groups do not use the existing trail network to deliver programming. As such, these assets remain underutilized and present opportunities for cost-friendly, self-directed and unstructured recreation. The Township should promote all-season outdoor trail-based programming such as guided hikes/interpretive signage focused on local ecology/plant identification, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, backcountry skiing and ATVing. Survey participants in particular were interested in four-season hiking.

ATV rentals are currently available at Back Country Tours in Dwight and snowmobile rentals are available at Baysville Marina in Baysville and Lake of Bays Marina in Dwight. The Township could contact these providers to explore establishing a seasonal agreement to offer rental equipment at 1-2 key locations

such as the public library or exterior lockers close to trailheads. The Township should work with the Lake of Bays ATV Club and active snowmobile clubs (e.g., Algonquin, Happy Wanderers, Tall Pines) to promote trail use for self-directed winter recreation. The Township's partnership with Irwin Memorial Public school (see section 4.4) is also a key opportunity to promote unstructured, self-directed skating, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing on the school property.

"Animating" outdoor programming to attract existing and new users – including vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations – has been identified as a best or "next" practice by leaders. The Township should explore integrating public art installations or culture activities on trails. The self-directed Dorset Heritage walking Tour, developed by the Lake of Bays Heritage Advisory Committee, is an existing example.

Another way to help create excitement and intrigue for trail users is through supporting geocaching recreation. Geocaching is a community-driven, family-friendly activity that can be enjoyed in trails, parks and open spaces. This GPS-aided, treasure hunt-like outdoor activity is facilitated through a number of online platforms. There is already geocaching activity in and around Lake of Bays: currently, the Geocaching mobile app shows there to be approximately 47 geocaches in and around the area. Other Ontario municipalities have supported geocaching as a facet of small-town tourism and recreation; a notable example is the Municipality of Highlands East, which has claimed the title of Canada's best "GeoTour."

To support this self-directed, unstructured trail activity, the Township of Lake of Bays should work with local geocachers to integrate geocaching with the regional trail system, develop a "Geocaching in Lake of Bays" information page on the Township website and ensure that trailheads include geocaching activity icons where suitable.

Recommendations:

SD 13. Promote more water-based activities (e.g., canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding).

SD 14. Reinstitute swimming lessons.

SD 15. Develop a strategy for hiring and retaining swim instructors/lifeguards to support swimming lessons.

SD 16. Promote all-season recreation by expanding outdoor winter activities (e.g., snowshoeing, trail hiking, backcountry skiing, snowmobiling, ATVing).

SD 17. Provide opportunities for self-directed programming and activities on trails/paths.

4.5.2 Indoor Recreation Activities

Although outdoor water-based and winter activities were the top choices for new/expanded active sport/fitness activities among 74 online survey respondents, interest in sports and non-fitness activities also emerged (Table 4 - 3).

Both resident surveys suggested that, in almost all cases, travel between settlement areas to participate in programs/activities of interest is acceptable to half or more of respondents (Table 4 - 4).

One third or less (22% to 33%) of participants in both surveys indicated they would not travel to other communities. Those who were uncertain most often indicated a decision to travel to these locations would depend on the cost of the program.

Collectively, these findings indicate there is potential for Lake of Bays to develop new and/or expand existing programs in several areas using available facilities. New activities should focus on group fitness, arena ice activities, visual arts and wellness programming. Residents' willingness to travel to different locations suggests that certain programs could be concentrated in particular facilities to permit more variety across the Township overall and concentrate registration to make provision more viable. Moreover, the Township may need to further promote existing programs that replicate those respondents are requesting (e.g., curling is available at Baysville Curling and Bocce Club).

The Township can develop indoor programming for the arena floor during ice-out such as tennis, badminton, group fitness, ball hockey, children's games, shuffleboard, bingo, line dancing, arts and crafts, etc. Use of the arena is discussed further in section 5.0.

There is also opportunity to expand arts-based programming, especially in the Township's public spaces such as parks and beaches. Events such as "art in the park," book clubs, speaker series, storytelling and craft clubs can help establish a strong sense of place and community and engage both permanent and seasonal residents.

Recommendation:

SD 18. Expand arts-based programming, especially in Township-owned public spaces.

Table 4 - 3: Interest in Sport and Non-Sport Programming Among Online Survey Respondents

Sport/fitness activity interests (74 respondents)	Non-sport recreation interests (62 respondents)
Group fitness classes (39%)	Wellness programs (70%)
Arena ice activities (38%)	Visual arts (47%)
Court sports (26%)	Artisanal (47%)
Gymnasium sports (24%)	Learning/self-improvement/interest (44%)
Field sports (15%)	Performing arts (32%)
Martial arts (15%)	Social/club activities (32%)
Arena non-ice activities (5%)	Camp programs (21%)
	Seniors' programs (19%)
	Play programs for preschoolers (8%)
	After school programs (4%)

Table 4 - 4: Willingness to Travel to Use Programs by Community

	Online Survey (63 respondents)	Telephone Survey (200 respondents)
Programs located in Dwight	67%	33%
Programs located in Dorset	54%	58%
Programs located in Baysville	50%	63%

4.5.3 Short Duration Programming

Short-duration programming (e.g., workshops, lesson series) is an effective way to help ensure resources are dedicated to activities where there is interest, uptake and success in the Township. This model of programming allows community members to explore different topics; for some, it could be the first step to engaging in an activity that captures their interest. It is ideal for learning new skills and is appealing to many adults, as an ongoing commitment is not required upfront. This approach also makes use of local knowledge and skills and is an opportunity for local artists, artisans, teachers and experts to increase their exposure, share their knowledge, build awareness of their skills and serve a broader market.

By testing out new programs using a "try it" model, the municipality can also gauge community interests in particular areas before dedicating greater resources to long-term programming. If a short-duration program is successful and participants want to engage further, the municipality can then explore opportunities for longer-term extension.

The Township of Lake of Bays can support development of new and diverse activity opportunities with municipal facilitation and support (pending new staff as outlined in section 4.1). These small-scale workshops/ activity series can be led by teachers, leaders and artists in the community (e.g., music lessons, painting classes, drama/improve group). Participants in the focus groups confirmed there is a demand for workshops and classes, and noted the presence of talented artists and musicians in Lake of Bays. Demand expressed in household surveys included wellness programming (e.g., yoga, tai chi) as well as environmental naturalization, wildlife gardening, lake stewardship. Ideally, classes should be accessible to multiple age levels so that youth (aged 13-18), adults and seniors are all welcome.

Following the delivery of each workshop or lesson series, the program should be evaluated to determine its success and community interest in repeated delivery, as well as any potential for expansion to a longer-term structure (e.g., recurring classes, seasonal programming, dedicated facility). Key considerations include community interest (i.e., how many people participated or indicated a desire to participate in that program topic and time of day) and capacity (e.g., availability and expertise of instructors, availability and use of Township facilities).

As discussed in section 4.4, expanding the Township's partnership with Irwin Memorial Public School may also be an opportunity to host expanded recreation programming at the school's indoor and outdoor facilities. Since the Lake of Bays population size makes it challenging to form teams for sports leagues, the Township can engage youth, adults and seasonal residents through pick-up sports such as soccer, baseball and gymnasium sports.

Case Study:

Westboro Brainery in Ottawa is a successful model for this type of short-duration, citizen-led programming delivered with limited municipal resources. Single-session classes up to 3 hours in length are offered at affordable prices ($0-$60) for community members aged 14 years and up, led by local instructors ranging from seasoned professionals and quasi-experts to passionate enthusiasts. Those with little to no teaching experience deliver their first class pro-bono and receive access to a free class by another instructor as compensation. Provided the class is generally well-received and there is interest in additional sessions, future teaching is compensated at an hourly rate.

Classes are typically held at community centres, municipal facilities, music schools, parks, cafés, pubs and churches. Members of the public are encouraged to contribute ideas for new classes and sign up to share their own skills or knowledge. Past classes at the Brainery have included:

- Intro to Crocheting
- The 5 Rs of a Zero Waste Life
- How to Make Seriously Good Pie
- Foraging Fundamentals
- Homeschooling 101
- Bullet Journalling
- Handmade Holiday Cards
- Food and Menu Planning for Summer Camping
- Intro to Improv
- How to Start Your Own Podcast
- Pickling 101
- Bead and Tassel Necklace Workshop
- Calligraphy 101
- Artisan Bread Basics
- Cross Stitch 101
- Henna Art DIY
- Dairy-Free Foods Workshop
- The Art of the Butter Tart
- Gnocchi Workshop
- How to Green Clean Your Home
- Intro to Collage
- Sketching Fundamentals

Modelled on the vision of the Brooklyn Brainery in Brooklyn, New York, the Westboro Brainery is a program initiative of the Dovercourt Recreation Association (DRA), a non-profit, charitable organization formed in 1977. For 35 years, the DRA has managed the Dovercourt Recreation Centre through a service agreement with the City of Ottawa. This fully accessible facility is part of the City's recreation system and serves 15,000 clients each year. The DRA is empowered to select programs that suit the Westboro community's needs and deliver them both at the Centre and in satellite facilities. The DRA is supported by in-kind and cash funding from the City of Ottawa as well as sponsorship from local businesses, government grants, fundraising and partnerships with community groups and volunteers.

Case Study:

Pickup Hub is an app that assists municipalities in organizing pick-up sports games. Residents can view upcoming scheduled games including the location, time, cost, age level and required number of players. After creating an account, participants secure their spot with a credit card via the online payment system. The municipality can schedule games from a few hours to four months in advance. Participants can see the names and number of players who have signed up for a game slot. If the minimum number of players is not reached, the game is cancelled and players are not charged.

The City of Waterloo has successfully used Pickup Hub to deliver adult shinny, basketball, soccer and volleyball as well as youth basketball and ball hockey, all at low costs ranging from $5-$10 per player per game.

Recommendations:

SD 19. Expand supply of non-sports programming by exploring try-it programming models (e.g., pilots, workshops, lesson series, short-duration programs, program packages, drop-ins).

SD 20. Evaluate short-duration activities to measure their success in serving particular markets and to determine any potential for extension as long-term programming.

SD 21. Explore providing pick-up sports through partnership with Irwin Memorial Public School.

4.5.4 Expanded Children's Programming

There is a gap in available recreation programming in the Township for children and youth aged 5 to 19 years. To begin, expanded programming can be delivered through a short-duration, drop-in model (described above) to assess participation and interest levels. Community consultation indicated interest in outdoor play and recreation (e.g., learn to paddle, canoe safety).

The Township's public library has been functioning as a core recreation program provider with activities such as sewing, story time, learning programs, line dancing, trivia nights, a book club and writer's circle. An interview with library staff indicated that pop-up storytime has been held outdoors at Dwight Beach, and there is openness from staff in delivering more children's activities such as programming through the Township's settlement areas or a boat ride with books. The Township should coordinate with the local library to explore delivery of pop-up programming for youth in public spaces, parks and beaches.

Public and stakeholder consultation indicated interest in summer day camp for children. There are existing camps held for kids aged 6 and older by the Lions Club in Baysville and Dorset. The Township should work with the local Lions Clubs to better promote and/or expand children's camp opportunities to meet community demand.

There may be opportunities for the Township's Youth Programming Fund to support expanded programming for children.

Recommendations:

SD 22. Develop additional programs and activities for children and youth aged 5 to 19 years.

SD 23. Work with the Lake of Bays Public Library to deliver additional programming across the Township, particularly for children and youth.

4.6 Policies, Practices and Procedures

4.6.1 Existing Policies

The Township has a number of policies and procedures that support service provision. These are summarized in Table 4 - 5 and discussed below.

Table 4 - 5: Summary of Existing Policies

Policy	Summary Description
Community Grant Program (Sept 14/21)	• The Community Grant Program provides financial assistance to not-for-profit community organizations to support activities or projects that promote: » Arts, Culture & Heritage, » Community Growth & Development, » Environment/Sustainability, » Health & Well-being, or » Recreation • It offers three funding streams: » Sponsorship stream provides up to $500 for community events or regional special events » Fast-track stream provides up to $1,000 for small projects or new ideas with short timelines (including in-kind contributions) » Start-up/Growth stream offers up to $5,000 for new or larger projects (including in-kind contributions) • The policy contains details on project eligibility and funding criteria, application submission, review and project reporting for accountability. • Council determines the amount of funding which will be allocated to the Community Grant Program when considering its annual operating budget. Funds will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. When annual funds are depleted, applications will still be accepted but they will need to be considered by Council.

Table 4-5: Summary of Existing Policies Cont

Policy	Summary Description
Special Events Policy (Feb. 1/14)	• Outlines the policies, procedures and by-laws which an event organizer must abide by in order to receive approval to host a special event in the Township of Lake of Bays on municipally owned property • Defines special events as, but not limited to, a festival, a procession, a march, a drill, a parade or other organized event with relevant listed components • Outlines requirements and procedures to be met in an application to the Township Corporate Services with applicable fees at least 90 days before the event, including: liability insurance and indemnification; use of temporary structures and tents; advertising signs and banners; temporary road closures and proposed traffic control; firework and/or music; noise by-law exemption; food and merchandise vendors; alcohol sales/service; washrooms; garbage and waste disposal • Corporate Services circulates application to other relevant agencies (e.g., Public Health, EMS, OPP) for determination of additional requirements • Baysville Winterfest and Dwight Winter Carnival are granted $2,000 each per year without application, as highly valued long-standing community events
LED Sign and Messaging (July 21/15)	• Purpose of the Light Emitting Diode (LED) sign is to provide government and community information to residents, ratepayers and visitors to the Township of Lake of Bays that serves to inform and enrich the Lake of Bays Community as a whole • Includes procedures to request an electronic message a. Appropriate uses related to recreation b. Community Events, Functions, Celebrations and Appreciation including but not limited to those functions hosted by H.O.L.D. group, other community groups which would pertain to the general public and not a specific group (i.e., Canada Day Fireworks, Church events, seniors events, Dwight Winter Carnival, etc.) c. Government Messages (includes Library) d. Fundraising Events within the Community, provided net proceeds are for charitable purposes, except for Lottery Events

Table 4-5: Summary of Existing Policies Cont

Policy	Summary Description
Sale and Other Disposition of Land Policy and Procedures (Sept 14/21)	• Governs sale and other disposition of land in ownership of The Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays, which may consider the sale and other disposition of land in ownership of The Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays • All sales and other disposition of land are at the sole and absolute discretion of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays • Outlines exclusions and procedures on appraisals, notice, certification, application to acquire
Accessible Formats and Communication Supports (June 29/21)	• Outlines the availability and approach to providing accessible information and communications in response to AODA requirements to remove barriers to services for people with disabilities • Applications for documents in accessible formats are processed by the Accessibility Coordinator
Public Art Policy (Feb 28/12)	• Outlines the process by which the Township of Lake of Bays may either assess and/or acquire pieces of public art for display in municipal owned public spaces through purchase, commission, donation or loan • Includes commentary on encouraging the inclusion of public art in private sector developments

Most of the Township's current policies have been recently developed or updated. The Township should consider including predetermined review periods for each policy (e.g., every five years) to ensure they are regularly revisited to incorporate any necessary changes. By this measure, the Public Art, the LED Sign and Messaging, and the Special Events Policies are due for review.

With respect to the Special Events Policy, there was concern expressed in the community about the complexity of the process for vendors to secure permits for the arts and crafts festival, and that the insurance requirements make viability difficult (see section 4.6.2 for insurance discussion). A more simplified, volunteer-friendly process was suggested along with Township assistance in navigating the application.

With respect to funding policy, which is now documented in the Community Grant Program, the area of arts, culture and heritage emerged several times in consultation as requiring more robust support. The following suggestions were made:

- **Including an annual allocation in Council's budget to fund arts and culture activities, programs and events:** The City of Tucson was provided as an example of municipally designated funds to the arts, where (subject to eligibility requirements) the policy City Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects with high public contact have 1% of their total project budget - namely the planning, design and construction - allocated for public art.[22]
- **Historic Indigenous portage sites:** identifying these on open road allowances to narrate heritage and support paddling activities in the Township

Regarding the first point, the Community Grant Program includes arts, culture and heritage as a general category for all such projects. The annual allocation to the Program is at Council's discretion, and applications can also be made for individual initiatives beyond the annual budgeted amount, which would not align with a fixed amount for arts and culture. In the current policy, all five areas for funding are treated equally in terms of potentially successful applications and interested parties must apply annually for consideration.

In many communities, "arts, culture and heritage" has gained a higher profile in recent years but lags other areas of parks and recreation services in terms of service development. Under the umbrella of arts, culture and heritage there are various service streams that are typically oriented to either residents or visitors - although these are not mutually exclusive markets. Arts include active engagement in visual and performing arts, and participant or audience/spectator involvement. Culture and heritage focus on the historically significant processes that have contributed to a community's unique characteristics and are important to highlight/enhance. An integral part of all heritage work today is uncovering the history of the community's Indigenous roots and telling the story.

Community focused programs in these areas are supplemented by initiatives geared to visitors, especially around culture and heritage. Visitor-related experiences are often tied to self-directed activities. In Lake of Bays, immediately apparent opportunities to develop this aspect of services relate to heritage trails and waterways and, more generally, public art. Services related to visitor attraction can be allocated funding through the economic development budget. The Township, therefore, could consider a distinct stream of funding for arts, culture and heritage initiatives that fall into this category - ideally as a separate program.

The District Municipality of Muskoka's most recent strategic priorities (October 2016) note the following under the heading Economy: "Collaborate with others to support new initiatives or methods that broaden the experiential tourism base in Muskoka including development of the arts and culture, culinary tourism, local food promotion, outdoor adventure, sports, and special event sectors."[23] The District also offers grants for various community projects, which the Township should investigate in terms of potential applicability to intended initiatives.[24]

22 https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/hr/ad/7-01-2.pdf#:~:text=It%20is%20the%20policy%20of%20the%20City%20of,and%20construction

23 https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/council/strategic-priorities.aspx#Economy

24 https://www.engagemuskoka.ca/muskoka-community-grants

Recommendations:

SD 24. Consult with volunteer groups to identify opportunities to simplify/help with the process to meet requirements in delivering special events and/or participating as vendors.

SD 25. Consider a distinct stream of funding for visitor-oriented arts, culture and heritage services that can be allocated funding through the economic development budget.

SD 26. Work with the District of Muskoka to access funding for experiential based tourism initiatives.

SD 27. Include an appropriate predetermined review period (e.g., every five years) in each policy.

4.6.2 New Policies[25]

Facility Allocation Policy: Court and Ice

Facility allocation policies are beneficial to ensuring consistency, fairness and equity in distributing time on facilities where demand exceeds supply. In most cases, 'excess' demand is concentrated in prime time when many users are interested in accessing the same hours. The Township of Lake of Bays could benefit from two such policies for tennis/pickleball courts and arena ice.

As noted in the discussion on tennis/pickleball courts, the rapidly growing popularity of pickleball has created competition for use of the tennis court in Van Seters Park for both activities. Although the Strategy's recommendations include adding to the supply of courts to address demand, the Township should prepare a policy to allocate time on all courts. This is particularly important to managing dual-use facilities. Specific times for tennis and pickleball use should be allocated/scheduled on courts during prime and non-prime time, for both organized (as warranted) and casual activity. Unlike arenas, there is no staff at outdoor facilities to manage use. The policy, therefore, is largely 'self-administered' and can succeed if users are willing to work together and honour their scheduled allocations once they are set at the beginning of the season. As such, it would need to be posted at courts and widely promoted to ensure all users are aware of the policy and its application. Monitoring the use of facilities by activity will confirm demand and provide indicators of need to revise the schedule under the allocation policy.

Although demand for ice may not require an allocation policy in the short-term, the need may emerge as the arena is marketed and use increases and generates competition for available time. An ice allocation policy would require the following general components:

- Duration of ice season (e.g., first week in September to last week in March)[26]
- Definition of prime and non-prime time
- Priority allocation by type of use/user
- Process and timing for submitting annual requests
- Process for distributing ice time, rescheduling, conflicts, etc.
- Ensuring new users have an opportunity to apply and receive consideration

The Township of Lake of Bays' current rates and fees schedule notes hourly ice rates as prime-time (adults $131, minors $121) and non-prime time ($94). There is no associated definition of prime and non-prime time, likely to provide flexibility in application. For marketing purposes, however, the policy should be clear in the application of fees to prime and non-prime times. Given reported use, a reasonable definition of prime time could be 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays, and all day Saturday and Sunday. All other operating hours would fall into the non-prime time category.

25 Interest also emerged in the need for policy to address the growing concern surrounding short-term rentals and the potential impacts on housing affordability in Lake of Bays. This is beyond the scope of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy.

26 The balance of the year would be the arena floor season.

Community Group Affiliation Policy

Seven (64%) of the eleven volunteer organizations indicated interest in additional Township support. Two groups indicated that the Township could not better assist them, and two reported uncertainty in this regard. Table 4 - 6 lists the responses for each area of support listed by the seven groups.

In view of these findings, and anticipating more community-based programming, the Township should consider developing a policy aimed at equity and consistency in municipal assistance provided to volunteer groups. It should be widely promoted to generate awareness of the help that is available. A Community Group Affiliation Policy describes the services available from the Township to registered community groups in providing their program and services.

Table 4 - 6: User Group Interest in Additional Municipal Support

Areas of Interest for Support	% (#) of Groups
Marketing and promotion	86% (6)
Communicating with the municipality	86% (6)
Assistance with funding applications	71% (5)
Volunteer recruitment	57% (4)
Volunteer recognition	57% (4)
Facilitating partnerships among service providers	43% (3)
Fundraising	43% (3)
Insurance (securing, cost, etc.)	29% (2)
Volunteer training	14% (1)
Better facility scheduling	14% (1)

Although not-for-profit community groups or organizations must be registered to receive municipal assistance, registration does not guarantee support. A standard, typically annual, registration/application process for eligible groups interested in municipal assistance "affiliates" them with the municipality and establishes a formal, consistent process for reviewing requests and monitoring policy effectiveness. Municipal staff review the applications and make recommendations to Council for approval. The support available is typically in-kind and predetermined for all affiliated groups, the type and extent of which depends on the capacity of the municipality to provide it. Major funding would continue to be provided separately through the Community Grant Program.

The policy specifies criteria for affiliation and the services available to affiliated groups. Requirements for affiliation include items such as delivering programs and services that align with municipal goals/objectives in parks and recreation as contained in documents such as the Strategy; being an incorporated not-for-profit group operated by a volunteer board or executive committee; ensuring membership/participation in the group is available to all residents in the community; meeting criteria to measure the merit of the group's programs/services (e.g., does not duplicate existing programs/services, fosters physical activity/healthy lifestyles, etc.); the group's primary focus is in Lake of Bays; etc.

While several of the benefits to be considered may already be available to local volunteer groups in Lake of Bays, it may be useful to bring these - and others identified through further consultation on needs - into a single policy. It can be used to provide clarity and consistency in terms of the range of support services available to volunteer groups and what they must do to be eligible to be, and remain, affiliated. Benefits to affiliated groups might include:

- **Marketing and promotion:** distribution of approved promotional materials at municipal facilities and assistance with contacts for the local media
- **Grants and insurance:** assistance from municipality in securing liability insurance, sourcing potential grants, and/or completing applications for non-municipal grant programs (e.g., Ontario Trillium Foundation, private sector, etc.)
- **Volunteer recruitment**: posting volunteer needs for the upcoming program season on the Township's website
- **Volunteer recognition:** an annual, municipally hosted recognition event for all volunteers of affiliated groups
- **Leadership training and development:** course rebates for community volunteer development to a maximum amount/person/course (e.g., $50/year) to a maximum amount per group/organization (e.g., $200/year), provided the course is a core component of the organization/group's mandate, with priority being given to certain courses
- **Facilities and equipment:** free or proportionate discounted fees for use of facilities, spaces, equipment

The manner in which support is provided can also vary. While not precluding assistance to individual groups when needed, support in some areas can be collective. Help with accessing external funding, for example, can include in-house training sessions on writing grant applications.

The details of this policy should be developed in further consultation with volunteer recreation organizations to confirm the type and extent of required assistance to sustain/grow their programs/events, in relation to the Township's capacity to provide it.

Insurance

Some of the groups that organize events in the Township expressed concern about insurance fees and suggested developing a policy to help groups attain and pay for event insurance.

Insurance is an area that can present a considerable obstacle for groups and individuals to deliver services. Insurance is a complex topic and an ongoing issue for Ontario municipalities. Cursory research on this topic shows that as litigation and insurance costs have increased over time, municipalities have been pushed to find ways to reduce expenditures on coverage. Moreover, current legislation in Ontario is based on the concept of joint and several liability, meaning that "if a municipality can be found even 1% responsible for an incident, property taxpayers may be left to pay the entire damage claim."[27] This puts a significant burden on the tax base should the municipality be required to pay a claim, with costs to the individual taxpayer increasing as community size decreases.

The municipal costs of insurance in delivering recreation services can be controlled by managing risk[28], which includes not offering the service. Alternatively, passing the costs of insurance on to the provider lessens municipal expenditures. However, it is difficult for individual providers to carry the costs of coverage, particularly if their services are limited (e.g., two, one-hour programs per week, attendance as a vendor at an annual art show) and the intent is to deliver affordable community programs.

The Township's Finance and Legal Departments would handle investigating options for reducing insurance costs for individual providers. We are aware of an ongoing municipal inquiry elsewhere about blanket coverage for a 'class' of program instructors, the costs of which would be shared among the individuals hired by the municipality as opposed to each instructor having to carry their own policy. Internet research indicates that insurance pools are an alternative to individual corporate policies. There are two municipal insurance pools in Ontario - the Waterloo Region Municipalities Insurance Pool and Durham Municipal Insurance Pool.

27 https://www.las.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/Risk%20Management/LAS~Municipal%20Risk~Jan%202022.pdf

28 Anything a municipality does to help prevent potential harm to people and property falls under risk management.

Recommendations:

SD 28. Designate separate times for tennis and pickleball, organized and casual play, ensuring equitable access to both prime and non-prime hours on courts through an allocation policy.

SD 29. Anticipate the need for an ice allocation policy if/ when demand for use begins to create competition for available time.

SD 30. Develop a Community Group Affiliation Policy to clarify the types of assistance available to all volunteer organizations that meet eligibility criteria.

SD 31. Investigate potential to reduce insurance costs for community groups and instructors providing events and programs.

4.6.3 Other Policy Considerations

Parks and Recreation Ontario's Framework[29] for Recreation Audit Tool references several policy areas for consideration by municipalities. These encompass the need to address concerns regarding affordability, diversity and inclusion. While attention may be paid in practice to some or all of these concerns, interest in formal policy is increasing in practice. Over the term of the Strategy, the Township should consider the need for policy that addresses: affordable access to services, and; diversity and inclusion.

Recommendation:

SD 32. Consider the need for policies that address affordable access, diversity and inclusion.

29 https://www.prontario.org/public/policy/Framework%20Audit%20Tool%20V%201.pdf

4.7 Service Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

4.7.1 Service Planning

Service planning and evaluation is an ongoing process that assists in aligning service provision to community needs through evidence-based decision-making. The initial step to implementing a comprehensive planning process in Lake of Bays will be activating a recreation management software system. As noted above, the management software will provide the basis for planning, and build upon a comprehensive picture of existing assets and services.

As a 20-year Strategy, it will be important to monitor use and demand for services and relate these indicators to facility provision. As the discussions in other sections of the Strategy indicate, there is a need to focus on increasing existing facility use through both marketing and program development. Similarly, forecasted population growth alone is not anticipated to generate sufficient demand to warrant new facilities. In the later years of the Strategy, however, the combined results of growth, service development, and marketing - along with unforeseen changes - may result in changes to facility requirements. This could comprise additions to supply or repurposing existing assets. As noted in the 2013 Capital Asset Review, for example, repurposing may be the long-term preference for the arena following efforts to optimize its use. A comprehensive update of the Strategy, therefore, should be conducted in ten years. By that time, planning and evaluation activities of recommendations will be well established and can contribute to an assessment of need for facility improvements/additions to take the Township to the year 2041.

There are currently many volunteer community groups and other non-municipal agencies/ organizations involved in service provision in the Township. Collectively, these organizations contribute programs and/or events, and financial support for park/infrastructure development. In an indirect service delivery model, community-wide involvement is both necessary and to be encouraged.

Through the new Program Developer/ Coordinator, the Township can take a leadership role in convening/coordinating the various parties in planning future services and the role each will play in implementation. A collective approach to this work can contribute to greater communication and connectivity among all contributors, enhanced awareness of the full 'roster' of assets and services within the Township, and ensuring that needs and potential opportunities are less likely to be overlooked. Planning activities should focus on:

- Verifying community service needs/ demands
- Determining which of these can be addressed
- Detailing the program/service response by area (parks, trails, waterfront areas, facilities, programs, and/or delivery)
- Determining the delivery method and, if appropriate, the organizations to share in provision
- Developing budgets to support the action(s)

Collaborations among participating organizations should emerge in response to specific required actions, which may be continuous or self-limiting, depending on the

initiative. Organizational contributions to an initiative will depend on the specific project and each party's role in its execution.

The number of sessions per year in which all participants should engage can be determined collectively. At least one full-group session per year, however, would be required - and likely supplemented by smaller group meetings throughout the year to deal with specific topics emerging from the collective session or unforeseen issues. Special events, for example, may require separate groups/sessions and include the business community in planning activities.

The first planning activity noted above, "verifying community service needs/ demands," will involve periodic research to clarify program and service needs by age group, content and delivery method. The Strategy's surveys revealed areas of interest that can be used as starting points for further investigation with the community. Those that emerged as most preferred and can be offered most easily should be pursued first. Moreover, programs that can potentially address several areas of interest simultaneously should be considered in the early stages of new service development.

4.7.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing service monitoring and evaluation will also inform planning to address needs as they evolve and to gauge the success of programs, events and services after-the-fact. For programs and services facilitated by the Township, an internal evaluation process will be needed. The Township's new recreation management software can generate information on a variety of variables to use in service planning.

Use of all Township facilities should be tracked, even if other organizations/agencies are responsible for renting or programming them. As appropriate, the following information should be collected and documented for scheduled facilities:

- Where the same facility is used for different types of programs/rentals, each should be tracked separately (e.g., arena ice, arena floor, hall rental/use with kitchen, kitchen rental/use, etc.)
- Hours of prime-time and non-prime time use, which will vary by type of facility
- Description of type of use (e.g., private rental, minor hockey, fitness instruction, etc.)
- Requests for use that cannot be accommodated with available facilities

Monitoring use of non-scheduled facilities (or times which are not scheduled) such as tennis and pickleball courts will help confirm use for different activities and the need for improvements to scheduling or additions to supply. These facilities can be visited on a random, rotating basis throughout the year to record use levels and types. As outdoor facilities are used largely in the summer, this task could be assigned to a student position.

Program and event participation information should also be collected and tracked over time. As appropriate to the intended outcomes of individual programs/events, variables such as registration, attendance, program completion, age(s) of participants and location of residence, seasonal/permanent resident participants, etc., should be documented and used for planning/designing services and to identify trends over time.

The ability to evaluate progress will require annual targets that can be measured. For example, a program objective for an upcoming budget year may be to introduce four new programs in areas of particular interest emerging from the Strategy's consultation. Each new program is essentially a pilot and should be evaluated upon completion to determine future options to continue - with any required adjustments - or discontinue. The results of each year's programming would provide the basis for reporting on outcomes and planning for the upcoming year. In addition to the 'statistics' noted above for collection, the experience of participants and volunteers should be evaluated to identify areas where both can be improved.

While the Township can ensure these types of data are collected for its services and those of organizations that use its facilities, joint planning activities can best be supported by comparable information from participating non-municipal providers. As part of joint planning, all parties should determine how each can contribute to monitoring and evaluating services to be able to make effective decisions.

Many commentators are predicting permanent shifts in the demand for recreation services post-COVID, and the need for municipalities to respond accordingly. The actual implications of the pandemic, however, will only become apparent over time. For example, the expectation that more people will continue to work from home on flexible schedules can be anticipated to translate into greater levels of demand for recreation programs/access to facilities in traditionally non-peak times. Monitoring these factors will contribute to verifying anticipated changes in recreation service needs and requirements to adjust municipal delivery responses to demand.

Parks and Recreation Ontario's Manual entitled Measuring Customer Value and Satisfaction for Parks and Recreation is a practical guide to supporting service evaluation work. As noted in the Manual, it is "intended to enable providers of parks and recreation to easily and consistently assess customer value and related issues. [It] includes a common set of core questions and an enhanced set of questions that can be used by providers to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and services, as well as advice on approaches to administering surveys" (p. 1).[30]

30 https://www.prontario.org/public/training/Measuring%20value.pdf

Recommendations:

SD 33. Institute collaborative program/service planning on a regular basis with other existing and potential providers, including invitations to participate as need or opportunity arises.

SD 34. Institute ongoing service monitoring and evaluation to inform service planning in the areas of facility/space use, programs and events, and participant and volunteer experience.

SD 35. Develop annual planning targets to allow outcomes to be measured and reported.

SD 36. Use new management software to develop comprehensive system-wide data collection to inform ongoing planning/evaluation work.

SD 37. Conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Strategy in ten years.



Baysville Library

5.0 Facilities

5.1 Introduction

Although Lake of Bays is extremely well favoured with natural outdoor assets for self-directed recreation, the supply of indoor facilities and outdoor facilities for scheduled activity is limited and generally underutilized. At the same time, Huntsville and Bracebridge are well supplied with a range of recreation facilities that Lake of Bays residents use and are also home to many local leagues.

Over two-third (67% or 134) of random telephone survey respondents reported using recreation services in the Township of Lake of Bays and area communities as part of organized programs or activities. Of these, 68% go to Bracebridge, 57% go to Baysville, 26% go to Dorset and 17% go to Dwight. Among the 155 respondents to the online survey, a majority (53% or 82) indicated that they or others in their household use recreation services in the Township and/or surrounding communities.

Participants in consultation activities noted that many residents from the Township travel to Huntsville and/or Bracebridge for swimming, hockey, tennis, badminton and to attend sports tournaments, and that a new arena in Bracebridge may attract more use from Lake of Bays. At the same time, there was support for improvements to Township facilities and programming to reduce residents' need to leave Lake of Bays for recreation services.

Among 145 respondents to the online resident survey, 51% (74) indicated they would use additional recreation programs/opportunities if they were provided. A somewhat smaller proportion (42%) were uncertain and 7% (10) reported they would not use them.

Among those indicating interest in new recreation programs/opportunities, those that were most frequently selected from the lists provided, and that require facilities to accommodate organized activity are:

- Sport/fitness activities including outdoor ice activities (43%), group fitness classes (39%), arena ice activities (38%), court sports (26%), gymnasium sports (24%), from a total 74 respondents
- Non-sport activities including wellness programs (69%), visual arts (47%), artisanal (47%), learning / self-improvement / interest (44%), performing arts (32%), from a total 62 respondents

Five of ten groups reported use of indoor or outdoor facilities in neighbouring municipalities to run their programs, activities or events. The reason most frequently cited for this was that the facilities used are closer to most of our participants (100% or five groups), followed by Lake of Bays Township facilities are not available when we need them (one group), and other facilities used can accommodate tournaments or events (one group). Rescheduling Township facilities might address availability relatively easily, while the primary reason of proximity is one that is difficult to influence.

Of 11 user groups, six and four provided information on current facility use within the Township and future need, respectively. These findings are shown in Table 5 - 1. Among these groups, halls, arena ice and kitchens are the most heavily used now for scheduled activity.[31] Arena ice and general program space (collectively) is expected to be needed in future to accommodate growth in program/

31 Does not include waterfront facilities and trails, park amenities, etc. used for self-directed activities, which are discussed elsewhere in the Strategy.

participation. Overall, however, anticipated future need is relatively limited. With the possible exception of access to arena ice in future, which may become more restrictive during prime-time if marketing efforts generate increases in use (see Section 4.1), available facilities should be able to accommodate higher levels of use - especially for activities requiring non-specialized spaces.

Facility needs are addressed under the following headings:

- Lake of Bays Community Centre
- Dwight Community Centre and Library
- Seniors Centres
- Kitchens
- Outdoor Tennis/Pickleball Courts
- Facility Upgrades/Improvements

Table 5 - 1: Use Of, and Need For, Facilities for Group Programs/Activities or Events[32]

Facility	Current Use (total responses from 6 groups)	Future Need (total response from 4 groups)
Hall	4	
Arena Ice	3	2
Kitchen	3	
Arena Floor	1	
Seniors' Centre	1	
Gymnasium	1	
Outdoor Rink	1	
Auditorium		1
Large Multi-Purpose Space		1
Meeting Space		1
Storage		1

32 The Baysville Curling and Bocce Club did not respond to the user group survey, and provided the following information later in the process: Our location is well suited to integration and co-ordination with Township services, being situated beside the existing arena, library and community centre (that being also the same hub as the Baysville Seniors Centre and where the report notes the potential for future facilities such as a splash pad). The Club has a lounge, kitchen and bar (with a liquor license).

5.2 Lake of Bays Community Centre, Baysville

The Community Centre was constructed in 1978 and comprises an arena with a 185' x 85' ice pad (OMHA standard), six change rooms, a referee room, and concession. The seating capacity of the arena is 1,650. The community centre component includes a library, a weight room, meeting room, and a hall with a 249-person capacity, a commercial kitchen, and bar. The Centre is fully accessible with an elevator.

The ice pad is well used from 4:00 pm to 11:00pm from October through March. Use at other times is minimal. Over time, arenas in larger communities in the area - including those in Huntsville, Bracebridge and Gravenhurst - have attracted the greatest share of the market for ice use. Newer, larger facilities combined with the trend to regionalization of hockey leagues has detracted from the use of the Township's single pad arena. The new twin pad facility in Huntsville has been particularly detrimental to use levels at the Community Centre, and a new arena is also being developed in Bracebridge.

During the non-ice season, the pad is used for pickleball, ball hockey and lacrosse. The fitness/workout room is generally well used. The main hall is primarily rented for events. A local fitness instructor is a regular user of the hall, and a percentage contribution of program fees is an important source of revenue for the Township.

The 2013 Capital Asset Review recommended 1) exploring opportunities to increase non-prime time and summer arena floor use to help offset costs, and 2) considering repurposing the arena should ice demand fall lower. To support the first recommendation and the general underuse of facilities, the report suggested developing a marketing plan for all municipal facilities to generate increased use. When the Review was completed, the Township initiated efforts to market its hall facilities, and for weddings specifically. Plans for this work, however, were precluded by COVID when all rentals - and marketing shows to promote facility rentals - were cancelled. The Strategy discusses facility marketing in section 4.1.

Given the findings for the Strategy, the 2013 recommendations are even more relevant. The Township wants to ensure the Centre's future as an important community asset in view of trends in the larger market, and more generally, those that are eroding its role as the focus of community recreation. This trend is not unique to Lake of Bays. Many small municipalities with older arenas that are part of larger 'markets' for recreation services are faced with difficulties in ensuring the future vitality of these spaces as community recreation hubs. The need to 'market' the Centre will be important to sustaining and growing use of its various components. Areas to consider in a coordinated marketing initiative include:

- Focusing on smaller organizations that require ice time - and particularly prime-time ice - and may not be able to access preferred times in larger centres due to high-priority users, may not need access to larger ice pads/higher levels of amenities and/or are not able to afford higher fees for ice time at other area arenas
- Focusing on a segment of users within the larger arena market to make the Baysville Lake of Bays Arena their home base (e.g., girls/women's hockey)
- Promoting the commercial kitchen for rentals outside those associated with social event hall use

- Continuing to market the hall for social events, as noted above, and focusing on developing programs that can be accommodated in this space

Marketing the hall will benefit from upcoming renovations aimed at making it more attractive for rentals. The Township and community fundraising has totaled $41,000 to date, and once $50,000 is reached, a grant application for an equivalent amount will be submitted.

As an older facility, periodic capital investment is required to maintain and extend the life of the Centre's components. Replacing the arena's ice refrigeration system was in the Township's capital budget for 2024. A provincial grant of $500,000, which was received in 2022, moved this work forward to 2023. The upgraded ice plant has extended the life of the arena and provided a more efficient and environmentally friendly operation. The ten-year capital plan shows a total investment of $1,205,900, of which $865,000 was allocated in 2022, $217,000 in 2023, and the balance in 2025.

Future upgrades will also be needed for other components, including the air conditioning system. Additional office space is also needed for staff, which would require reconfiguring the existing office/lobby area. A potential option to achieving this could be to incorporate the concession into the administration space. As concessions become more difficult to operate on a regular basis, municipalities are increasingly looking at other food service options such as more extensive vending machine provision, and vending trucks for major events. As part of this investigation, the feasibility of moving the workout space to the main level, and adding equipment, should also be considered. These areas are increasingly located in open spaces within buildings to visibly promote the service and to "activate" the environment with people doing their workout routines.

Recommendations:

F 1. As part of a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Township's parks and recreation system, market the Lake of Bays Community Centre to establish a niche in serving the area's need for/use of arena and hall facilities.

F 2. As part of future upgrades, consider reconfiguring the existing office/lobby area to provide more administrative space.

F 3. As part of future upgrades, investigate the feasibility of providing an open, larger workout/weight area on the main level.

F 4. Develop programs that are amenable to the spaces available at the Community Centre.

5.3 Dwight Community Centre and Library

The Community Centre was constructed in 1988 and comprises two major facilities: a hall with a 289-person capacity with a commercial kitchen, and bar, and the main library. The Centre is fully accessible.

The 2013 Capital Asset Review included two recommendations for the Centre: 1) expanding storage capacity (for tables and chairs, etc.) 2) expand the Library, as it is nearing capacity. The Library's website notes, "Since

2009, programs have increased by 310% and participation is up 257%. WiFi usage has increased 218% since 2010."

The 2015 Municipal Building Review - Public Use Buildings (Summary Report) proposed three options with respect to the future space needs for two facilities - the Dwight Community Centre and Library and the Municipal Office and Council Chambers. Option 1 recommended no change to the buildings in the short term and to consider Options 2 and 3 in one to five years. Option 2 addressed the Municipal Offices. Option 3 was specific to the Dwight Community Centre and Library and noted,

> "The Library currently relies on the Community Centre facilities for regular operations, but the space layout is not optimal for Library functions. [The report] suggested that reconfiguration and optimization of the building appears feasible, but only with a reduction in the Community Hall's capacity."

An expansion plan for the library was prepared in 2018 but did not go forward as proposed. The library is currently investigating other possible options to meeting its expansion objectives but there are currently no definitive plans. There may be interest in developing a community hub to house a variety of community services in addition to the library (e.g., municipal office space, EMS services, etc.) From a recreation facilities perspective, expansion plans should, at best, look for ways to increase community program space or at least not result in a reduction in hall space/ amenities (e.g., kitchen), which will detract from the limited amount of existing space and its flexibility. At the same time, available information suggests increasing the building footprint will be restricted due to septic, accessibility, and other code-related issues. In view of these factors, the following points should be considered in developing the plans:

- If a two-storey option is advanced, the possibility of housing the library component on two levels would reduce its overall footprint and allow for the retention or possible expansion of the component of the building available for recreation purposes.
- If additional program space is added, it should be designed as multi-purpose for both library and recreation programming (e.g., sprung floor) and located between the library and the hall with access from both areas.
- The need for other designated spaces (e.g., Seniors Facility) should be incorporated within the overall design.
- The design should address the need for additional storage as noted in the 2013 report. Secure storage will also be important to new program uses of the hall/ multi-purpose area.

Including multi-purpose space in future development plans in this manner will likely require an agreement between the Township and the Library for joint development and use of this component of the building.

Recommendations:

F 5. Ensure future plans to expand the Library at Dwight Community Centre retain the Hall or, ideally, add multi-purpose recreation program space in the overall design.

F 6. Consider a joint development and use agreement with the Library for a shared multi-purpose component of the building.

5.4 Seniors' Centres

There are four small seniors' centres in the Township: Baysville Autumn Leaves, Dwight Lakeview, Dorset and Port Cunningham. Each of these centres is governed by a 99-year lease, at $1.00 per year, that will expire in 2099. Operating and capital expenses are paid annually by the municipality to maintain the structures at a reasonable standard. Revenues are retained by the respective seniors' organization, including those that come from rentals to other users. The 2013 Capital Asset Review indicated that, although these centres are important facilities, they are expensive to maintain and operate and are not used to capacity at peak times of the day or seasonally. In the years since 2013 (excluding COVID closures) use of the centres has remained below capacity.

The ten-year capital budget allocates $73,000 to the seniors' centres to 2025. Repairs/ upgrades to Dorset Seniors Centre and Autumn Leaves Seniors Centre have been deferred pending the completion of an Asset Management Plan (see section 5.7). As older buildings, it is recognized the Plan could project significant costs to sustain these buildings over the long term - leading to the need to review investment in conjunction with possible options to better meet the need for seniors' facilities. Regardless of long-term decisions affecting the future of seniors' facilities, there is merit to considering ways to better use these spaces now for recreation programming purposes.

A limited indoor facility supply in the Township points to the need to optimize use of those that are available. Spaces that sit idle also increase net costs to provide them. The Township is bound by the long-term leases it has entered with the four seniors' groups, which largely restricts access to these facilities to these users. At the same time, each building serves a small membership and is not well used. Efforts should be made, therefore, to work with the seniors' groups to make the centres available for other uses, including intergenerational programs, arts, learning, yoga, etc.

Opportunities to move seniors' involvement in service provision in a different direction could also be explored. One of the groups could, for example, operate a community arts centre in its facility under the current lease agreement. Intergenerational programming, led by the seniors' groups, is another possibility. The Baysville Autumn Leaves Centre has a commercial kitchen that could be used for programming outside senior use hours.

Recommendations:

F 7. Notwithstanding the terms of the long-term lease agreements and decisions precipitated by the Asset Management Plan, investigate opportunities to adapt seniors' centres to program for other age groups, including intergenerational activities.

F 8. Investigate opportunities to move seniors' involvement in service provision in different directions under the existing lease agreements.

F 9. Use the commercial kitchen at the Baysville Autumn Leaves Centre for programming outside senior use hours.

5.5 Kitchens

Historically, community centre kitchens have typically been provided as facilities to supplement the use of associated halls and are not used at other times. Increasingly, however, municipalities are also using their kitchens for community programs and for revenue generating purposes during idle periods. There are five commercial kitchens in Township facilities - one at Dwight Community Centre and four in Baysville - that should be considered for this purpose.

A Health Unit certified kitchen can be used for a variety of food, culinary and nutrition programs, as well as projects/activities related to communal and/or commercial use of the kitchen. The Township of North Glengarry has embarked on a rental initiative for food producers. Their website notes:

"Now accepting bookings: The Township of North Glengarry has partnered with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit to launch the new "North Glengarry Community Kitchen" pilot project. This initiative will enable food producers to rent time at the North Glengarry Community Kitchen, located at the Maxville & District Sports Complex (25 Fair Street, Maxville) so that they can produce food items for resale. The cost is $50 per day and food producers are required to have their Food Handlers Certificate and have their recipe validated by the EOHU."[33]

Other provinces appear to be considerably farther ahead in this area. The Government of Manitoba lists approximately 60 locations to, "Rent a local commercial community kitchen to help further develop your food product idea. All these locations have a Food Service Establishment permit issued by Manitoba Health."[34]

Culinary and nutrition programs are other potential uses for community centre kitchens. Culinary programs could be offered by local providers who work in the food sector (e.g., restaurants, bakeries, etc.). Nutrition programs can be developed in consultation with Public Health.

Use of Township kitchens for nutrition/culinary programs or rentals for commercial activities should be monitored separately from that associated with hall rentals for social events. This will allow the municipality to track trends in use levels and as indicators the local market for this type of use, and associated revenues from rentals.

Recommendations:

F 10. Consult with Simcoe Muskoka Public Health Unit to investigate the potential to use the large community centre hall kitchens for community programming and food producer rentals.

F 11. Initiate separate schedule for, and track, use of kitchens for programming and commercial uses.

33 https://www.northglengarry.ca/en/things-to-do/community-kitchens-program.aspx

34 https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/online-resources/community-kitchens-listing.html

5.6 Outdoor Tennis/ Pickleball Courts

The Township currently accommodates indoor pickleball during the summer on the arena floor in Baysville. During the winter, play moves indoors to the Community Centre hall. The Dwight Community Centre hall is used year-round. There is currently one outdoor tennis court in the Township at Van Seters Park in Baysville that also accommodates pickleball. There have been conflicts, however, between tennis and pickleball players over shared use of the court.

Trends show that pickleball participation has been growing exponentially across North America in recent years and appears not to have yet peaked. Pickleball Canada notes, "the number of players across Canada has grown from 6,000 to 60,000 in the past 6 years and the number of courts increased approximately 10 times...Every U.S. state and all Canadian provinces now have pickleball venues. The known places to play total of 6,885 at the end of 2018 represents (sic) an increase of 1,016 or approximately 85 locations per month."[35]

There are a number of factors that will likely support continued growth in pickleball participation, including:

- Its recognition as a legitimate sport, with both recreational and competitive categories
- Play, in terms of rules and physical intensity, is relatively easy
- An all-ages appeal
- National organizational commitment to growing participation
- It can be played year-round indoors and outdoors, with appropriate facilities
- Participants report that it is fun as well as physically beneficial

The experience of other municipalities indicates that pickleball courts are currently among the most requested new facilities in Ontario communities.

Data in Table 5 - 2 from a 2018 study on frequent players[36] show the appeal of tennis to youth and young adults, as well as its potential to engage newcomers to Canada in community sport.

35 https://www.usapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2019-Pickleball-Fact-Sheet.pdf

36 https://www.tenniscanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/04.-Tennis-Participation-Data-and-Statistics-to-Assist-in-Facility-Planning.pdf

Table 5 - 2: Canadians Who Played Tennis at Least Once a Week During the Tennis Season in 2018

Participation Levels					
2,936,000 Canadians, 8% of Canadians					
Breakdown by Gender					
Male: 58%	Female 42%				
Breakdown By Age					
6 to 9	9 to 11	12 to 17	18 to 34	35v to 49	50+
2%	5%	25%	38%	22%	7%
Additional Facts					
67% of participants over 18, have children under 18 at home					
18% were born outside of Canada					

Although court sports did not emerge as activities of high interest in the surveys, Township staff indicate pickleball demand is high in Lake of Bays, based on calls received. This is in keeping with broader trends and suggests the need to improve access to facilities for this sport. At the same time, this should not occur at the expense of tennis facilities, which are also required to meet residents' needs.

A single outdoor court is insufficient to both maintain access for tennis players and accommodate the rapid increase in demand for pickleball - the latter of which is creating animosity between the two types of users at Van Seters. Additional courts are required and the potential to upgrade the Dwight outdoor rink to both provide courts for summer use and enhance the facility for ice-related uses should be investigated.

Assuming the current agreement with the School Board governing the maintenance and operation of the Dwight outdoor rink can be appropriately amended (see section 4.0), the Township can issue an RFP to hire a qualified professional (e.g., landscape architect) to prepare a design and construction drawings for an RFQ to be issued to engage a contractor to do the work based on the approved drawings. Facility-related items to include in the call for proposals include:

- Replacing the grass base with a concrete pad for year-round use, with courts lines or both tennis and pickleball (and flush portable net footings)
- New dasher boards
- A roof to provide shade in summer and to protect the ice from snow and sun in the winter
- A new warming/change hut with storage for needed equipment

A north-south orientation is preferred to minimize sun glare on courts, although this might not be a concern if the rink is roofed. The total play area for a dual court comprising one tennis and four pickleball courts is 120' x 60', which would fit in a north-south orientation on the rink pad (visually estimated to be comparable to a standard outdoor NHL rink of 200' x 85').

This approach represents investment in additional and improved facilities for year-round use. Moreover, the rink is already lit which will maximize available time. It also partially aligns with the 2013 Capital Asset Review recommendation to "develop multi-purpose courts for non-ice season use at existing outdoor rink (Dwight)." When determining locations for pickleball courts, it is also important to consider the distance from surrounding residences. Municipalities are now frequently dealing with noise complaints from residents living near pickleball courts who are irritated by the sound of the paddles hitting the ball. Dwight outdoor rink is not immediately adjacent to residences, which should address this potential concern.

While multi-purpose (or more specifically dual-purpose) courts are becoming the norm now in response to pickleball growth, Lake of Bays has only one tennis court. Retaining Van Seters as a tennis only location will address the current conflicts between users here and ensure the continued availability of one court for tennis exclusively. Alternatively, as suggested in the 2013 Review, the courts in both locations - Dwight and Van Seters could be designated and set up as dual-purpose facilities. At any site that supports dual-use facilities, a court allocation policy will be needed to distribute time between tennis and pickleball. Allocation policy is discussed in Section 4.6.2

Monitoring the use of facilities by activity will be important to confirming demand, and determining the need to either adjust scheduling to equitably accommodate both types of use or to add courts to supply. The Van Seters court should be resurfaced in the short-term, for which the Township has budgeted $30,000. If warranted in the long term, an additional tennis only court could be added at Van Seters Park. Outdoor courts serve both permanent and seasonal residents during peak summer months and, therefore, may reflect a relatively higher level of demand than indoor, winter use facilities.

Beyond these additions/improvements, if more courts are required to meet future demand for pickleball, it is recommended that a four to six court facility be considered for both casual and organized activity. Multiple courts in a single location will enable tournament play, which offers potential to optimize use, support the establishment/ growth of community-based, organized activity, and generate revenues through area tournament hosting.. As noted above, locating pickleball courts should consider the distance from residences to minimize the impact of noise during play.

Recommendations:

F 12. Upon amendments to the agreement with the School Board, issue an RFP to redevelop the rink through upgrades, the addition of a concrete pad for pickleball/ tennis courts, a roof to protect the rink/courts from sun/snow throughout the year, and a new change hut/storage shed.

F 13. Resurface the Van Seters tennis court.

F 14. Once pickleball courts are available, designate the Van Seters court exclusively for tennis, and if demand warrants, add another tennis court here.

F 15. Monitor use of both tennis and pickleball courts to confirm demand for additional facilities and/or dual use scheduling of existing courts to equitably accommodate both uses.

F 16. If required over the long-term, develop a four to six-court pickleball court facility for casual and organized activity, considering the higher number of courts to be able to accommodate tournament play, and a location removed from residential areas.

5.7 Facility Upgrades/ Improvements

5.7.1 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Township of Lake of Bays Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2018-2023, includes initiatives to become a barrier-free community. It reflects a commitment to create a community free of physical, attitudinal, and social barriers by the year 2024. The Design of Public Spaces Standard is most relevant to physical infrastructure for recreation. Priorities projects for 2021 to 2023 under this Standard include:

- Completed 2021: Zoning By-Law amended to regulate number of accessible parking spots throughout the Township.
- Completed in 2022:
  - » Purchase 2-3 additional accessible portable toilets
  - » Install an automatic public access door for the Dwight Community Centre
  - » Install new accessible toilets (24" in height) at the Dwight Community Centre
  - » Install a ramp at the Tourism Booth at the Municipal Office.
- Planned completion 2023:
  - » Dependent on grant opportunities – possible proposal for a Mobi mat at Dwight Beach
  - » Paved pathway to the gazebo at the Municipal Office as a meeting area for staff and the public.

» Continue efforts to review buildings and properties to identify and improve accessibility

The Township, through its Accessibility Working Group, monitors and evaluates accessibility initiatives and changes to applicable legislation and/or regulations. Changes to policies, plans and initiatives are incorporated, as required. The current Plan will be updated in 2023 to cover additional required improvements/upgrades to achieve AODA accessibility standards.

5.7.2 Asset Management Plan (AMP)

The Township is currently preparing a comprehensive Asset Management Plan to "assist the Township in making the best possible decisions regarding the building, operating, maintaining, renewing, replacing and disposing of infrastructure assets" (RFP, p.5).

All indoor recreation facilities will be included in the Plan, which will address the following: current levels of service, analysis of asset inventory, performance levels, lifecycle activities and costs to maintain current levels of service and impacts of growth on current service levels. The Plan will consider the same factors with respect to proposed levels of service and will provide a supporting ten-year financial strategy. The costs associated with managing Township recreation assets that are determined by the Plan will be in addition to those identified in the Strategy.

Depending on the current condition of the buildings assessed, and the anticipated costs to upgrade, repair and maintain (or increase) levels of service over the long-term, the AMP may point to merit in decommissioning facilities. In cases where this is determined to be the preferred direction, future plans to develop new facilities (e.g., Library expansion) should incorporate space needs that may be displaced by facility retirement. Leases for the seniors' centres stipulate this consideration should the buildings be removed from facility supply.

Recommendations:

F 17. Continue to implement AODA improvements/upgrades as itemized in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2018-2023) and update the Plan for the period beyond 2023.

F 18. Incorporate the conclusions and recommendations of the Asset Management Plan for recreation facilities in planning and budgeting processes.

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6.0 Parks, Open Space, Water Access Points, and Trails

6.1 Introduction

The Lake of Bays Official Plan is clear on the importance of parks, open space, trails, and water access in the Township:

> "Open Space in its broadest sense includes not only active and passive parkland and recreational trails, but also water corridors and access points to the water, as well as environmentally and culturally important sites and areas. Open space plays an important role in the definition of the character of the Township, the preservation of the landscape and environment, and it also contributes to tourism and adds to the quality of life for the residents of the Township. Public access to the water is particularly important in providing the opportunity to share this public resource. Such access points should be clearly identified to avoid trespass situations on private property." (vC.26)

The approach to this assessment is to reflect the Township's priorities of protecting, improving, and celebrating the local natural resources - priorities that have been echoed in other municipal strategies related to culture and economic development, as well as echoed throughout the community consultation process.

In addition to this focus, special attention is also given to the top improvements needed to these spaces as identified in the resident surveys (Table 6 - 1 and Table 6 - 2). The top improvements identified for both parks and waterfronts were the same in both surveys: Picnic tables/seating areas, trees/shade structures, and washrooms/change rooms/ water fountains. Waste receptacles and parking were additional notable mentions.

This section begins with high-level assessments and recommendations that apply to all parks, open spaces, waterfronts and trails:

6.2 Parks and Open Space Classification

6.3 Parks and Open Space Supply and Distribution

6.4 General Parks, Open Space, and Trail Recommendations

Then, recommendations for specific sites are presented in the last section:

6.5 Site-specific Recommendations

Table 6 - 1: Top Improvements Needed to Waterfronts and Parks in Lake of Bays, from the Random Telephone and Online Surveys

Improvement Needed	Random Household Survey Response % (number of respondents)	Online Household Survey Response % (number of respondents)
Picnic tables seating areas	63.3% (74)	65% (130)
Trees/shade structures	60.7% (71)	66% (132)
Washrooms/change rooms	51.3% (60)	59% (118)

Table 6 - 2: Top Improvements Needed to Trails from the Random Telephone and Online Resident Surveys

Online	Telephone
• More/improved trail heads 77.8% (35), • Signage/wayfinding 62.2% (28), • More information about trail system as a whole 60% (27)	• More maintenance 68% (15) • Signage and wayfinding 41% (9) • Better separation of uses and monitoring of said uses 32% (7)

6.2 Parks and Open Space Classification

Park classification systems define the elements of a park, such as uses, service area, size, and provision target. This information helps to understand and plan for the spatial distribution of parks and future parkland requirements, as well as helping to guide future park acquisitions/disposals and development of the overall parks system.

Lake of Bays has a parks classification system outlined in By-law 12-096: By-law to Regulate Public Parks. However, this park classification did provide detail on the reason for assigning parks to categories, and did not outline the above elements. For those reasons, and because there have been many changes in the Township over the past 10 years, we are recommending an updated park classification system with the following four typologies:

- Major Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Parkettes
- Semi/Undeveloped Open Spaces

Table 6 - 2 lists the park classification typologies along with their description, current provision, design and use considerations, and parks assigned to that typology. The current provision is determined using 2021 permanent and seasonal population data (7,540). It should be noted that some parks are assigned to a typology may not presently meet its criteria. For example, some parks may be missing amenities that are necessary to their assigned typology. However, once the park recommendations from this Strategy are completed, all parks should meet the criteria of their typology. Additionally, this proposed parks classification is separate from the land-use designation discussed in the Lake of Bays Official Plan. There will be overlap between types of land uses across all park typologies. In this Strategy, park typologies are defined primarily by size and the presence of parking and washroom facilities - rather than land use.

Table 6 - 3: Park Classification Typologies

Name	Description	Current Provision	Examples of Design, Facility and Amenity Considerations	Parks in this Typology
Major Park	A park used by the whole Township as well as visitors. May host events. Mixture of active and passive uses Generally 1.2 ha in size or greater Can feature a mix of manicured, natural, and hardscape surfacing	11.1 ha per 1,000 people (approx.) (83.5 ha total, most of which is contained at Oxtongue Rapids and Echo Valley)	Should include parking, washrooms, signage, waste receptacles, park sign, and if possible, a water fountain or bottle fill station Amenities can include beaches, ice rinks/loops, facilities for physical activity (e.g., skate parks, tennis and pickleball courts, basketball courts etc.) change room facilities, play equipment, public art, habitat enhancement features, interpretive signage, monuments, and stages/band stands. These parks should be top priority for making accessibility upgrades (e.g., for seating, paths, and play equipment).	**Baysville** • Baysville Riverfront (Riverfront trail, Robertson Parkette, & Grist Mill Parkette) • Baysville Dam Park • Centennial Park • Lake of Bays Community Centre Park • Van Seters Park • Norway Point Park **Dwight** • Dwight Beach • Gouldie Park • Dwight Community Centre Park • Dwight Outdoor Rink • Echo Valley Park • Oxtongue Rapids Park **Dorset** • Dorset Lions Centennial Park

Table 6-3: Park Classification Typologies Continued

Name	Description	Current Provision	Examples of Design, Facility and Amenity Considerations	Parks in this Typology
Neighbourhood Park	A park that mostly, but not exclusively, serves the surrounding community Mixture of active and passive uses Size varies, usually smaller, with less amenities than a major park Usually has open lawn space with naturalized vegetation (or a mix of both), and some hardscape	0.3 ha per 1,000 people (approx) (2.0 ha total)	Should include seating, park sign, and a focal amenity such as a beach or playground Can include exercise equipment, gardens, trails, passive space, lighting, washrooms, parking, water fountain or bottle fill station, habitat enhancement features, interpretive signage	**Baysville** • Heney Lake Park • Arena Beach **Dwight** • South Portage Park **Hillside** • Grassmere/Hillside Beach and Dock **North Portage** • Wolf Bay Beach **Rabbits Bay** • Rabbit's Bay Boat Launch and Park **Dorset** • Cedar Narrows Heritage Park • Colebridge Park and Zach Cole's Playground • Dorset Pavilion and Community Park **Glenmount** • Glenmount Dock

Table 6-3: Park Classification Typologies Continued

Name	Description	Current Provision	Examples of Design, Facility and Amenity Considerations	Parks in this Typology
Parkette	Always passive Usually located at community gateways and major crossroads, or in small remnant urban parcels Size varies, usually smaller than a neighbourhood park Often open lawn or hardscape with gardens	0.08 ha per 1,000 people (approx.) (0.62 total)	Can include gardens, monuments, entry signs, paths, public art, interpretive signage, monuments	• Dorset Parkette* • Marion White Park • Fairy Falls Park • Chimney Park
Semi/ Undeveloped Open Space		2.2 ha per 1000 people (approx.) (16.2 total)		• Glenmount Greenspace • Bigwin Island parcel • Bayview Point Road Parkette

Recommendation:

PT 1. Adopt the Parks Classification System provided in this Strategy.

6.3 Parks and Open Space Supply and Distribution

Park supply and distribution must be considered in Lake of Bays' specific context. Growth is slower and less dense, there are multiple Provincial Parks and other significant recreation areas nearby (e.g., Limberlost, Crown Land, etc.) and many residents already have access to more private recreational space (e.g., large lots, waterfront properties). Therefore, the need for public greenspace is not as pressing from the perspective of access. However, public green spaces and parks can offer residents more than the benefits associated with private outdoor spaces, such as community-building by providing a place for people of all ages to come together, recreate, and socialize. In addition, public parks and trails play an important role in supporting tourism and economic development. The current provision levels in Lake of Bays - a higher amount of major parks, and lower amounts of neighbourhood parks and parkettes, along with over 20 trail routes - makes sense for the community as the parks serve tourism and community building functions more than functioning as the main source of greenspace for residents.

Lake of Bays should continue to invest in improvements to existing parks and trails to make them accessible and appealing to all residents and visitors. The Township should ensure new residential developments incorporate adequate parkland and, when possible, ensure new parks are connected by pedestrian trails or pathways to existing parks, trails and amenities, and that consolidating subdivision parkland to create larger parks is prioritized.

The Township is well supplied with parks in the main settlement areas, as indicated by community consultations , and shown on the maps in Figure 6 - 1 and Figure 6 - 2 . Due to the large geographic area that Lake of Bays spans, the Township has been split into two maps (north and south) in order to facilitate viewing the maps. The numbers are not in sequential order because they are numbered alphabetically by site name, not by settlement area or geographic location. Consultations revealed the desire for a new waterfront park, to ease pressure on existing beaches and support tourism, but no particular area was mentioned. Determining the location and feasibility of such a park is discussed further in section 6.5.

Recommendation:

PT 2. Ensure new residential developments incorporate adequate parkland, and connect to other parks, trails and/or recreation facilities where possible.

Figure 6 - 1: Parks Located in Northern Lake of Bays

Lake of Bays (North) - Parks

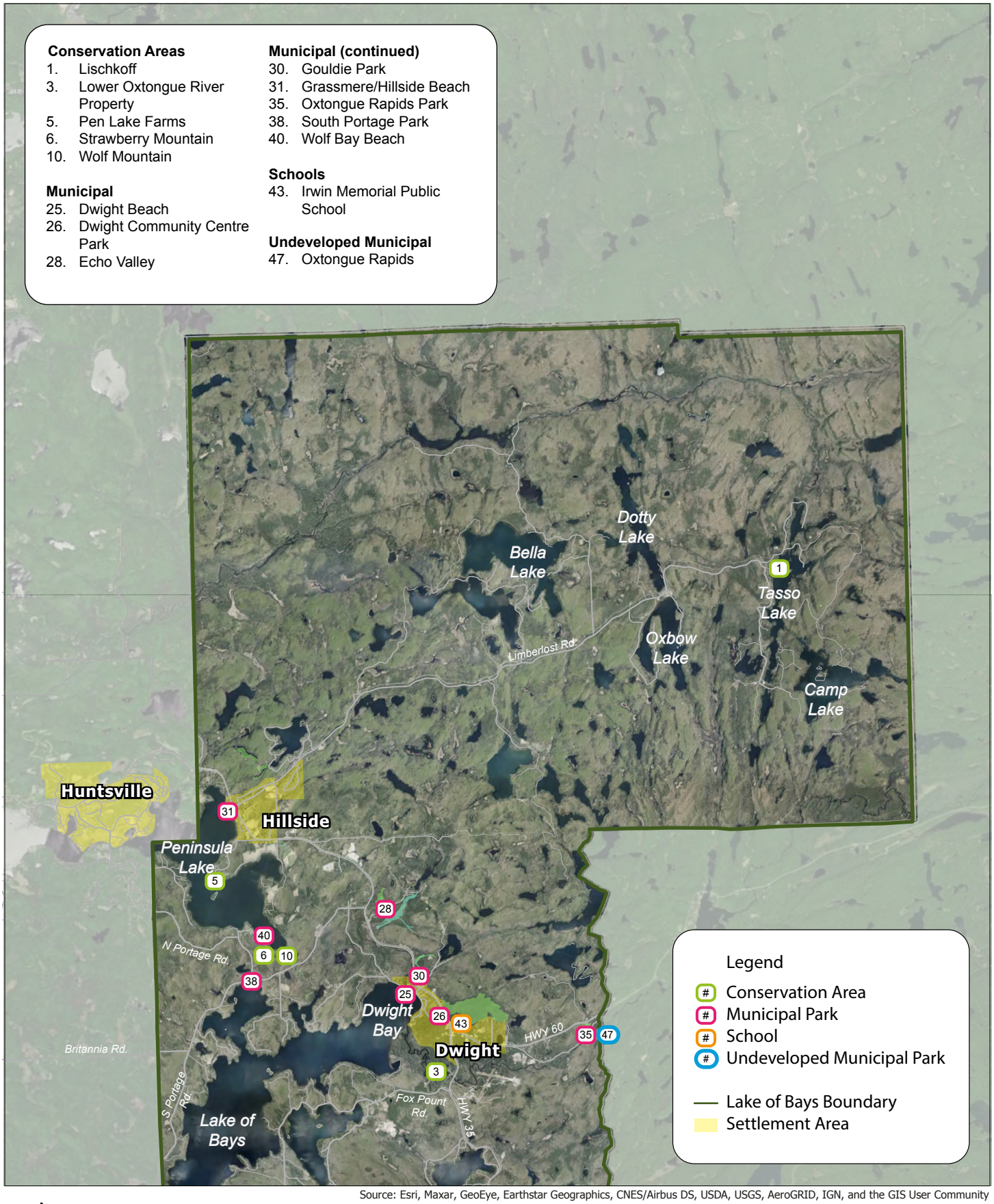
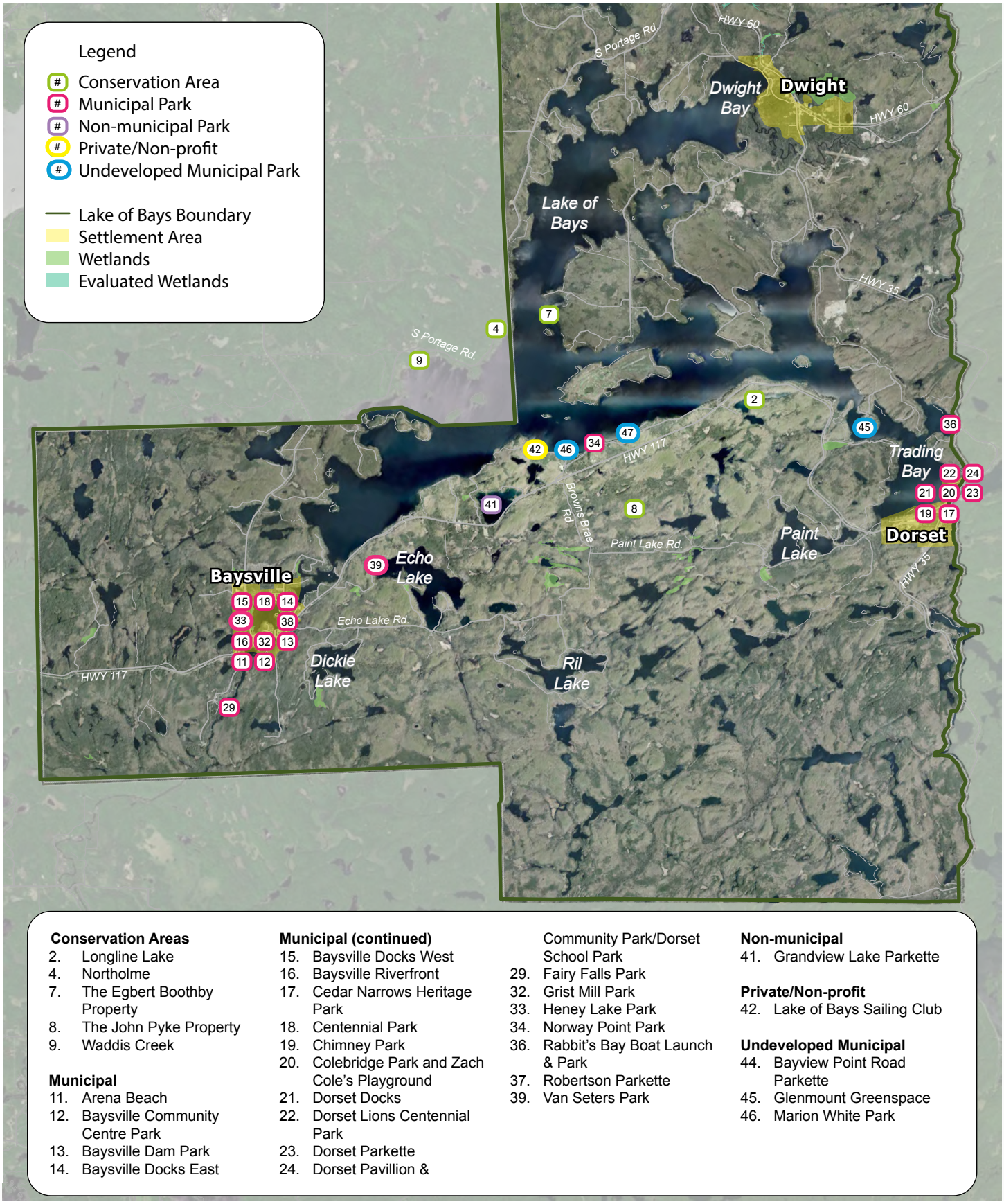


Figure 6 - 2: Parks Located in Southern Lake of Bays

Lake of Bays (South) - Parks



Conservation Areas
2. Longline Lake
4. Northolme
7. The Egbert Boothby Property
8. The John Pyke Property
9. Waddis Creek

Municipal
11. Arena Beach
12. Baysville Community Centre Park
13. Baysville Dam Park
14. Baysville Docks East

Municipal (continued)
15. Baysville Docks West
16. Baysville Riverfront
17. Cedar Narrows Heritage Park
18. Centennial Park
19. Chimney Park
20. Colebridge Park and Zach Cole's Playground
21. Dorset Docks
22. Dorset Lions Centennial Park
23. Dorset Parkette
24. Dorset Pavillion & Community Park/Dorset School Park
29. Fairy Falls Park
32. Grist Mill Park
33. Heney Lake Park
34. Norway Point Park
36. Rabbit's Bay Boat Launch & Park
37. Robertson Parkette
39. Van Seters Park

Non-municipal
41. Grandview Lake Parkette

Private/Non-profit
42. Lake of Bays Sailing Club

Undeveloped Municipal
44. Bayview Point Road Parkette
45. Glenmount Greenspace
46. Marion White Park

Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

N

0 1.75 3.5 7 Kilometers

6.4 General Parks, Open Space, and Trail Recommendations

The following discusses overarching recommendations for all parks, open spaces, and trails in Lake of Bays. The assessment is organized into six topics:

1. Health, safety, and accessibility
2. Signage and wayfinding
3. "Environment-first" park policy
4. Park acquisition/disposal decisions
5. Park beautification program
6. Dock and boat launch strategy
7. Trail Strategy

6.4.1 Health, Safety and Accessibility

Parks need to be upgraded over time to address accessibility. Infrastructure needs to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standard requirements regarding seating (benches and picnic tables), playground equipment, playground safety surface, and pavement surface/path of travel (including tactile warning strips, handrails, and ramps). Safe and accessible paths of travel should be provided through parks with connections to amenities.

Many parks in Lake of Bays do not have an accessible route to amenities (e.g., to seating and to playgrounds). Many benches are not accessible, and should be located on an accessible surface with space for a wheelchair to rest beside the bench and with space behind the bench to allow a caregiver to assist with transitioning from a wheelchair to the bench. Similarly, picnic tables and other types of fixed seating should allow for a wheelchair to sit at the table.

The Township should undertake a detailed accessibility audit, develop accessibility standards, and incorporate changes as part of routine upgrades and repairs and as parks reach end of life cycle. Accessibility standards include:

- Establishing a parks standard for AODA compliant benches, picnic tables, and fixed tables and chairs including an AODA compliant installation detail
- Establishing an AODA compliant playground standard to be implemented in conjunction with playground upgrades:
    - » Poured in place rubber or rubber tile safety/fall surface
    - » Cast in place flush concrete curb around perimeter of playground to retain safety surface and allow for barrier free access
    - » Playground design must meet minimum accessibility requirements as per CAN/CSA Z614-07 Annex H: Children's Playspaces and equipment that are accessible to persons with disabilities

As described in the parks classification table, parks in the 'Major Park" category should be first priority for accessibility upgrades as these parks are most frequented by residents and visitors.

In addition to accessibility upgrades, as a matter of community health and safety, adequate shade needs to be provided in each park, either through tree canopy or a built structure. This is particularly important in playgrounds where caregivers with young children often spend considerable time exposed to the sun. Given the importance of providing shade in parks, shade structures and/or additional tree planting should be incorporated into all parks. Larger shade structures that can be rented for groups/ special events can encourage use of parks and help offset costs of providing shade structures.

Another aspect of safety that was brought to attention during consultations with staff is regarding the practice of jumping off picnic tables into the water. This is not a practice that the Township supports as there is high risk of injury. In order to prevent this activity, the Township can consider permanent or fixed seating in waterfront areas (e.g., affixed to a concrete base, or via a chain to a stable object, etc.).

Recommendations:

PT 3. Complete an accessibility audit.

PT 4. Develop AODA compliant park standards.

PT 5. Make required accessibility upgrades to parks and trails (including playground safety, routes and wayfinding, seating, shade and bicycle parking) as part of ongoing maintenance and upgrades.

6.4.2 Signage and Wayfinding Strategy

As a general rule, signage should be provided at major parks, trail heads, along major routes, water access points, facility entrances, and throughout the sites as needed. Aside from increasing awareness and user experience, signs contribute to building the community's sense of place when consistent, unique signage is used throughout the Township. Lake of Bays should develop a consistent sign design for parks, trails, water access points, and facilities that reflects its brand. Signs should be AODA compliant.

A signage and wayfinding strategy should be developed, which outlines a hierarchy of signs, content, where signs should be located, graphic standards (fonts, colours, icons, etc.), materials and installation details. Where the signs will interface with other jurisdictions, the strategy should be developed in consultation with stakeholders, landowners and public authorities to ensure a coordinated approach. Once the strategy is in place, signs would be fabricated and installed in a phased approach and as part of separate projects and initiatives, many of which are described in this Strategy.

Recommendation:

PT 6. Develop a Township-branded signage and wayfinding strategy for parks, trails, boat launches, facilities, heritage sites and main arterials.

6.4.3 "Environment-first" Park Policy

In recent years natural spaces have become much more attractive to people seeking recreation and physical activity, a trend that was hastened with the restrictions on indoor activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. In some communities this has led to a large influx of visitors looking for more rural/ natural settings, creating concern over the ability of some spaces to support a significant increase in use. While this trend may abate somewhat post-COVID as previous routines are resumed, it is likely that some of these 'undiscovered' places will continue to attract user levels beyond historic levels. Establishing appropriate boundaries around human encroachment on natural ecosystems is essential to avoid causing irreparable harm to the environment we want to experience for our enhanced well-being. Lake of Bays is a place that many people visit for its natural beauty, and as such it would be prudent to develop a policy that outlines the Township's approach to balancing recreation, tourism and environmental health in their public parks. For example the policy can identify priorities for supporting time spent outdoors and in nature, ecologically sensitive areas, protection measures such as visitor limits, restricted periods of access, appropriate and acceptable interventions, park management practices to avoid, etc. There are a variety of sources the Township can consult in developing this policy, for example:

- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015)[36] supports environmental health in parks and recreation services. The Framework includes five goals and priorities, one of which, "connect people and nature", recognizes the need for initiatives that address the health of the natural environment itself.
- EcoHealth Ontario is a research and public policy collaborative made up of professionals in the fields of public health, medicine, education, planning, parks, recreation and conservation, which focuses on the connected and interdependent issues of mental and environmental health. Its vision is: "that everyone benefits from the provision of well- distributed, high quality greenspace, is aware of its contributions to health and well-being, and has access to its benefits."[37] EcoHealth reports (e.g., A Conceptual Framework to Understand the Business Case for EcoHealth in Ontario; Conserving Biodiversity: A Public Health Imperative, and Leveraging the Benefits of Green Space) and tools (e.g., Communicating EcoHealth), can help municipalities achieve their own ecohealth related goals.
- The District of Muskoka's A New Leaf: Climate Change Strategy contains locally relevant data, actions, and directions for mitigating the effects of climate change and protecting the local environment.

This policy should be developed with community involvement - perhaps by a committee assembled for this purpose that has representatives from the community, along with staff and Council.

Recommendation:

PT 7. Develop an Environment-first Park Policy.

36 https://www.prontario.org/policy/framework

37 https://www.ecohealthontario.ca/about

6.4.4 Park Acquisition/Disposal Decisions

The Township has some open spaces that are not currently used as parks (or are underused), and a decision needs to be made whether or not the Township can dispose of these parcels, or if they should be held for one reason or another. Figure 6 - 3 provides a decision tree to be used by staff to determine the best course of action for these lands. The Township has a policy for land disposal (By-Law 2021-094 Sale and Other Disposition of Land Policy and Procedures) which outlines the steps to be taken once it is decided to dispose of a parcel. The decision tree would be used before this, to determine if the parcel should be retained or disposed.

On the other hand, there will be opportunities presented to the Township to purchase land for parks and recreation purposes. Figure 6 - 4 provides a decision tree to assist the Township in determining the appropriate course of action in these situations.

Figure 6 - 3: Decision Tree for Parcels of Land Owned by the Township

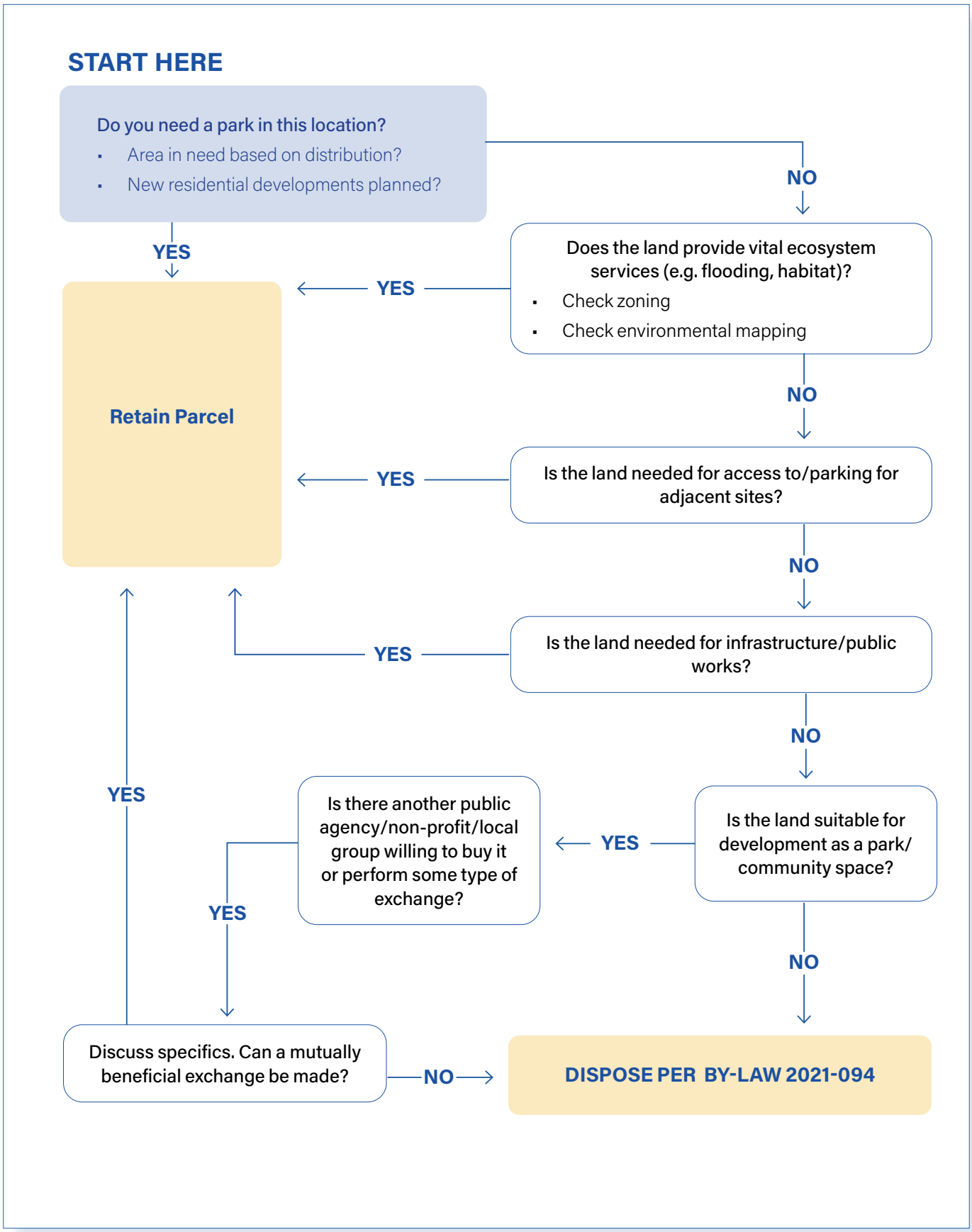
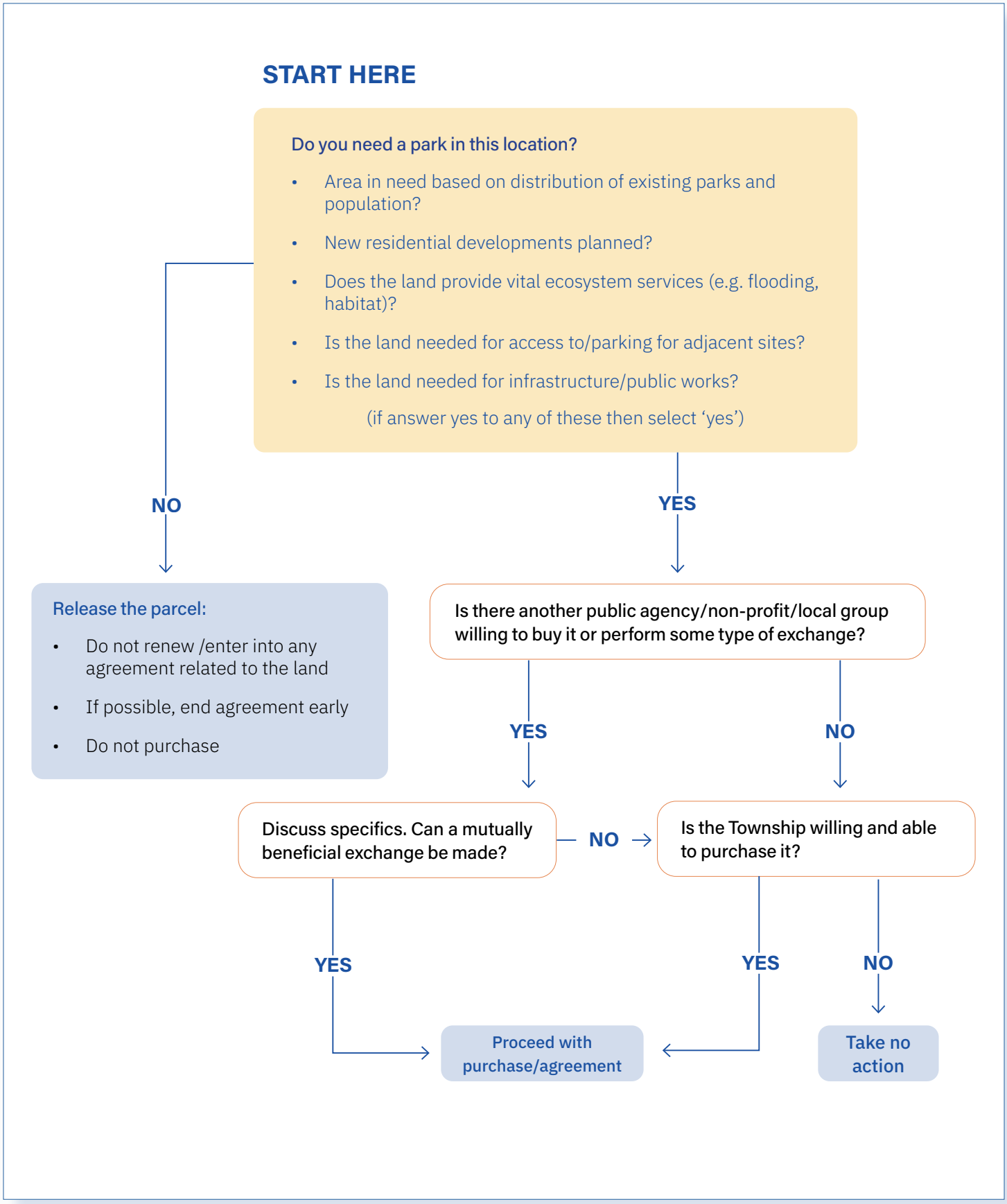


Figure 6 - 4: Decision Tree for Parcels Not Owned by the Township



Recommendation:

PT 8. Use the park disposal/ acquisition trees provided here as necessary to assist with land decisions.

6.4.5 Park Beautification Program

With the emphasis on tourism and the natural environment in Lake of Bays, the quality and visual appeal of park spaces is a priority. While this Strategy contains recommendations for needed improvements and additional amenities for most parks, some parks should be prioritized and beautified beyond the basic standard for their contribution to tourism and economic development. A Park Beautification Program will identify:

- A purpose for the program
- Various standards (e.g., for walkways, lighting, seating, signage, shelters, gardens, etc.)
- A prioritized list of parks that should be part of the program (and rationale for their inclusion)

Lake of Bays has a number of community organizations that contribute to park beautification, and this program provides a way for efforts to be coordinated. It will allow park improvements to be made in a methodical way rather than ad-hoc, and for materials chosen to be cohesive throughout the Township to create a strong sense of place. There are many resources available in the community, and this program can be wholly or partly funded with donations from local groups to a general parks fund, as discussed in the Service Delivery section.

A primary reason for the additional investment being made in these parks is to support tourism and economic development in Lake of Bays, and by extension, District of Muskoka. For this reason, the Township may be able to access funding through the District, or other economic development and tourism-related grants/funding.

In order for the community to be supportive of the program, it is imperative that they are consulted when selecting the materials for the standards, so that those who may donate to this program are pleased with the vision and finished product of the program.

Appendix C contains a draft Park Beautification Program document that staff can use as a starting point for consultations with the community in developing and adopting the final program.

Recommendation:

PT 9. Develop, finalize, and implement the Park Beautification Program provided.

6.4.6 Water Access Point Strategy

There are 24 municipal water access points, ten non-municipal and four private water access points in the Township. Overall, the Township is well served in terms of distribution, with the exception of Peninsula Lake that has only one launch and is used by both Lake of Bays and Huntsville residents.

Overall, the Township's water accesses vary in their size, amenities and conditions. As part of this Strategy, we have provided recommendations for key locations in the Township in section 6.5 Site-specific Recommendations. There are a number of Township-owned water access points that are unsuitable for public use, either as a swimming area, launch, dock or otherwise. The proposed Water Access Strategy, through the inventory and assessment, should identify any parcels to be sold. Revenues from sales should be put towards parks costs, for example, developing a new waterfront park at a preferred location (PT 49).

To ensure the water accesses (whether a launch, dock, or swimming area) are safe and in a state of good repair, a strategy is required to assess, update and enhance the sites on a regular basis. This would include undertaking a detailed assessment of each site, clarifying ownership and responsibilities at each site, identifying required improvements, scheduling the repairs and regular monitoring after improvements are completed. Once ownership and agreements etc. are clarified, the Township can determine a way forward for investments or divestments at each location. We have provided a sample Terms of Reference for a water accesses strategy in Appendix D.

Since many of Lake of Bays' lakes cross into neighbouring municipalities and/or have properties owned by the MNR, collaboration

across municipal boundaries is required. This includes working with the other municipalities in the District of Muskoka, Cottage and Lake Associations, and the Provincial government (e.g. Provincial Parks, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry). Together, boat launches across the region should be standardized in regards to physical design, signage, amenities (including boat washing stations), and messaging related to mitigating environmental impacts. Being a highly visited region, Lake of Bays (and surrounding municipalities) should provide large, clear, educational signage for boaters to protect water quality and the local ecosystem. For example signage could include:

- Regulations regarding boat washing to control the transfer of invasive species between lakes
- Messaging on boater responsibility regarding oil and fuel leaks and the benefits of proper boat maintenance
- Information on the impact of lead sinkers used in fishing on water quality
- Information on boat cleaning practices and use of polluting cleaners

The Township has assisted the Lake of Bays Association in erecting similar signage around the Lake of Bays, and this work should continue, in addition to expanding it to other lakes in the Township.

Another issue the Water Access Strategy should consider is revenue capture - are there any locations that should be pay-per-use for launches, or paid parking? How could it be enforced? There are many examples from other municipalities that could be explored for their suitability in Lake of Bays. Revenues captured could then be used for site maintenance.

Recommendation:

PT 10. Undertake a water access study.

6.4.7 Trail Strategy

There are 21 trails in Lake of Bays, 12 of which are owned by the Township (all were described in more detail in the Background Report). The trails range from paved walking paths/ routes through settlement areas to dirt hiking paths to strictly snowmobile trails. Lake of Bays is located in an area surrounded by an abundance of nature reserves, undeveloped land, and crown land. There is abundant opportunity for Lake of Bays to develop into a trail-based tourism destination, in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

This present Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy contains a number of general trail recommendations (described in section 6.4), as well as recommendations for a number of specific trail sites in section 6.5. The recommendations provide a good starting point and address urgent needs and future opportunities, however a more detailed trail strategy is needed to fully capture the potential of trails (particularly for tourism), and align the various stakeholders.

As a well connected-trail network is a big tourism draw, particularly for snowmobile trails but also for cycling, stakeholders would include neighbouring municipalities with existing or potential trail connections to Lake of Bays (e.g., Huntsville and Algonquin Highlands), and the District of Muskoka. There are also organized groups and volunteers that would be part of the process, for example Lake of Bays Snowmobile Club, Algonquin Snowmobile Club, Huntsville Mountain

What We Heard About Trails:

- Online survey:
  - » 71% (87 respondents) use trails in the Township
  - » Most used trails:
    - – Oxtongue rapids 65.9% (54)
    - – Baysville trail 53.7% (44)
    - – Dwight beach trail 48.8% (40)
- Telephone survey:
  - » 34% (68) use trails in the Township
  - » Most used trails:
    - – Oxtongue rapids 39% (27)
    - – Dwight beach trail 34% (23)
    - – Baysville 30% (20)

Bike Association, Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation, etc. This trail strategy will identify partnerships and alignments between these groups, and clarify responsibilities and contributions for future trail development initiatives.

Another key challenge that the strategy will need to address is how to balance uses in a way that does not overly hinder the economic and tourism benefits of motorized trail use, but that protects the ecological integrity of Lake of Bays and limits excessive noise pollution (as would be described in the Township's 'Environment-first policy' recommended in section 6.4.3). Ideally the trail strategy will identify locations suitable for ATV use, and methods for directing this use to preferred areas (e.g., providing amenities such as ATV wash stations, parking, etc.) while preventing it in unsuitable areas (e.g., using signage, blocking methods, etc.).

At the same time, the strategy needs to consider how many trails are currently accessible to those with mobility challenges, and which trails would be suitable for being developed as accessible routes.

The strategy will also help direct the establishment of new trail connections across the Township as both on- and off-road linkages, trailheads and other associated amenities over the long term. The strategy will provide staff with the guidance and tools necessary to secure these new connections and trailheads as opportunities present themselves through the land development/ subdivision process. Key trail connections supporting the strategy would be secured by requiring developers to provide open space connections.

As part of the Township's approach to enhancing connectivity within settlement areas and providing public access to lakes and trails, public access to road ends and rights of ways should be preserved and, when appropriate, enhanced. This may include using closed rights-of-ways to provide access between streets and access to lakes where roads terminate at a body of water, and to support amenities such as parkettes and small craft launches. As a general rule of thumb, it is recommended that closed rights of ways and road ends not be sold and to remain in public ownership. Only if there is no value in a road end or right-of-way from an access and/or connectivity perspective should it be disposed of and sold to a private interest.

Recommendation:

PT 11. Develop a trail strategy that addresses the items described.

6.4.8 Park and Trails Staff

There are many recommendations in this Strategy that will require additional staff dedicated to parks and trails, for example, increased trail maintenance, expanding trail networks, and maintaining the outdoor ice rinks at Dwight Beach and Baysville Dam Park (in previous years they were only possible because existing staff was diverted from the arenas which were closed due to COVID). This is of course in addition to park staff's regular duties that include park maintenance and grass cutting at the cemeteries as well. All the recommendations that are dependent on additional park and trail staff are indicated by icons in the implementation table in section 7 to easily identify the value of adding this position. To start, one full time position can be added with primary responsibilities being split between ice rink duties in the winter, and trail maintenance in the summer. The Township has had difficulty in recent years attracting staff, in part because of the high cost of living in the area. It is thought that a permanent full time position would be more attractive to potential applicants than seasonal or part-time arrangements. Another option that was presented is to contract out grass cutting in the summer, which currently takes up almost all of staff time in the summer, leaving little time for other forms of maintenance. The Township should undertake a comparative analysis of the cost to hire contractors versus the cost to hire additional summer staff dedicated to grass cutting, and proceed accordingly.

Recommendation:

PT 12. Add one full time staff for parks and trails.

PT 13. Undertake a comparative analysis to determine which is more cost effective - contracting out grass cutting. or hiring additional summer staff - and proceed accordingly.


Baysville Dam Park

6.5 Site-specific Recommendations

6.5.1 Major Parks

Baysville Riverfront Park

Description

The Baysville Riverfront Park comprises a group of connected parks, that for all intents and purposes, function and appear as one park system: Baysville Riverfront Trail, Baysville Docks East and West, Robertson Parkette, and Grist Mill Park. The Park has seen considerable investment from the community for the bandstand, walkways, light standards, seating, signs, and more, and can rightfully be described as a core public space of the Township. As such, given the importance of major parks such as this one for tourism, continued investment from the Township and community should be made to maintain the appearance, quality, and accessibility of this park.

Concerns

- Grist Mill Monument in need of maintenance to remove plant growth and dirt. This may require special care to avoid damaging the monument.
- West Dock pavilion in need of repair or replacement: parts of the pavilion are decaying, and water is pooling underneath, on the concrete dock. The dock may need to be regraded or resurfaced to have the water drain properly.
- The bandstand in Robertson Parkette in need of cleaning and painting

Goals

- Improve accessibility around the site, particularly to bandstand, docks, and historical monuments and signs. This can be achieved through the addition of pathways, ramps, and railings where needed.
- Beautify the site (through the Park Beautification program), and invest in it as a key focal point for the community and visitors
- Add a pathway through Grist Mill Park area going to each monument and historical signage as part of the walking tours in the area

Recommendations:

PT 14. For all intents and purposes (e.g., planning, discussion, and marketing etc.) consider Baysville Riverfront Park, Baysville docks east and west, Robertson Parkette, and Grist Mill Parkette as one site called “Baysville Riverfront Park”.

PT 15. Revitalize Bandstand.

PT 16. Revitalize Grist Mill monument.

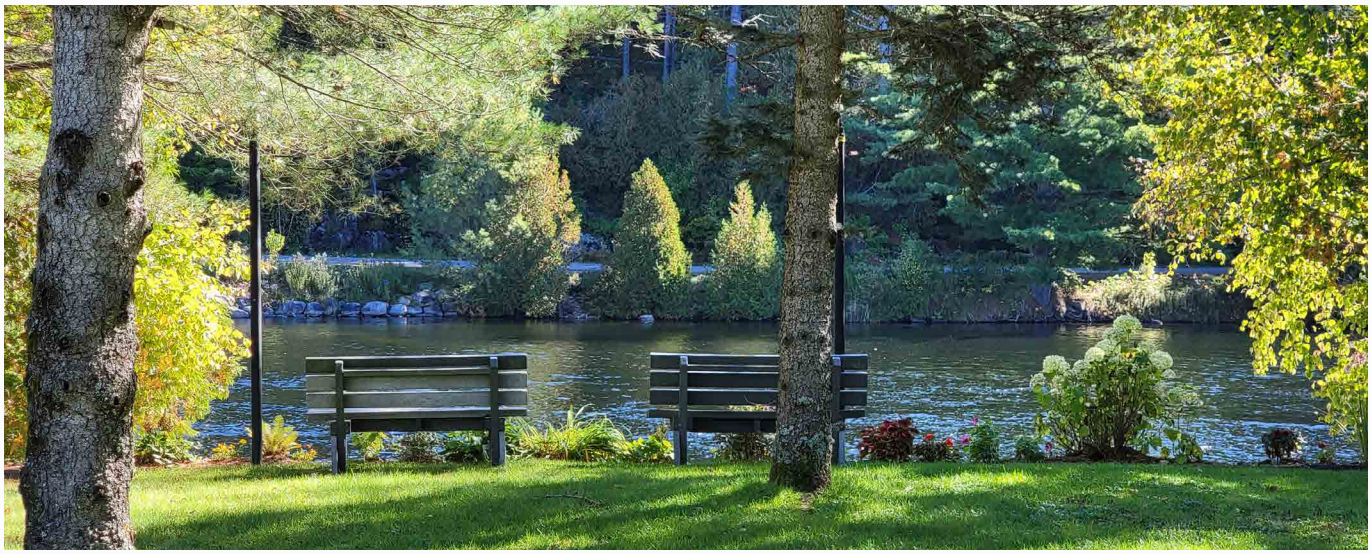
PT 17. Add path through Grist Mill park are, connecting monuments, historical signage, and the Baysville waterfront trail.

PT 18. Both Docks: Increase accessibility to dock area with railing to stairs and, if possible, a ramp to dock area.

PT 19. West Dock: Upgrade or replace pavilion: It would be advised to have an aluminum soffit/ frame to the roof structure to avoid the water damage happening to the roof .

PT 20. West Dock: Improve drainage to dock/pavilion area.







Baysville Dam Park

Description

Being in downtown Baysville, and connected to the Baysville Riverfront Park, **this park is a feature park that should be a priority for future investments**. During COVID, when the indoor arena was closed, the parking lot was flooded to create a skating loop. It was very well received by residents, and operationally was an ideal location as the configuration of the parking lot and riverfront makes it easy to pump water to create the rink. It would be ideal to continue offering this outdoor rink, however, additional staffing may be required and/or may require volunteer support.

Concerns

- Gazebo: the gazebo is small and aging, and the entry and interior are not accessible for users with mobility devices (e.g., currently a picnic table is placed in the gazebo, hampering accessibility and leaving little room for maneuvering)
- Stairs to dock are covered in stones increasing the risk for injury - stones should be removed from this area.

Goals

- Continue to support this park as a key amenity for the community:
  - » This rink was well received and appreciated by residents. The Township should seek ways to continue offering it as long as it is feasible
  - » Increase seating options in the park (particularly around the parking lot to support skating in the winter)
  - » Improve gazebo to accommodate more seating, and make it more accessible
  - » Improve the dock and stairs to the dock to support more, and safer, use

Recommendations:

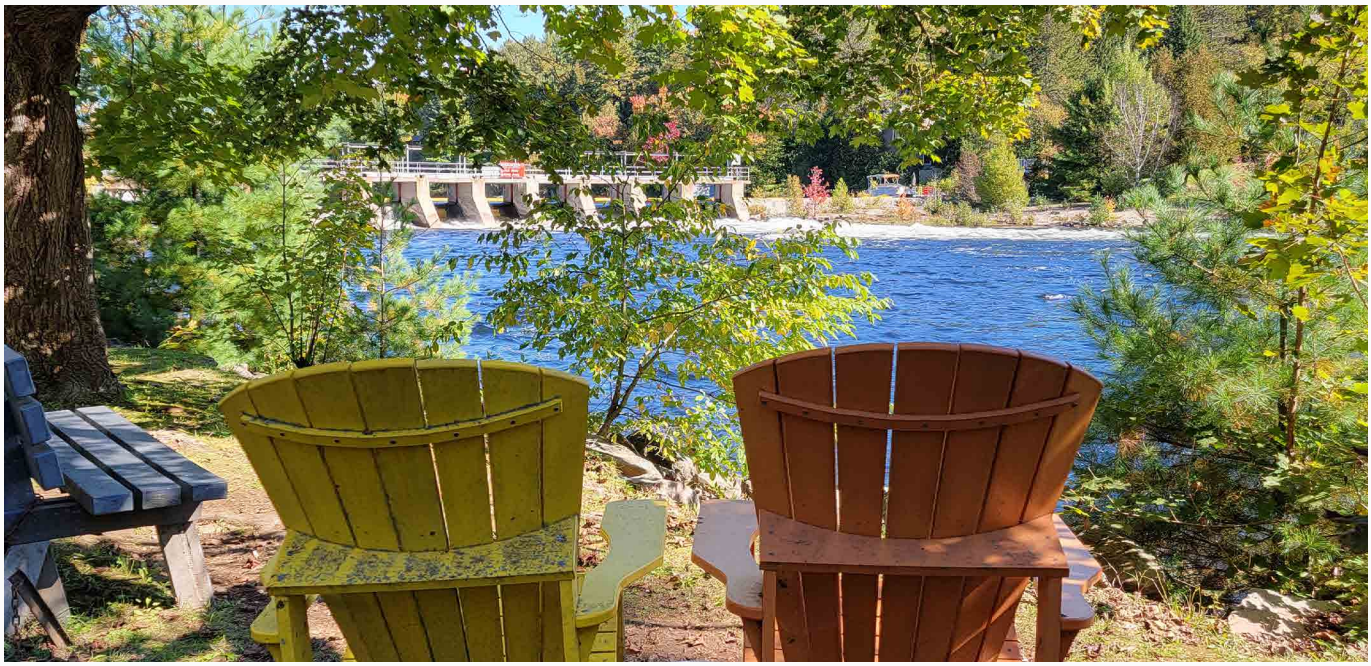
PT 21. Replace/upgrade gazebo and seating: Provide more seating, with ample space surrounding seating for maneuvering. Entries should be designed for easy access to all users and abilities.

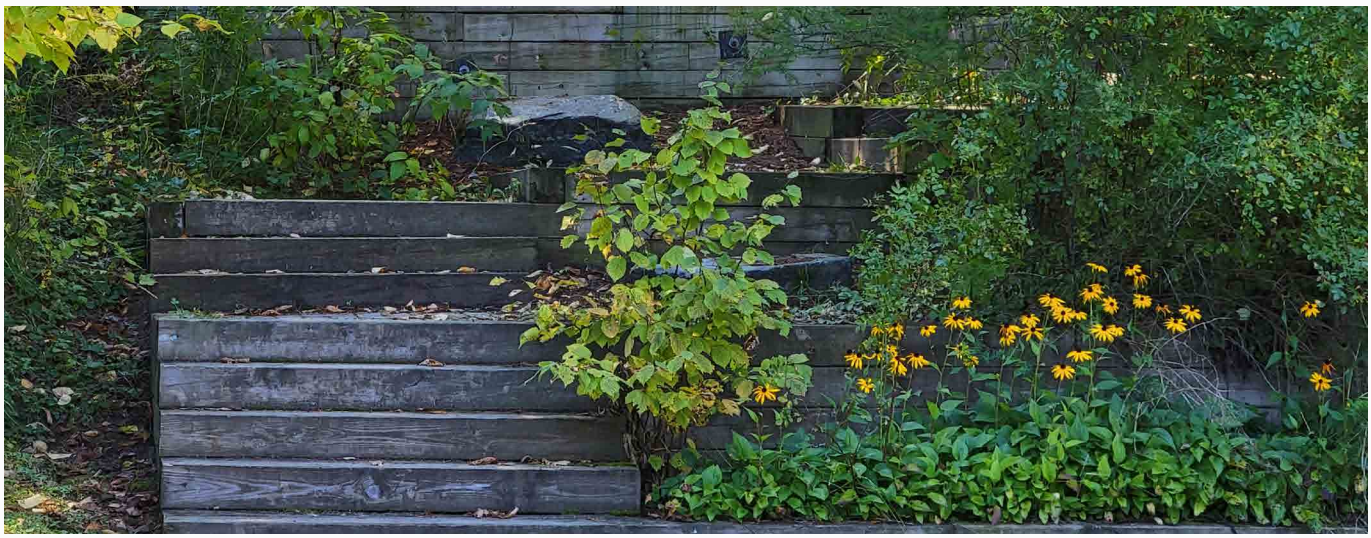
PT 22. Add seating along water's edge, and around ice rink (if present).

PT 23. Replace/improve stairs.

PT 24. Continue to provide an ice rink on the parking lot in winter months.







Lake of Bays Community Centre Park

Description

As the park is surrounding a major facility, Lake of Bays Community Centre Park has the potential to play an important role in recreation, with some investment. The community garden is managed by the Baysville Library, and this arrangement should continue. The Lions Club has expressed interest in contributing to a shade structure near the playground to support outdoor programming, which would greatly benefit the community. The Township should approach the Club to discuss if they are still interested, and under what terms.

Concerns

- Playground is aged and not AODA accessible
- Insufficient seating and shade/shelter

Goals

- Invest in this park as a community hub and increase potential for outdoor programming:
    - » Add a pavilion with picnic tables for use by visitors, camps, events, and programs
    - » Add benches around the playground
    - » Add a splash pad: This is an ideal site it is central to the community, has access to the Community Centre for washrooms and change rooms, and can be used by camps.

Recommendations:

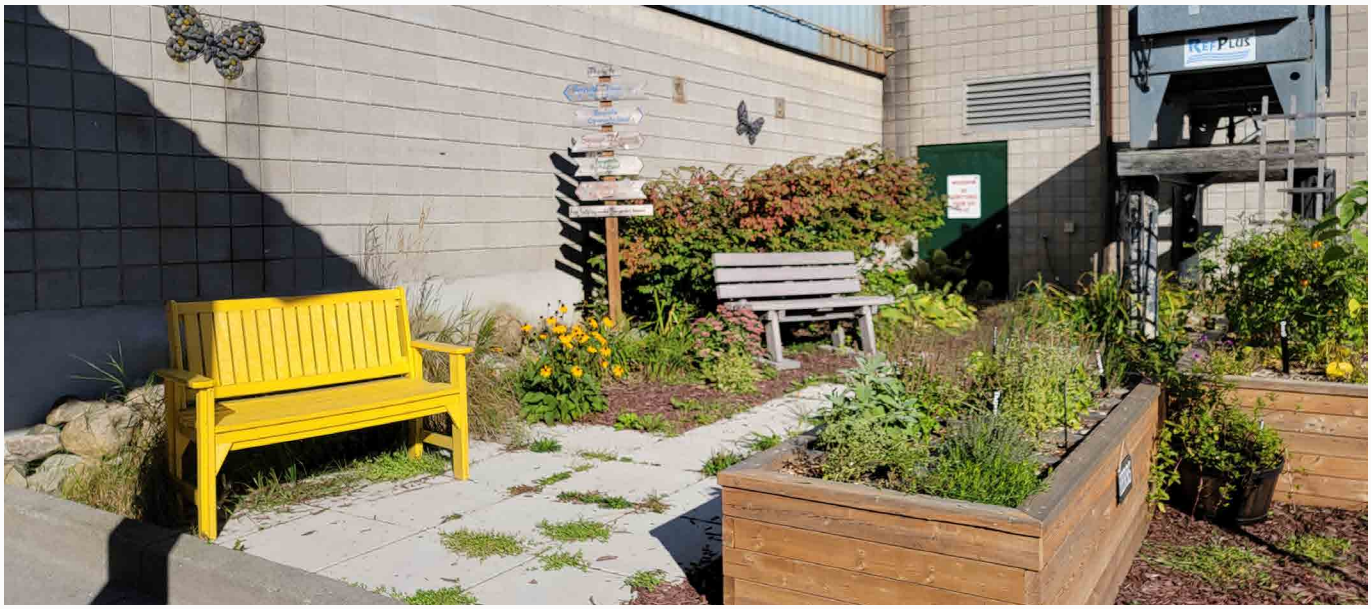
PT 25. Add pavilion near playground. Approach Lions Club to discuss potential for partnership.

PT 26. Add seating around playground.

PT 27. Add splash pad.







Van Seters Park

Description

This park features tennis courts, large green space (mowed turf), connection to a trail and Lions lookout. The site is very large, and it is long and narrow. A significant portion of the site is paved and used as overflow parking for the Baysville Dock. The Lions Club constructed a lookout in the forest along the trail, however due to tree growth, the view is now obscured. The park has great potential to be developed as an active recreation destination, with ample space for additional courts, while keeping plenty of parking. The Facilities section suggests there may be a need for a second tennis court here, which can easily be accommodated.

Concerns

- There is currently no seating around the court - adding seating within the fence gives a place for users to sit and rest
- Residents have placed a basketball net within the tennis court, which is not ideal due to potential use conflicts with tennis users
- The lookout tower structure is in need of repair and the view from the top is obscured by tree growth

Goals

- Develop Van Seters Park as a key active recreation location
    - » A separate, permanent basketball court would provide an improved option for recreation particularly for youth, while not interfering with the use of the tennis court(s)
    - » Per the discussion in section 5.0 Facilities, add an additional tennis court if needed and shaded seating around courts tennis
    - » Revitalize the lookout tower: add new signage in the main park directing visitors to the tower, repair the structure, and clear tree growth to open up the view.

Recommendations:

PT 28. Add shaded seating around tennis and basketball courts.

PT 29. Separate basketball court from tennis courts, and provide permanent posts and nets.

PT 30. Revitalize the Lions lookout tower.


VAN SETERS
PARK
BAYSVILLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY





Norway Point Park

Description

This is a very busy boat launch and park used by mainland and Bigwin Island residents. The boat launch is large, and suitable for barges. The beach area has historically been a prime swimming location for residents, as the water is shallow and ideal for use by families with small children. However, a shoreline restoration project has substantially diminished the usability of the beach both because of reduced access to the water and reduced sight lines to the water for supervising children. The park is made up of two main sites separated by trees and brush, connected with a narrow pathway. The Bigwin Island Golf Club has a parcel connected to the park, with parking and docks and a ferry service to the Island.

Concerns

- While naturalization is beneficial in many areas to protect water quality, in the case of Norway Point, the naturalization cost valuable public water access and swimming space, as public swimming areas in the Township are limited.

Goals

- Expand the swimming area: Clear tag alders and scrub brush to increase access and sightlines to the water.

Recommendations:

PT 31. Clear tag alders and scrub brush to expand swimming area and increase sightlines to the water.

PT 32. Add additional seating throughout the park.

Use of Waterfront Areas

According to the online survey, 85% use waterfront areas, and the top activities enjoyed were:

1. Swimming - 68.1% (77)

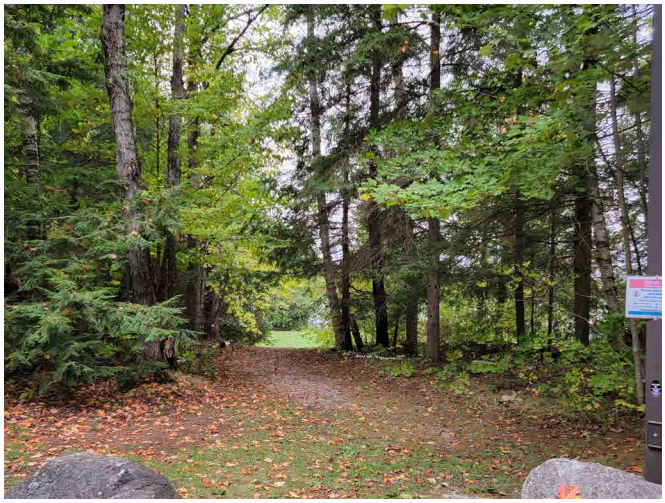
2. Canoe/kayak/paddleboard - 67.3% (76)

3. Relaxing and appreciating water views/vistas - 61.1% (69)

Forty one respondents to the online survey expressed concern about crowding at beaches, particularly at Dwight Beach. When asked their opinion for the best way to remedy the issue, 34 respondents suggested a new waterfront park is needed. The beach expansion recommended at Norway point will meet some of this need. A number of improvements to other neighbourhood beaches are also recommended in the Strategy, as well as a study for a new waterfront park.









Dwight Beach

Description

Dwight Beach is likely the most used park, by both residents and visitors. It has a long sandy beach that can accommodate many people, and a picturesque dock with a pavilion at the end. There is a boat launch, and a number of finger docks off the main dock. After a successful pilot project, the Township has introduced some street parking to support year round use of the beach. In the winter, the Township provides a skating rink on the lake, which has been very successful, with residents using the area in the winter to skate, snowshoe, walk, cross country ski, ice fish, and snowmobile. Beachgoers can park and access washrooms a short walk away on Dwight Bay Road, beside Gouldie Park.

Concerns

- Erosion: There is a small slope from the road to the beach, that has been denuded of vegetation, and is eroding.
- Mixed resident opinions: While many have been enjoying the activities at the park, some residents are not pleased with the increased use of the park.
- Pavilion: Structure is aging, in need of refreshing (power wash, painting)

Goals

- Support and invest in the park as a key destination for residents and tourists. This can be done by:
    - » Providing items for rent (e.g., umbrellas, floaties, paddleboards etc.). This would ideally be organized as a partnership with a local group.
    - » Adding temporary lighting for winter use: With the short winter days, lighting (e.g., catenary lights, see Figure 6 - 5) will allow for users to enjoy skating longer, and add to the sense of place. However, if lit, the Township would be required to staff the rink in the evenings and there is not currently staff capacity to do so. If this changes in the future, this option should be considered.
    - » Improved maintenance: power washing and painting the pavilion, and hydroseeding areas where grass has been lost

Recommendations:

PT 33. Offer beach rentals.

PT 34. Refinish and repair pavilion.

PT 35. Hydroseed areas where grass has been lost (to be reviewed annually).

PT 36. Continue to allow parking on street.

Figure 6 - 5: Example of Night Skating with Catenary Lighting.[36]



36 https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/entertainment/events/2020/01/17/12-spots-for-outdoor-ice-skating/1815259007/




TOW-AWAY ZONE



Gouldie Park

Description

Gouldie Park has greenspace with mature trees, a cenotaph, and trail head for the Dwight Beach Walking Trail. The park was the site of the old Township office, which was lost to a fire, and the original staircase remains as an interesting historical artifact. The Park is immediately beside public washrooms and a parking lot used by visitors to Dwight Beach, which is just down the street from Gouldie Park.

Concerns

- Lack of playgrounds: While not a concern related to this particular park, there are no playgrounds in the north end of the Township (aside from at the school), and Gouldie Park presents a good location for one. Where possible, park facilities and amenities should be located in hubs to concentrate activities, bring people together, and increase opportunities for programming and events. With the parking lot, washrooms, trailhead, and proximity to Dwight Beach, and the market in the summer, a playground would enrich the area as a community gathering place. In addition, as there are no other playgrounds nearby, for families that must drive to the park, there is already a parking lot and washrooms in place.

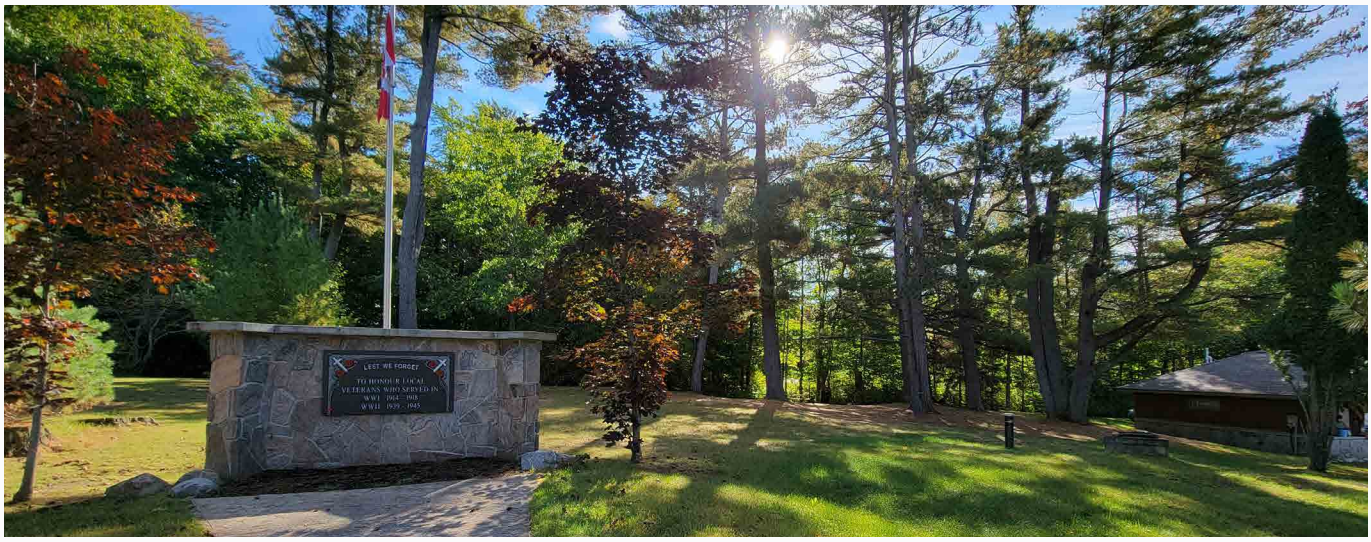
Goals

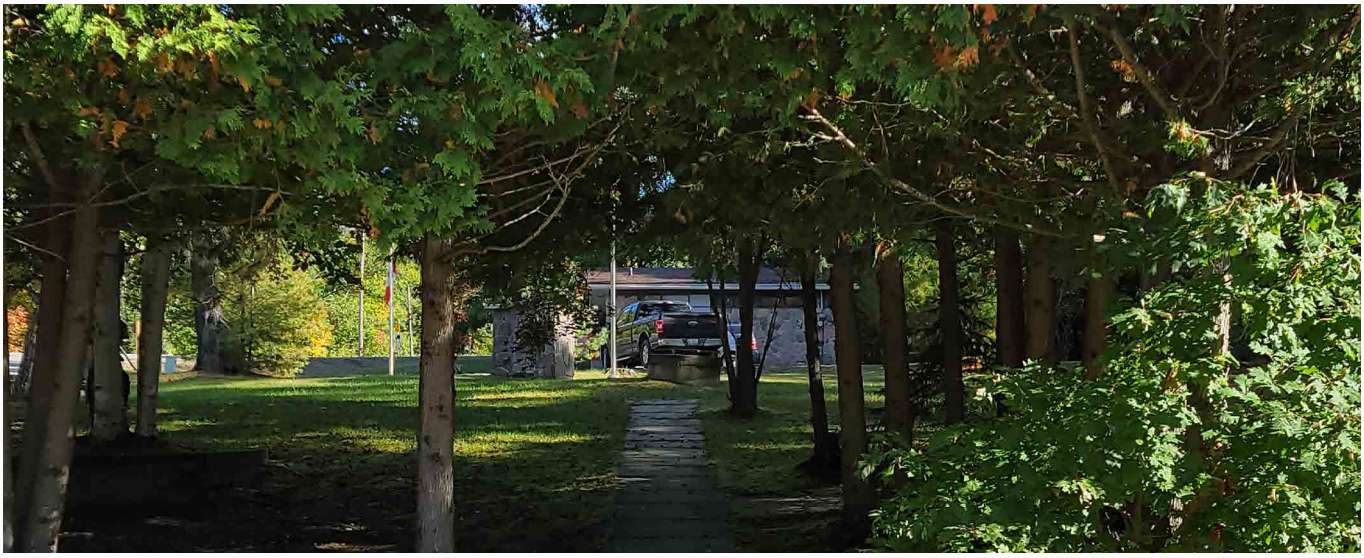
- Support the continued use of the Park for the farmer's market
- Provide a playground for residents in the north-end of the Township (i.e. Dwight):
    - » The playground design should match the look and feel of the park and existing structures, and avoid removing trees if possible
    - » Install more benches and picnic tables for visitors and farmer's market patrons, and around future playground
    - » This playground should be designed to be fully accessible, as the other playgrounds in the Township are not

Recommendations:

PT 37. Install playground.

PT 38. Add seating.


LEST WE FORGET
TO HONOUR LOCAL
VETERANS WHO SERVED IN
WWI 1914 - 1918
WWII 1939 - 1945





Dwight Community Centre Park

Description

The park surrounding the Dwight Community Centre has a considerable amount of open space that could support additional amenities/ facilities. It is also quite close to the Huntsville Multi-use Trail, and Dwight Beach, with potential to create a connection between them. Currently there is green space with trees, a pavilion, and some seating throughout the park. The park's focal point is the beautifully painted 'Book Nook', with matching Muskoka chairs and flowering gardens, provided by the Friends of the Dwight Library and a number of local donors. The area is also used by the EarlyON program for story walks.

Concerns

- The site is not being used to its full potential. Given its location, there is the opportunity to develop a walking trail around the site that can connect to the Huntsville Multi-use Trail and Dwight Beach. In addition, given its proximity to the Community Centre, library, public school and outdoor rink, it would be the ideal location to create a sort of hub for children and youth.

Goals

- Develop a trail loop around the site, and connecting to the Huntsville Multi-use Trail and Dwight Beach. A new trail loop offers more opportunity for unstructured, physical activities for residents, and connects these valuable public spaces. The trail would need to be along the perimeter of the site as there is a tile bed in the middle of the open spaces.
- Add a new recreation amenity directed at children and youth. Additional consultation with children and youth should be done to determine what amenities are most in demand, keeping in mind a playground is suggested for Gouldie Park, which is nearby. Non-playground examples include obstacle courses, skateparks, pump tracks, basketball courts, etc.

Recommendations:

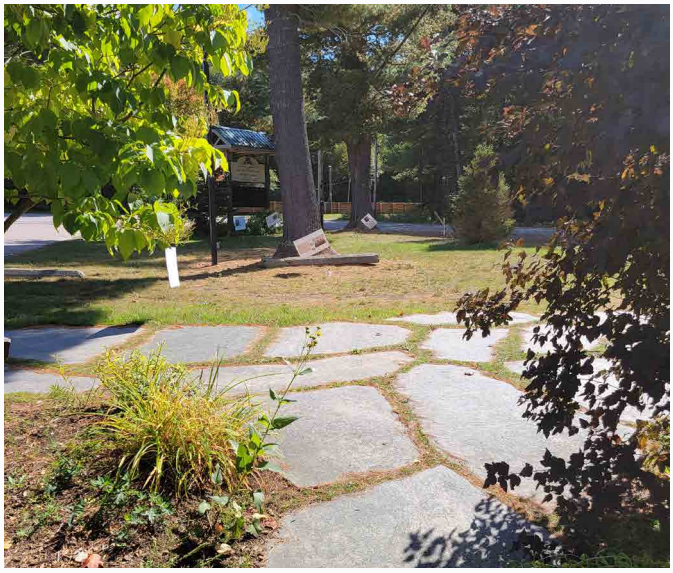
PT 39. Create trail loop around park that connects to Huntsville Multi-purpose Trail and Dwight Beach.

PT 40. In consultation with children and youth in Lake of Bays, add a new recreation amenity for children and youth.


THE FRIENDS OF THE DWIGHT LIBRARY
Book Nook
2010











Dwight Outdoor Rink

Description

The Dwight Outdoor Rink is across the street from the Dwight Community Centre, on school board property. It is owned by the school, but maintained by the Township (with an agreement in place). The rink is large, with boards and a natural surface, that the Township floods each winter. There is also a small warming/change hut beside the rink.

Concerns

- Without a roof over the rink, it can be difficult to maintain ice throughout the winter, a concern that is growing as the temperatures increase due to climate change.
- The warming hut is small, limiting the number of users at one time.

Goals

- Improve the space to support more use and community events (as shown in Figure 6 - 7):
    - » Provide a larger warming and changing hut: As a popular destination in the winter months, ample and adequate space is required to provide proper shelter and warming for the users. Shelters could be unique and fully closed or open much like those used in Winnipeg during the winter months (see Figure 6 - 6).
    - » Add a roof to the rink: a roof would greatly increase the usability/ longevity of the rink by shading and preserving the ice.
    - » Provide bench seating around the rink for users and spectators.

These recommendations would be done in consultation and partnership with the school.

Recommendations:

PT 41. Add a new larger warming/ change hut.

PT 42. Add a roof to the rink.

PT 43. Add seating.

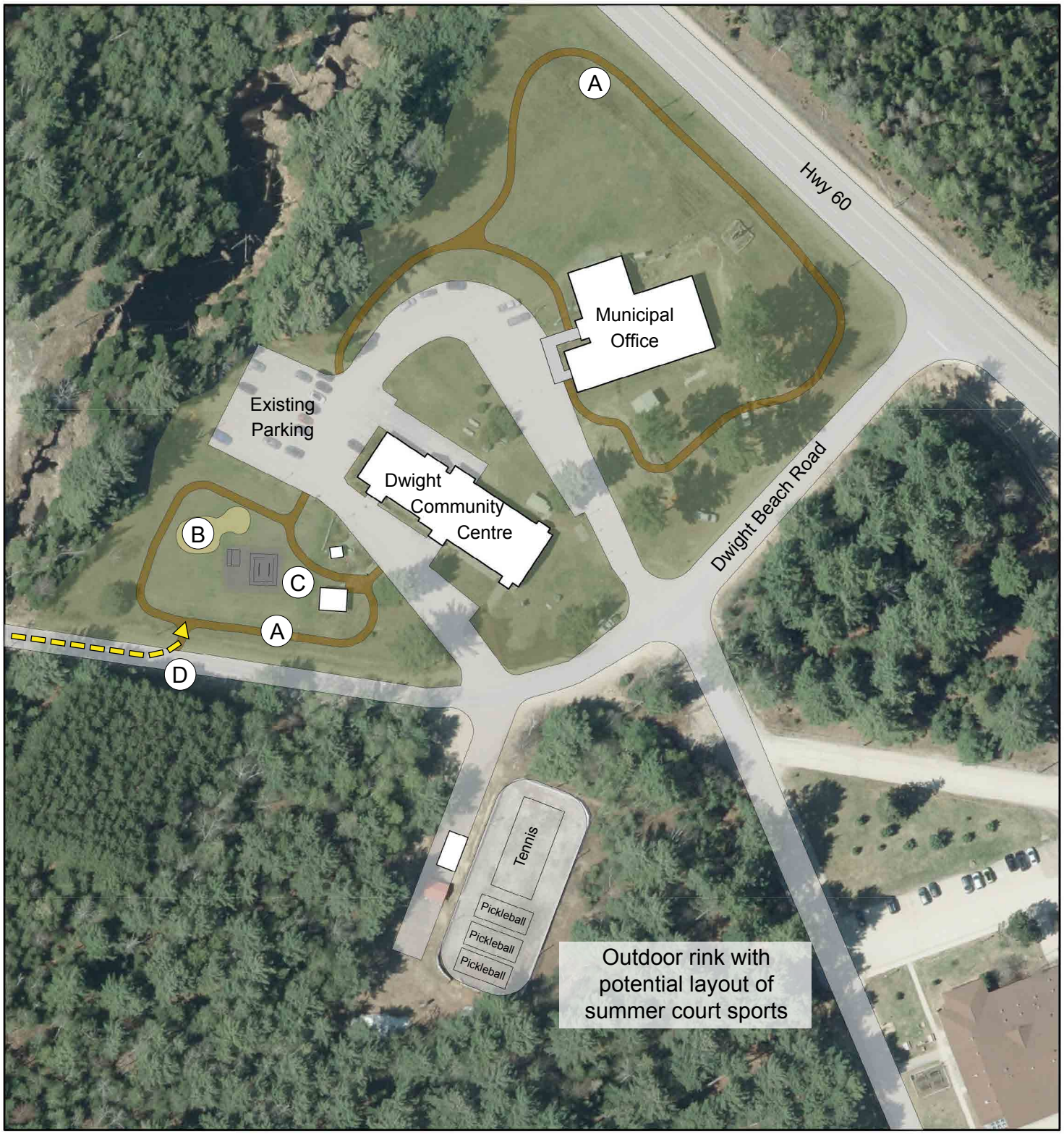
Figure 6 - 6: Example of Creatively Designed Warming Huts





Figure 6 - 7: Dwight Community Centre and Outdoor Rink Concept

Dwight Community Centre Concept



(A) Path/Trail System
(B) Play Area
(C) Skatepark
(D) Existing Dwight Walking Trail

1:2,000

0 65 130 260 ft

0 20 40 80 m

Echo Valley Park and Trail

Description

This site is the result of a park dedication to the Township for an adjacent subdivision development, and construction will start soon on the new units. The Township has partnered with the Huntsville Mountain Bike Association to maintain the trails. There is a large parking lot, map of the site, pump track (dirt surface), and a trail system through the woods, for hiking and mountain biking. The pump track and trails provide very valuable recreation opportunities for people of all ages in the Township. The site was damaged severely from a tornado in summer 2020, and since then most of the clean-up has been completed.

Concerns

- Portions of the trail have boardwalks over wet ground, and they are in need of repair. The Township has begun repairs on these.
- Maintenance of trails and boardwalks has not been consistent. This would be addressed through the agreement with the Huntsville Mountain Bike Association. Agreements are discussed in the Service Delivery section.

Goals

- Review agreement with bike club with regard to responsibilities for repairs and ongoing maintenance to ensure consistent upkeep of trails
- Establish a rest area near the pump track, with seating. If the seating cannot be configured to be shaded by existing trees, consider adding a shade structure.

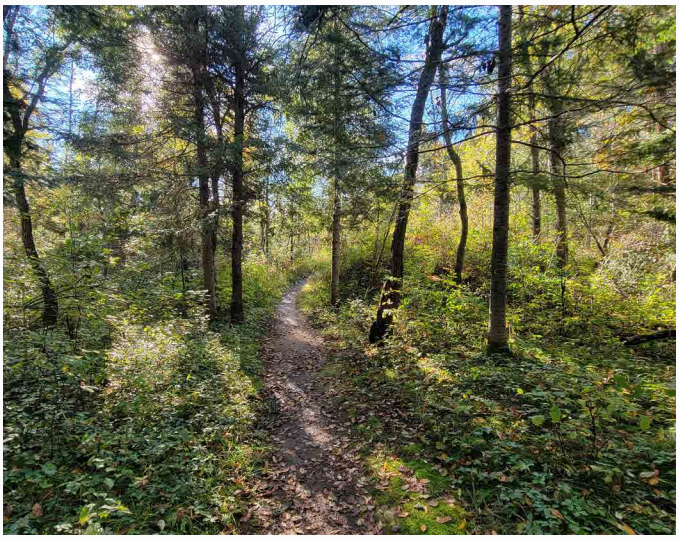
Recommendations:

PT 44. Review agreement with Huntsville Mountain Bike Association.

PT 45. Continue repairs to boardwalks.

PT 46. Install rest area near pump track.











Oxtongue Rapids Park

Description

This is a crown jewel of Lake of Bays, with stunning views of the Oxtongue Rapids. There is a trail along the river, with parking, and some seating near the parking area. There is a historical portage site that has been used by Indigenous peoples for about 1000 years, however there is very little signage to commemorate this special location. A local resident has volunteered to help maintain this park, and has contributed significant hours of effort, with the support of the Township. The Snowmobile Club installed a bridge (Hunter's Bridge) across the rapids, where the Township owns approximately 27 acres of undeveloped land, that currently has only snowmobile trails.

Concerns

- There are a few spots where the trail runs very close to the water's edge and there is a risk of slips and falls. An assessment should be made to identify specific locations, and safety measures that can be employed (e.g. fencing, boardwalks, rerouting the trail).
- If the trail system is increased, more parking may be needed.
- Maintenance is currently conducted by a local resident volunteer, in coordination with Township staff. Additional trails here and in other locations will likely be beyond the capacity of a single volunteer. The additional staff recommended in this Strategy are needed for the maintenance and development of this Park.

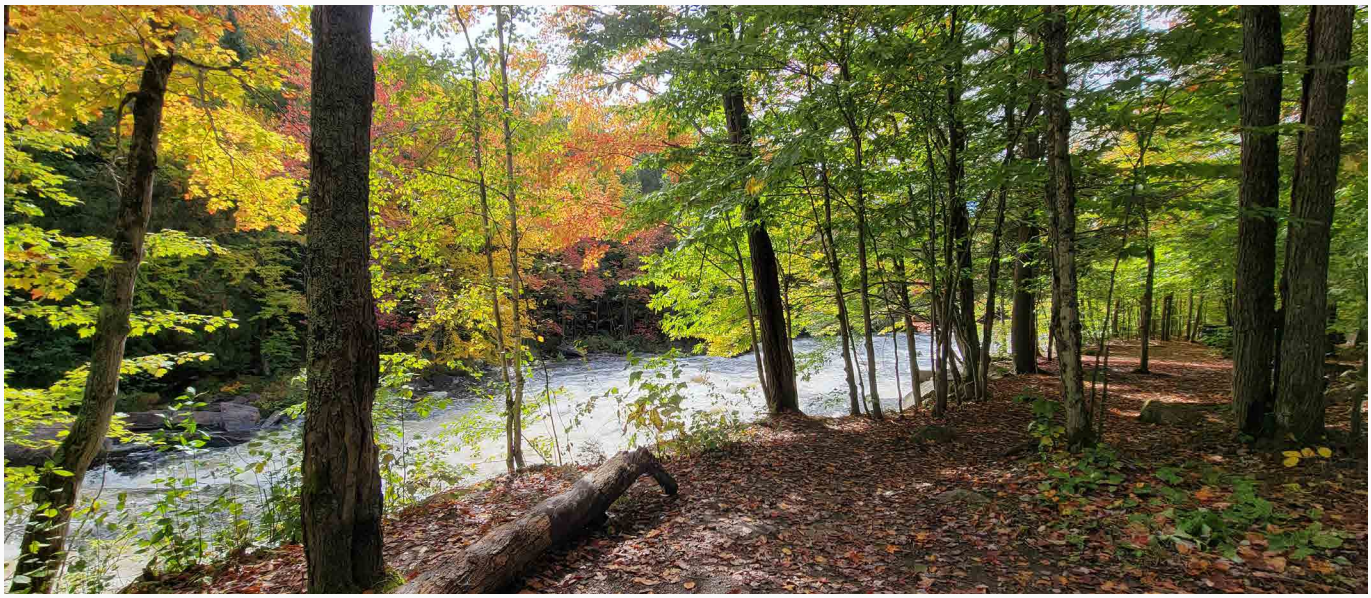
Goals

- Given the size and scope of this park, the Township should undertake a master plan for the park that will include at minimum the following items:
  - » Highlight Indigenous history: Work with local Indigenous groups to showcase the history of the site through interpretive signage, activities/events, etc.
  - » Create more trail networks across the river, on the 27 acre parcel that is currently undeveloped. Consider creating various loops that intersect one another and vary by difficulty.
  - » Add trailhead and map: Trail loops should all be individually named and labeled by difficulty.
  - » Expansion of the trail network (for hikers) should be done in consultation with the Snowmobile Club, and potentially Algonquin Highlands, as the parcel borders their Township and they may be interested in partnering.

Recommendation:

PT 47. Undertake a Master Plan for this park that will address at minimum safety, signage, trail development, heritage, partnerships, etc.







Dorset Lions Centennial Park

Description

The Park is owned by both Lake of Bays and Algonquin Highlands. Lake of Bays pays half of the cost of maintenance to Algonquin Highlands whose staff performs the work. The details of this agreement are discussed further in the service delivery section. The Lions Club donated many of the amenities. The park has many amenities: Concession stand, gardens, outdoor fitness equipment, outdoor rink, green space, pavilion, trail, washrooms and change rooms, and parking.

Concerns

- The rink is aging

Goals

- Continue to work with Algonquin Highlands and local groups to maintain and provide amenities at the Park.
    - » A comment was received from the online survey saying "We are interested in partnering to install a bocce court and a beach volleyball court in the Lions Centennial Park in Dorset. These [two recreation] facilities would cover a wide demographic swath and help attract users to the park....fairly inexpensive to install and low maintenance". The survey was anonymous, so it is not known which group this came from. These initiatives in general are welcome, and a bocce court and/or volleyball court would be suitable additions (see sidebar) to the site. If the group approaches the Township, they should discuss specifics at that time.

Recommendation:

PT 48. In partnership with Algonquin Highlands, and any interested community groups, revitalize the rink boards, and consider adding one or two relatively low-cost, low-maintenance amenities to the site, if funds can be raised.





Resident-led Park Improvements and Additions

Lake of Bays is a community with many residents who have a long history in the Township, with established social networks, and a strong pride of place. Like many other communities with a similar context, this has resulted in many resident-led initiatives to provide park amenities. While this is an appreciated contribution to the public realm, the Township must consider a few factors before agreeing to said additions:

- Does the proposed amenity 'fit' with the park type, per the park classification?
- Does it match or at least not directly contradict the directions and recommendations laid out in this Strategy?
- How much/what type of regular maintenance will the amenity require?
- Would the proposed amenity be better placed elsewhere than where the resident group is proposing? If another location is more suitable, is the group still interested in partnering?

These questions are for the Township to consider when making their decision to weigh the pros and cons of moving forward. While the aim is not to stand in the way of community-led initiatives to improve their parks, the Township is responsible for the large-scale planning of recreation opportunities, and will be responsible for maintaining any amenities added to parks. For this reason, careful consideration should be made to these initiatives.



New Waterfront Park

Consultations with Township representatives and the community indicated interest in an additional waterfront park, with the primary reasons being to address what is perceived as crowding at existing beaches (especially Dwight Beach), and to encourage more tourism to the Township (Figure 6 - 8). This is a delicate balance, because attracting more tourism will most likely result in more perceived crowding. However, it is possible that adding another waterfront park (or multiple) will spread visitors around and relieve the pressure on Dwight Beach. As discussed previously, the redevelopment of Norway Point Park will provide residents with a desired swimming area, and that project should be done in the short term (indeed, the Township has already begun work on it at the time of this writing). As this is a long term Plan, the Township may still require an additional waterfront park within the later term of this Plan. This would be a longer term project, as first a study will need to be done to determine the best location for the park - one that has a good lake for swimming, a sandy beach, or the ability to create a sandy beach, enough room for parking, and ability to provide washroom facilities, among other considerations. With vast amounts of waterfront in the Township, a study is required to locate sites that meet the criteria, and that are for sale/have owners possibly willing to sell. The Township will likely need to fundraise, access grants, and identify partnership opportunities to make this project a reality. Depending on the location, partnerships could include neighbouring municipalities, whose residents would use the new beach, provincial or federal government, and local community groups.

Recommendation

PT 49. Undertake a study to determine the location and feasibility of a new waterfront park.

Figure 6 - 8: Opinions on Public Waterfronts from the Online and Random Telephone Resident Surveys

85% (113 respondents) of online survey respondents use public waterfronts, and the top activities listed included swimming, canoeing/kayaking/paddle boarding, relaxing, enjoying nature, beach play, and picnicking/social gatherings. Waterfronts in Dwight and Baysville were the most popular.

44% of those use waterfronts (56) feel that overcrowding is a concern, particularly at Dwight Beach (online survey).

64% (34)[36] suggested that an additional waterfront park needs to be developed to address overcrowding concerns (online). On the other hand, only 8% (5) in the telephone survey think another waterfront park is needed. The top response from telephone respondents about how to address overcrowding is to provide designated residents-only areas (42% or 25 respondents).

73% (68) of online respondents agreed that the Township should strategically acquire waterfront properties to create larger lakefront beach parks to accommodate residents and visitors, and 14% (28) of telephone respondents agreed with that approach.

36 Of those who answered the question (53)

6.5.2 Neighbourhood Parks

Centennial Park

Description

Centennial Park has road frontage in downtown Baysville, and lots of open greenspace, which is irrigated. There are also gardens and a stone stage (flag pole in the middle). It is across the street from Baysville Riverfront.

Concerns

- There is a stone wall along the main entrance point, with a rotating gate. This type of gate is not accessible

Goals

- Given its location and configuration, this Park would be ideal for hosting outdoor community events.
    - » There is ample space for the addition of a pavilion or shade structure for events or picnics. The pavilion should be designed so that it could be used for events (e.g., have power connection, be raised etc.).
    - » Adding a pathway throughout the park will provide more opportunities for passive activity, and connect different areas of the park during festivals, markets, etc.
    - » With the addition of a trail and pavilion for events and gatherings, seating would encourage and support use of the park

Recommendations:

PT 50. Add pavilion suitable for events.

PT 51. Add seating.

PT 52. Add pathway around park.

PT 53. Remove rotating gate.





Arena Beach

Description

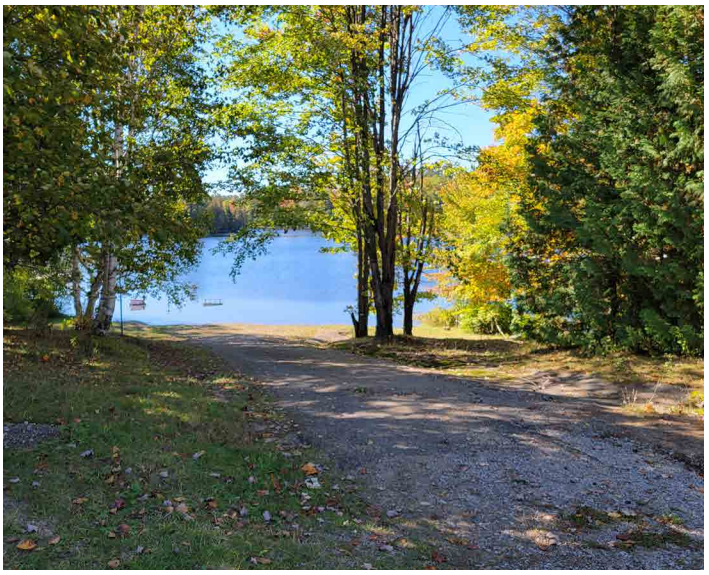
This park is located across from the Lake of Bays Community Centre, and has a large grassy area, part of which is undergoing naturalization, and small sand beach. The water level can change drastically, and at times seating (e.g., a picnic table) is submerged. Geese are attracted to the area, and as such, water quality is problematic sometimes causing swimmer's itch.

Concerns

- Poor water quality due to geese
- Water damage to seating due to water levels
- Poor sand quality/small beach area

Goals

- Given the location across from the Baysville Community Centre, investment in this beach would contribute to developing/ improving the area as a recreation hub, and provide more area for swimming in the Township.
    - » Use humane bird deterrent products to help reduce geese in the area (e.g., aromatic repellent, visual deterrents)
    - » Improve the overall quality of the beach with the installation of new sand
    - » Add muskoka chairs and benches, placed far away from the water's edge





Recommendations:

PT 54. Employ geese deterrent methods.

PT 55. Improve quality of beach.

PT 56. Add more seating.

South Portage Park

Description

This park and boat launch is well used by residents for fishing, swimming and launching. There is a beach, dock with swimming ladder, greenspace, boat launch (suitable for barges), and parking.

Concerns

- There is an educational plaque about the history of the site that is obscured by plants
- The road passes close to the water increasing risk for runoff contamination

Goals

- Increase swimming opportunities, and protect water quality:
  - » Add a boardwalk around the water's edge for users to rest and swim
  - » Naturalize the portion of the shore along the roadway to reduce runoff
  - » Add seating around new boardwalk





Recommendations:

PT 57. Add wooden walkway along water's edge.

PT 58. Naturalize shore along the road.

PT 59. Add seating.

PT 60. Clear brush from historic signage

Grassmere/Hillside Beach

Description

This is a very well-used park, by swimmers, anglers, and boaters. There is a dock, boat launch, seating and picnic tables, parking, and a trail head for the Hillside Hamlet Trail. This is also the only legal launch for Lake of Bays and Huntsville on Peninsula Lake, meaning many users also come from Huntsville (though there is no hard data to confirm exact numbers).





Concerns

- The driveway used for boat launching is partially on neighbouring private property, and the Township is currently addressing this, doing a survey to confirm the site boundary lines
- Parking issues: too few spaces in general (approximately for 7 or 8 vehicles), and inefficient parking lot design (i.e., the tree in the middle).

Goals

- Optimize parking:
  - » Thin trees adjacent to lot and redesign parking layout to accommodate more vehicles and install permanent parking stall markers
  - » Eventually the Township may need to acquire land in order to provide more parking. This should be done in partnership with Hunstville, as their residents are likely making use of the site

Recommendation:

PT 61. Undertake a design study to reconfigure parking area to accommodate more spots.

Wolf Bay Beach

Description

This is a small sandy beach used for swimming, and perhaps small craft launching. As there is no parking, users typically walk or cycle to the site.

Concerns

- The site is a mix of dust, rocks and sand, and is not very comfortable for sitting and walking on.
- No seating
- No bike parking

Goals

- Improve the beach for local users:
    - » Install new sand for beach area
    - » Install permanent bike racks for bike parking
    - » Add muskoka chairs and picnic benches





Recommendations:

PT 62. Add seating.

PT 63. Add bike racks.

PT 64. Improve beach area.

Rabbits Bay Boat Launch and Park

Description

This park is on the waterfront, nestled in a treed area. It has a boat launch, a couple of docks, and unique sitting areas composed of stone seats and tables. Aside from use of the boat launch, it is otherwise reportedly not used very much.

Concerns

- The boat launch concrete is severely cracked and needs to be replaced.
- Both docks also have damage

Goals

Improve the functioning of the site by making repairs to the boat launch and docks





Recommendations:

PT 65. Repair docks.

PT 66. Repair boat launch.

Colebridge Park and Zach Cole's Playground

Description

This park consists of a playground in a treed area, with a free book exchange, and educational signage about the history of the trees and logging in the area, and recently had upgrades to seating and surfacing funded by community donation (through the Dorset Community Partnership Fund). The park is accessible by walking up a moderate incline/ hill.

Concerns

- The playground is quite new, however the surface does not meet current safety standards.
- Seating is limited

Goals

- Upgrade the playground for greater user safety and comfort:
    - » When the playground has reached the end of its lifecycle, it should be replaced with an accessible playground, with safety surfacing
    - » Additional seating (e.g. a few picnic benches) around the site could allow for families to spend more time at the playground





Recommendations

PT 67. Redesign playground for safety and accessibility.

PT 68. Add seating.

Dorset Pavilion and Community Park

Description

Dorset Pavilion and Community Park, as its name suggests, has a very large, newly constructed pavilion (which was constructed such that it could be dismantled and moved if required), washrooms, open greenspace, and parking. The site is a partnership between multiple stakeholders: It is located in Algonquin Highlands and owned by a private landowner; the Township of Lake of Bays leases the land from a private landowner, and maintains the park, amenities and facilities; and the Dorset Community Partnership Fund fundraised and built the washrooms and pavilion.

Concerns

Community members have asked the Township for additional amenities at this park, and/or to assist groups who are fundraising for the amenities. The primary concern for this site is that as it is not owned by the Township and not located within the Township of Lake of Bays, there is no guarantee that the site will remain a public space for the community should the owner decide to sell the land. For these reasons, The Township cannot invest in recreation facilities and amenities unless the owner agrees to bequeath or sell the land to the Township once the current lease is due for renewal. However, since the land is actually located in Algonquin Highlands, if the owner decides to bequeath it to any municipality, it would most likely be to Algonquin Highlands, not Lake of Bays. Given the complicated nature of this arrangement, the Township should withdraw from this agreement when the lease is up for renewal, and ideally the arrangement will remain between the resident and Algonquin Highlands.

Goals

The Township has a number of arrangements with partners to manage, and a significant amount of parks and facilities to manage given current staffing levels. This is one arrangement that is unnecessarily complicated, and where it is unclear why Lake of Bays is involved at all (given that it is not located in Lake of Bays). With one of the underlying goals of this plan to clarify and simplify partnership arrangements, this is one arrangement that can be concluded. The lease and future arrangement is discussed further in the Service Delivery section.



Recommendation:

PT 69. Do not add any facilities to this parcel while under the current lease agreement/structure.

Glenmount Dock

Description

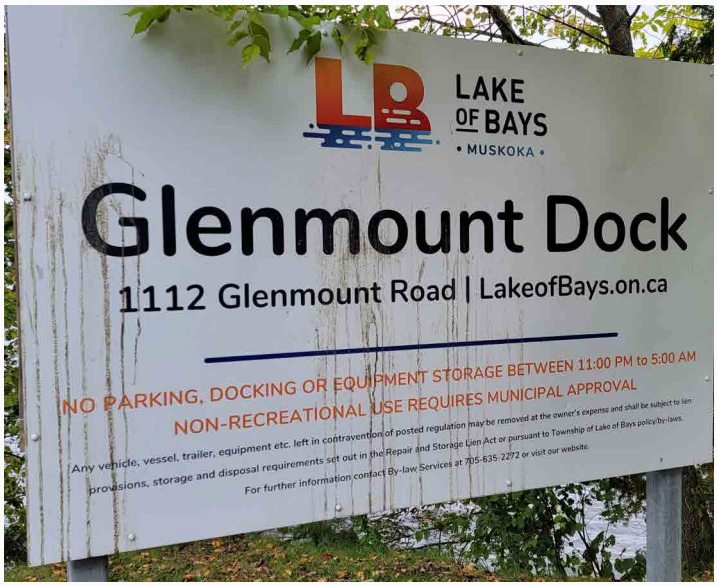
The Glenmount Dock consists of a very long wooden dock with a pavilion at the terminus. There is a small amount of greenspace on the waterfront, and it is located directly beside the Lake of Bays Sailing Club. The area leading up to the dock is paved.

Concerns

- Pavilion is worn, requires cleaning and painting or replacement
- The dock is also worn and in need of repair.
- Site signage is old and in need of refreshing

Goals

- Improve site for use by boaters and park visitors
    - » Repair or replace the pavilion
    - » Complete dock repairs including sheet pile and resurfacing. The Township has plans underway to complete this work, with money being allocated in the 2023 budget.





Recommendations:

PT 70. Upgrade or replace pavilion.

PT 71. Replace/repair dock.

6.5.3 Parkettes

Chimney Park

Description

This is a site with an interesting history. It was formerly a ladies' only beach, and the namesake chimney was constructed at that time for cooking for picnics. Today, the site is very small, and barely visible from the road. It is mostly covered by brush, and access to the water is down a steep incline with stone steps. The area near the water is very small and swampy. It is not known if this water access is used at all.

Concerns

- No signage to indicate the site is there, or the history of the site
- Water access area is not really usable due to size and condition (swampy)
- No parking available

Goals

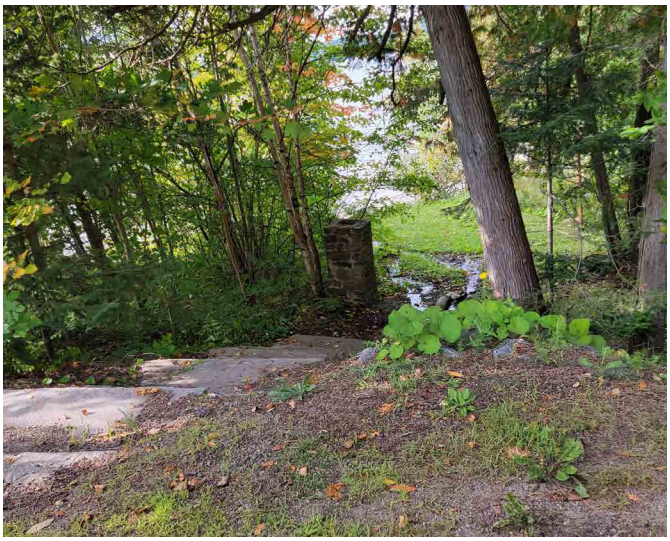
Revitalizing this site would address two goals of parks and recreation in the Township: highlighting local heritage, and providing more swimming areas.

- Improve accessibility and visual lines to the site
- Add a dock for sunbathing and swimming
- Add either a bench or a couple Muskoka chairs at the base of the stairs/on the swimming dock
- Add signage on the road to increase awareness of the park's existence
- Add educational signage telling the story of the park

While it would be ideal to develop this park, there are significant challenges that need to be further assessed through a feasibility study, particularly the lack of parking, and suitability of the swimming area. If the feasibility study determines that a park should not be developed here, the Township can consider selling this parcel to a neighbouring property owner.

Recommendations:

PT 72. Undertake feasibility study for developing the parcel as a park.





Marion White Park

Description

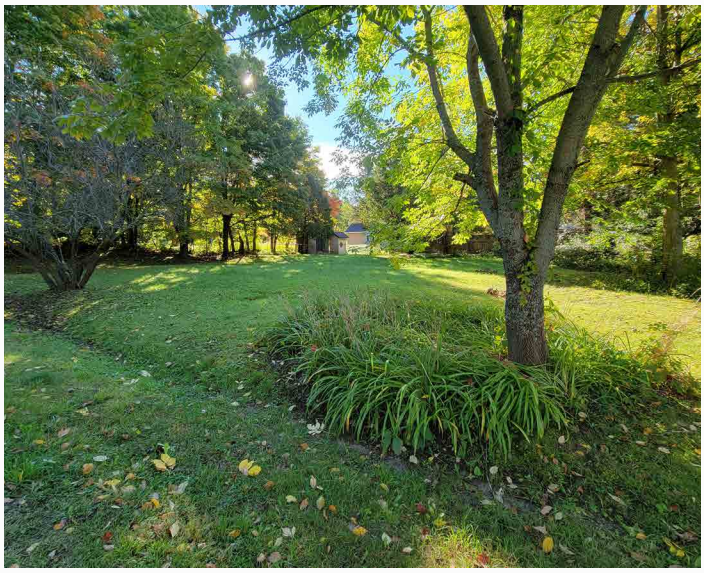
This Park is a small open space with some trees. The Township mows it, but it is not clear if it is used by residents. It was identified by staff as a potential site for divestment. It borders a cottage, and property lines are unclear for users (it is hard to tell that the site is public).

Concerns

- To staff knowledge, the park is not used by residents, and there is little incentive to begin using it given the size, location and lack of features and amenities. However, Township staff are deployed to mow it regularly, resulting in staff time and labour being spent on a parcel that is unused.

Goals

- Determine the best course of action for this parcel:
    - » Using the decision tree in section 6.4.4, it is determined that the parcel can be sold. The Township should approach neighboring property owners to assess their interest in purchasing the property before listing it on the market.
    - » If the Township is unable to find a buyer, they should naturalize this site in such a way that would reduce maintenance requirements (for example local species that don't require watering, tree plantings, etc.)





Recommendations:

PT 73. Approach the neighbouring property owner to assess their interest in purchasing the property. If they are not interested in purchasing it, the Township should list it on the market. In the interim, and if the property is unable to sell, the Township should naturalize the site.

PT 74. If the property is sold, earmark the funds earned for other parks and recreation capital or operating costs.

6.5.4 Semi/Undeveloped Open Spaces

Glenmount Greenspace

Description

This parcel was given to the Township in a land swap with a resident. The resident owns the land behind it, and the waterfront across the street, so this parcel is in between their two pieces of land. It is on the corner of two streets, with a view of the water. It is currently an open green space that is mowed by the Township, and it is not known if it is used by any residents. The plot is immediately beside a house. It was identified by staff as a possible plot for divestment.

Concerns

- Like Marion White parkette, to staff knowledge, the park is not used by residents, and there is little incentive to begin using it given the size, location and lack of features and amenities. However, Township staff are deployed to mow it regularly, resulting in staff time and labour being spent on a parcel that is unused.
- Given its proximity to the neighbouring cottage, it is not an ideal site for many park amenities. Likewise, if the Township were to naturalize the site and/or plant trees, it may obscure the view to the water from the neighbouring cottage, which may not be well received.

Goals

- Determine the best course of action for this parcel:
    - » Based on the points described above, the best course of action for the site would be if the property owner that owns the cottage and waterfront across would purchase this parcel as well.
    - » Using the decision tree provided in section 6.4.4, the same conclusion is reached, that theTownship should dispose of the land per By-law 2021-094.
    - » If the Township is unable to find a buyer, they should naturalize this site in such a way that would reduce maintenance requirements (for example local species that don't require watering, tree plantings, etc.)



Recommendations:

PT 75. Approach the neighbouring property owner to assess their interest in purchasing the property. If they are not interested in purchasing it, the Township should list it on the market. In the interim, and if the property is unable to sell, the Township should naturalize the site.

PT 76. If the property is sold, earmark the funds earned for other parks and recreation capital or operating costs.

Bigwin Island Parcel

Description

The Township owns approximately 1.7 acres of land on Bigwin Island. It is forested, and undeveloped at present time. Bigwin Island has seasonal cottages, some vacation rentals, and a large private golf course. Access to the island is by boat only (personal craft, as well as private shuttle services from condo corporations on the island and the golf club).

Concerns

- Restricted access: as described above, there is no regular, public shuttle service to the island. The main points for boat launching are from the Port Cunnington Marina (private), and at Norway Point Park, which as discussed previously, already has some conflicts between those using the park at Norway Point, and those parking their car there and staying on Bigwin Island.
- If the parcel on Bigwin Island were to be developed for public use, access to the island must be considered (e.g., will a shuttle service be offered at all, or just personal crafts? Any possibility for arrangement with existing private shuttle services?), as well as considering additional parking stress at Norway Point Park.

Goals

This parcel is a considerable asset to the community. It presents the opportunity for nature-based recreation and additional access to the waterfront, both of which residents highly value based on consultations. However, developing the parcel as a public park and increasing access to the island will undoubtedly cause frictions with existing island residents. To balance the needs and desires of island and non-island residents, the development of the site should be limited, and designed to prevent heavy use of the park. For example, a trail loop or two can be created through the forest, with a couple of docks (to limit the amount of boats/visitors at any one time) and a small waterfront picnic area. Shuttle service, if organized, should also be limited seasonally, and with restricted runs (e.g., one run in the morning, and one coming back in the afternoon). However, given the scope of the project, and the question of access (for both park users and park staff), a feasibility study needs to be conducted to fully understand the opportunities, challenges and costs associated with the project. While we do not recommend selling the parcel, if the feasibility study determines it is not possible to develop the park, and Council decides to sell, the funds should be earmarked for other park projects, such as for the development of a new waterfront park elsewhere.

Recommendations:

PT 77. Undertake a feasibility study for developing a park at Bigwin Island.. Bigwin Island Parcel

District of Muskoka Fairy Falls Parcel

Description

The District of Muskoka owns a large parcel of land that hosts a sewage lagoon in a former gravel pit. It is wooded, with varied landscape, and has a three-kilometre trail with access to the Two Foot Falls. The Township leases part of the land from the District and manages the parking lot and trail. Part of the trail goes along the Muskoka River. Community consultation indicated interest in allowing ATVs in some part of this parcel, however, due to liability and ecological concerns, this is not a use likely to be supported by the District or Township.

Concerns

- Lack of signage and trail maps
- Lack of parking in winter months, cars park on the road
- Trails are self made and require widening and maintenance

Goals

- Work with the District to develop the site to its full potential as a trail destination
- Determine the best way to balance various uses (e.g., hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, skiing). This may look like distinct areas for each activity with appropriate trail maintenance to support each activity, with signage and appropriate amenities to support use and blockades to prevent undesired use.
- Explore opportunities (e.g., partnering with a small business) to provide rentals in the winter such as show shoes, skies, push sleds, etc

Recommendations

PT 78. In collaboration with the District of Muskoka, undertake a study to develop the Fairy Falls parcel as a trail destination.


Fairy Falls

7. 0 Culture

7.1 The Importance of Arts and Culture in Community Recreation Planning

While this plan is primarily a Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy, it does also address the potential to promote and support cultural opportunities and cultural development. Like many forward-looking communities, Lake of Bays recognizes the importance of arts and culture in providing a well-rounded and healthy environment for its citizens. Many communities regard arts and culture activities (which often include "heritage" activities as well, as they do here) as equally important to the provision of sports infrastructure, parks and open space for the mental health and well-being of its residents. For example, note that in the online survey results, interest in the visual arts (49%) exceeded many sports and fitness-related activities such as arena ice activities (38%) and group fitness (39%). Interest in the performing arts (32%) was similarly high.

In 2015 an Arts and Culture Strategy for the municipality was undertaken (building upon previous plans such as the Town of Huntsville Culture Strategy in 2011; A Tapestry of Place – Huntsville/Lake of Bays Cultural Tourism Strategy in 2013; and the Huntsville Cultural Strategy in 2014) and many of the initiatives undertaken in the last decade spring from that work. However, now, a decade on, there is a need for that plan to be updated and revised, and that is noted in the present study.

Having said that, this is not an arts and culture plan per se. The directions outlined here might point to an opportunity for some future Arts and Culture Master Plan to be undertaken (in the way that Huntsville, for example, has in the past). Until then, however, the recommendations presented here are intended to ensure that where there are clear opportunities that are tied to the overall Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy they are recognized and acknowledged, and might form the basis of such a plan in future.

This is important for a variety of reasons. First, there are clear synergies between certain types of "art and culture" activities and "sports and recreation" activities. Public art in open space and parks is one example. Trails that feature photo opportunities of artistic scenes, or explain natural or human heritage, are another.

Second, arts and culture can be an economic generator in a community, when festivals and events, historic driving tours, crafts and art studio tours, etc. draw in visitors who then spend time and money in the community. Many communities, including Huntsville, have developed cultural tourism strategies where the arts, culture and heritage amenities and activities in the community can act as a key draw for visitors, with resultant positive economic impact to the community.

Third, arts and culture activities can augment the quality of life in a community which, when coupled with parks, sport and recreation activities, provide "something for everyone" when families and households are considering a place in which to raise a family or retire. Being very visible, they help to create an image and identity of the community as a balanced one with an overall very high standard of living.

7.2 Types of Municipal Support for Arts, Culture and Heritage

When considering the ways in which a municipality might support its local arts, culture and heritage sector, there are a number of avenues for consideration. These are:

a. **Direct Product Provision**: This method of support is where the municipality chooses to directly provide facilities, programs or services to ensure opportunities for cultural engagement. Examples of this at present in Lake of Bays include the support of the library, museums, and the Baysville Walkabout. The Community Grant Program, which supports arts, culture and heritage activities as well as a host of other activities, is similarly a form of direct provision.

b. **Public Realm Improvements:** This type of support is shown in terms of arts and culture-related improvements to the public realm; for example, maintenance of vistas and viewpoints (e.g., the Dorset Fire Tower), community plaques, public art, and attractive / historic signage in communities.

c. **Capacity-Building:** This form of support is where the municipality (sometimes in partnership with other organizations) provides assistance to arts and culture organizations, "helping them help themselves." This often takes the form of workshops and seminars on topics such as marketing, membership development, fundraising, organization and Board development, etc. At the moment an organization does exist (Lake of Bay Arts – LOBarts) and the Township has provided seed funding for the development of their website.

d. **Investment Encouragement and Attraction:** As previously mentioned, arts, culture and heritage can be a major attraction for tourists and visitors to come to a community. The Township of Lake of Bays does have an economic development strategy, and the tourism industry is one of the key focal points contained within it. Investment in arts, culture and tourism through an initiative such as a cultural tourism plan can not only act as a tourism generator in the community but also clearly benefit local artisans, performers and craftspersons.

e. **Marketing and Promotion**: A fifth way that a municipality can benefit its local arts and culture sector is through the promotion of local artisans and events, which can increase exposure and sales opportunities for local artisans.

These areas of potential activity are all mutually supportive and reinforcing, as illustrated in Figure 7 - 1.

As indicated above, while the Township is currently active to some extent in all of these areas of support, there is more that could be done.

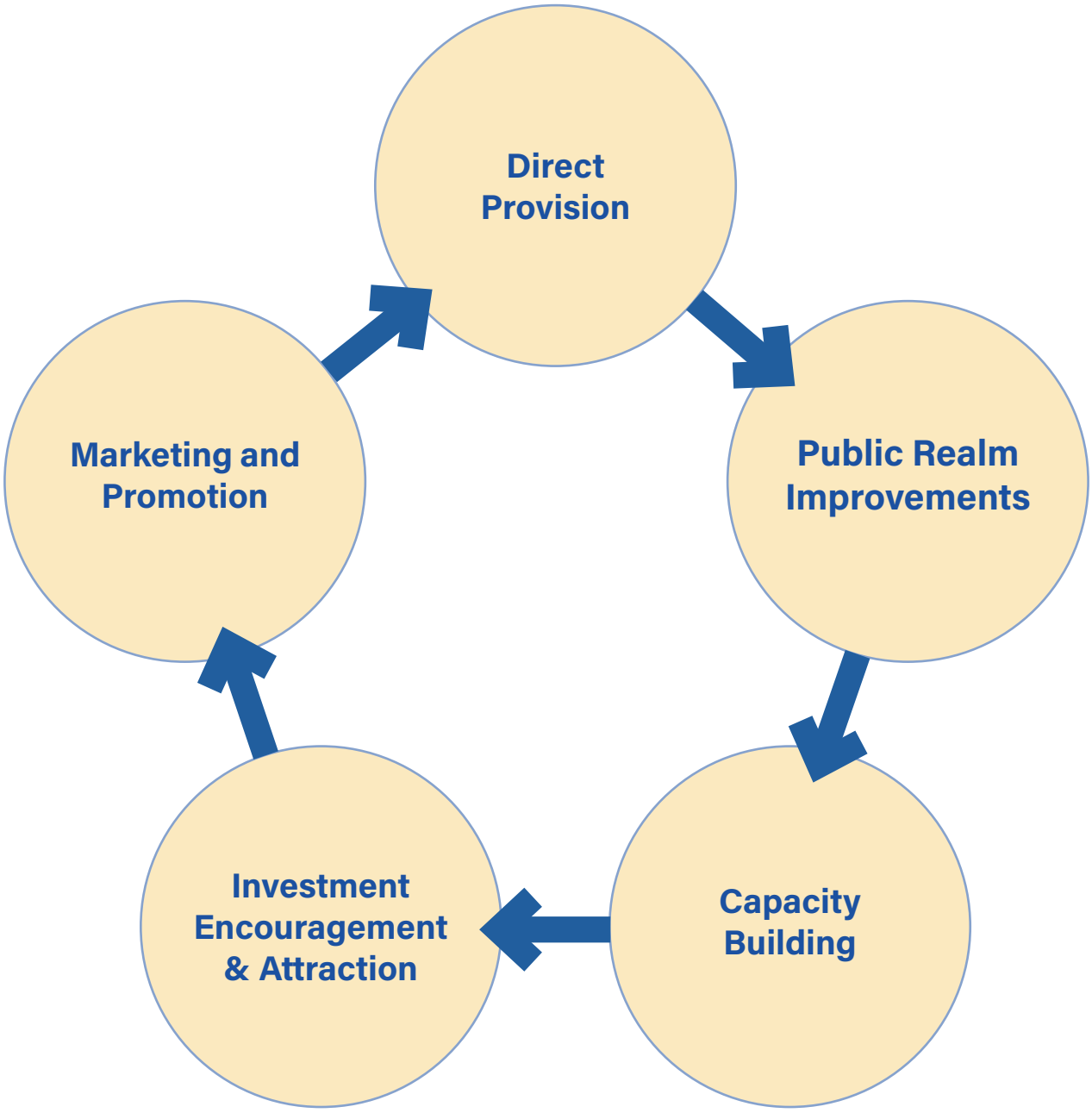


Figure 7 - 1: Types of Municipal Support for Arts, Culture and Heritage

7.3 Arts, Culture and Heritage Improvements in Lake of Bays

As earlier mentioned, the arts, culture and heritage recommendations raised here are somewhat tangential or peripheral to the main thrust of the overall Strategy, which is primarily upon parks, recreation and open space. While there are several opportunities that have been raised during the consultation process, and that are mentioned in this section, an overarching recommendation is that a separate arts, culture and heritage plan or strategy be developed for the Township. This would take all of the suggestions raised during this process and compile them into a specific and separate arts, culture and heritage strategy. While many larger municipalities have developed such plans, even smaller communities have taken initiatives in this regard.

Case Study: Town of Three Rivers, PEI (population 7,200) Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy

This small community (certainly much smaller than Lake of Bays in the summertime) was intensely and justifiably proud of its history, very active cultural scene, and superb location, and decided to develop an arts, culture and heritage strategy to ensure that Town efforts supporting the sector were optimally efficient and effective.

The Township should develop a separate arts, culture and heritage strategy, containing and extending the recommendations contained in this report. Considerations in developing such a strategy should include:

- Creating a cultural tourism strategy, again in partnership with the Town of Huntsville (which might be interested in updating its own now-dated cultural tourism strategy). The involvement of the joint Huntsville / Lake of Bays Chamber of Commerce should also be considered (see Section 2.4.4. of this report). This effort should be seen as an update to the 2015 plan.

Chemainus, BC:

This small community , part of the municipality of North Cowichan (total population about 30,000), is renowned for its support and promotion of the arts. The community is most famous for over 50 wall murals throughout the town created by local and regional artists, that have collectively become a major tourist attraction. There is an annual mural festival that celebrates and adds to this base of attractions. The municipality also supports that activity through a series of arts and culture grants to local artists. This activity has literally put Chemainus 'on the map' and it is now a favoured tourist destination for travelers on Vancouver Island.

- All elements that are normally considered in other municipal arts, culture and heritage plans, such as: hosting an annual arts summit; an active public art program (see Section 4.6.1 of this report); possibly a live music and events component; methods of encouraging experimentation and innovation; etc. This could be done through a benchmarking assessment of the arts and culture strategies of other small communities.
- The public library, which is a key cultural agency in any community and often left out of such planning, as libraries are technically separate organizations from municipalities according to the Ontario Public Libraries Act.
    - » Arts and culture suggestions made elsewhere in this Strategy, including:
    - » An annual allocation in the Council budget to fund arts, culture and heritage activities (see Section 4.6.1)
    - » Expansion of arts-based programming, especially in Township-owned public spaces (see Section 4.5.2)
    - » Exploration of potential to support short-term, citizen-led arts and culture programs along the lines of the Westboro Brainery in Ottawa (see Section 4.5.2)
    - » Expansion of children's programming, an example of where the Library can play a key role (see Section 4.5.3)
    - » Ensuring that all programs offered by the Township consider accessibility equity and inclusion (see Section 4.6.3)

We now turn to consideration of each of the five elements in the framework previously discussed.

7.3.1 Program/Service Development

Under this category there are a number of suggestions and opportunities raised that should be considered. Again, these would fall under the purview of the separate arts, culture and heritage strategy referenced above.

- **Investigate the feasibility of a small public art gallery that would showcase the works of local artists.** This could be located at Dwight, Dorset or Baysville.

Case Study: Gallery in the Park, Altona

The small town of Altona, Manitoba (population 4,200, just slightly larger than the permanent population of Lake of Bays) maintains a public art gallery in partnership with a local corporation (Friesens Corporation, a local printing company). The public art gallery and sculpture garden is located in a historic home in the community that was acquired by the municipality, and run by a not-for-profit volunteer Board but funded by the Town. It is dedicated to showing the works of local and regional artists from Southern Manitoba.

- Explore the development of more walking tours with an arts, culture and heritage focus. Coupled with smartphone interpretation (e.g., using QR codes), these can be a very effective way of presenting the artistic and historic aspects of the community to visitors as well as residents. If the municipality were to sponsor the development of such tours using local individuals and organizations, this would be a very effective means of promoting the community and enhancing tourism (and become one of the initiatives contained within a cultural tourism strategy). Two Ontario examples are Thunder Bay Heritage Walking Tours and Port Hope Driving Tours.
- Explore the creation of more local festivals featuring local musicians and artisans. Baysville has the Walkabout but there is nothing equivalent in Dwight or Dorset. The possibility of similar events in these communities (which generate tremendous local economic impact) could be explored. The opportunity to develop more off-season and winter events should be considered.

Case Study: Brookfield Ice Harvest and Winter Carnival

The small town of Brookfield, Maine (population 1,200) hosts an ice harvest festival centred around the historic practice of cutting and storing ice for customers in the summer months. The festival focuses on a historic theme, and features various related arts and cultural activities.

- **Explore the feasibility of a Community Arts Centre or Creative Hub.** Public consultation revealed a desire for a "community arts centre" of some form. This would consist of space for arts groups, perhaps a small performing arts space, etc. The possibility of repurposing one of the seniors centres for this use might be examined. Also, coupling such a centre with a public art gallery (see above) could be explored as well. However, the reality for such centres, especially in small communities, is that they are often run very close to the financial margin and require significant operating subsidies by the municipality (however, in this regard they are not unlike a sports arena). In any event, the feasibility of such an initiative would need to be carefully studied, but this could be an initiative contained within an overall arts, culture and heritage strategy.

One opportunity that did not come up to a significant degree in the consultation program was the idea of artist studio space being an element of a creative hub. This can be a very strong aspect of a community arts centre, providing creative space for local artisans, and acting as a strong draw for visitors who can see "artists in action." This aspect should be considered as well in any feasibility assessment of an arts centre or creative hub.

Case Study: Jasper Habitat for the Arts

The small resort town of Jasper, Alberta is home to a creative arts studio and community arts hub that serves local residents and is a significant tourist attraction. With a permanent population of about 5,000 and a very large influx of tourists in the summer season, Jasper is similar to Lake of Bays in many ways.

Case Study: Artscape Wychwood Barns

This community hub and artist studio space in Toronto consists of converted "car barns," which were repair facilities for streetcars but became a dangerous and derelict area when they were abandoned. Since converted into community arts space and artist studios, it is a huge draw for the community, featuring a regular weekend market where local produce is sold, the studio artists sell their works, and community causes are promoted by a variety of not-for-profit groups. A number of events throughout the week are also held at the facility.

7.3.2 Public Realm Improvements

- **Create a percentage for public art mechanism.** Many smaller communities have a "percentage for public arts" policy where a certain proportion of the cost of public works projects is dedicated to public art projects and improvements made to public spaces. Usually the percentage ranges from 1 to 2 percent[37]; some very progressive communities have levels up to 3% and 4%. Again, this would be an element to consider in the development of an arts, culture and heritage strategy.
- **Implement improvements to Ragged Falls.** Some in the consultation process mentioned that Ragged Falls is an "amazing asset" to the community, but in need of improvements to make it even more attractive as a public space. This could be the focus of a concerted public improvement plan, focusing upon the natural, artistic and heritage significance of the site. Certainly, similar attractions (such as Kakabeka Falls outside of Thunder Bay) are major attractions in their areas. While the Falls itself is administered and operated by Ontario Parks, the site is a major economic generator to the small town of Oliver Paipoonge (population 5,900, just slightly larger than the permanent population of Lake of Bays) and generates significant tourism attention. Another example is Walter's Falls in Grey County

37 **Moncton (1%):** https://www5.moncton.ca/docs/policies/updated2020/Percent_for_public_art_policy.pdf

Missoula (1%): http://publicartmissoula.org/percent-for-art

Ottawa (1%): https://ottawa.ca/en/arts-heritage-and-events/public-art-and-city-ottawa-art-collection/public-art#section-8278d953-189f-4875-8601-f1613db51bad

Seattle (1%): https://www.seattle.gov/arts/programs/public-art

(not a provincial park site) which has for the past several decades been the focal point for local art shows (see: http://waltersfallsartists.ca) as well as the site for an inn and spa development.

- **Continue distinctive signage throughout the community.** The Township has some distinctive and attractive signage in place (e.g., village signs in Dwight, Dorset and Baysville) but there is opportunity to extend this branded signage and create a greater "sense of place" in other areas in the community (e.g., trails, attractions such as Oxtongue Rapids, Dwight Beach, etc.). This was discussed further in section 6.4.2, and a signage and wayfinding strategy was recommended.

7.3.3 Capacity-Building

- Consider an arts and culture development officer position. Some smaller communities have an arts and culture development officer position in place to work with individuals and organizations involved in providing arts, crafts and historical opportunities to the community. Very often, these staff become involved in capacity-building initiatives in working with these individuals . This may also be an area where Lake of Bays could explore possibilities with the District of Muskoka overall, modelling the practice in Huron County (note that at 62,000, Huron County's population base is about the same size as Muskoka's). Part of the responsibility of this position would be to work with arts, culture and heritage organizations to identify their needs and determine ways to best meet them. If this were a District-level function rather than a purely lower-tier one, there could be significant economies of scale incurred in providing service; this is an aspect of the position that should be explored further in the investigation of this possibility.

Another possibility to explore is whether there is any potential to work with individual artists and crafts-persons who may be on the "threshold of commercialization," that might be interested in turning their arts-related hobby into a career. While this may be more of an economic development function than an arts capacity-building one, it still may be a matter for consideration. Again, this may be a function that would be more appropriate at the District level than the local one; this would be a matter for further exploration.

7.3.4 Investment Encouragement and Attraction

- **Investigate hotel investment potential.** While only indirectly related to arts, culture and heritage, the point was raised on occasion during the consultation process that Lake of Bays has no clearly defined "hotel" operation, or even many bed and breakfast-type operations (this is particularly an issue in the south end of the municipality). If an updated cultural tourism strategy is developed (as earlier recommended), this may be a complementary development to ensure that tourists and visitors have access to the full range of amenities they expect in the area (rather than necessarily going to Huntsville or Bracebridge). Other communities (Arnprior, Smiths Falls) have proactively undertaken preliminary hotel feasibility studies when they perceived a lack of available rooms, and used the results of these assessments to interest investors and hotel chains in potential operations. While this is more of an economic development responsibility (rather than, say, the arts and culture development officer position previously referred to) it still is an important item for consideration. This matter should be reviewed again in the development of the aforementioned cultural tourism strategy.
- **Encourage private sector provision of arts and culture opportunities.** The consultation process suggested that there are certain types of cultural activities for which there is a substantive market; for example, several mentioned that there was likely a market for the provision of drama and arts to children. This would likely not be a matter of direct service provision by the Township, but rather working with external individuals and organizations who could provide such services as a business. Again, while this is fundamentally an economic development type of opportunity, there is clearly a role for the arts, culture and heritage position in helping this come about.

7.3.5 Marketing and Promotion

The initiatives and recommendations presented in the following section are probably most appropriate under the aegis of a cultural tourism strategy. It is recognized, for example, that the Hwy. 60 corridor through Hillside and Dwight sees well over 1 million vehicles per year, which represents tremendous tourism potential. 38 It is surmised that a significant proportion of these are relatively new Canadians, who are anxious to see the sights and experience the culture of northern Ontario.

- **Recognition of Indigenous Heritage:** There is already some recognition of the Indigenous heritage of the Lake of Bays area – for instance the plaque in Cedar Narrows Park in Dorset commemorating the history of the Anishinaabeg people. However, there are undoubtedly many more opportunities throughout the Township for similar recognition and education, and Lake of Bays could support efforts for further acknowledgement and promotion/education of the contribution of the Indigenous peoples in this regard.
- **Promote the S.S. Bigwin Tour**: The S.S. Bigwin, the restored steamship from the early twentieth century that once traversed Lake of Bays ferrying the rich and famous to Bigwin Island, was restored by the Lake of Bays Marine Museum and Navigational Society and started operations in 2012, offering tours around the Lake of Bays from its departure point in Dorset. With

its companion attraction of the Lake of Bays Marine Museum in Dorset, this tour offers an enjoyable and educational outing in Dorset that can be better promoted and utilized. The viability of the operation was threatened during the pandemic and is now in the process of building back. The Township should be more active in promoting the tour and utilizing it as an asset when hosting social occasions, promoting the assets of the Township to visitors, etc.

- **Greater Promotion of Dorset Museum:** In a similar vein, the Dorset Museum, which is a gem of a facility at the north end of Dorset, is a key asset that could be greater promoted and supported. Several of its exhibits do an excellent job of promoting the history and heritage of the area (for example, the exhibit showcasing the Bigwin Inn, and the Gilmour Tramway diorama). This too is a key asset that could be used and promoted more actively by the Township.
- **Greater Promotion of Waterfront Access:** There are relatively few opportunities for the general public to access waterfront throughout the Township, and these should be better promoted (and possibly developed). Examples include the beach at Dwight and the relatively small one at the highway park in Dorset. As population of the Greater Toronto Area grows, and the Township becomes better known as a destination location (as a result of this Strategy and other initiatives) demand will only grow. And of course, when the public makes use of facilities such as these, if there are spending opportunities nearby, there can be significant economic benefit associated with the sites. The Township should take a more concerted approach to the promotion of these public waterfront sites.

Recommendation:

CL 1. Develop a separate arts, culture and heritage strategy, exploring and elaborating on the recommendations contained in this report and updating the work of the 2015 Arts and Culture Strategy for Huntsville and Lake of Bays.

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8.0 Implementation Strategy

8.1 Introduction

This section outlines the proposed implementation strategy for the Strategy's 131 recommendations. Following a discussion of key considerations, the recommendations are presented by service areas of the Strategy (Service Delivery; Facilities; Parks, Open Spaces, Water Access Points and Trails; Arts and Culture), accompanied by the anticipated costs and timeline associated with discrete tasks. For a more complete explanation of each recommendation, please refer to the corresponding discussion in the preceding sections.

This implementation strategy should be considered a living document. In monitoring and evaluating the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy, changes that result from work completed should be reflected in systematic reviews that track the initiation, progress and completion of each item as they are implemented in annual work plans and budgets.

8.2 Considerations

The proposed roll-out of recommendations is based on the information available at the time of the Strategy's development and includes the following considerations:

8.2.1 Operational vs. Capital Projects

Of the 131 recommendations, 69 are operational in nature. This means the implementation of these recommendations would be undertaken by staff as part of their day-to-day activities. The remaining 50 capital recommendations and 12 recommendations to undertake supplementary studies require discrete budget allocations for execution. This includes both improvements/repairs to existing facilities, as well as the design and construction of new facilities and amenities. The capital cost estimates for parks and trails include design fees, initial project start up permits, insurance, protection fencing, construction signage, contingency and cash allowance.

8.2.2 Immediate Need

Several recommendations reflect immediate community need. These are scheduled for Year 1 in the implementation forecasts and address repair backlogs to aging infrastructure and facilities, closing gaps in services and processes for decision-making. Importantly, a Program Developer/Coordinator should be hired immediately to begin developing programs/activities at all Township facilities and parks, and to facilitate programming at other community spaces that are public serving.

8.2.3 Dependencies and Efficiencies

While recommendations are described as individual initiatives, many are interrelated and need to be considered in the larger context of achieving efficiencies in implementation. Some recommendations must be initiated and completed before other recommendations can begin, while others may benefit from being undertaken simultaneously in terms of process efficiency and providing a more fulsome approach to physical improvements.

8.2.4 Budget Considerations

The implementation sequence attempts to evenly distribute the costs of recommendations over the 20-year time frame of the Strategy. This includes costs associated with operations, planning/design and implementation. The total cost of all projects over the 20-year schedule is approximately $4,426,500, with $747,000 allocated for the first year (see Table 8 - 1).

It should also be noted that costs for some recommendations are not available and are yet to be determined. These have been noted in the forecast and would be in addition to the numbers provided in the Strategy. Another factor to consider are cost premiums/ fluctuations due to the pandemic and inflation. The current situation makes it especially difficult to attach estimates to recommendations. This is particularly true at a master plan level where the potential range in design and the quality of materials and finishes are also unknowns, and are determined by the municipality.

Table 8 - 1: Cost Breakdown of Recommendations by Area of Focus and Timeframe

Areas of Recommendations	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
	Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
Service Delivery (SD)	$145,000	$240,000	$300,000	$680,000	$1,365,000
Facilities (F)	-	$30,000	-	$500,000	$530,000
Parks, Open Spaces, Waterfronts and Trails (PT)	$602,000	$1,409,200	$490,500	$460,000	$2,501,500
Arts and Culture (CL)	-	$30,000	-	-	$30,000

8.2.5 Staff Resources

The need for staff resources to do the work requires both a distribution of tasks over time and, in some cases, hiring additional staff to take responsibility for implementation. It will also require coordinated efforts both internally and externally.

8.2.6 Flexibility

The proposed schedule reflects a reasonable roll-out, assuming no major obstacles to activation. However, it is expected that some projects may need to be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. There may also be opportunities to "fast-track" other initiatives.

Ongoing initiatives are to be carried through each year to the end of the Strategy's term. Their applicability throughout the entire period, however, will depend on evolving needs in relation to service development. For example, program expansion for specific interests may be sufficient to meet demand in considerably less than twenty years (subject to potential changes based on continuation of monitoring and verification of need). The point at which this will happen, however, is unknown and thus not identified as an "end-date" in implementation. The recommendations shown as time-limited endeavors may also extend beyond the years shown. It may take longer to complete the identified activities and/or the completion of a recommendation may result in a new system component or procedure. Recommendations to establish formal agreements or contracts, for example, are shown as time-limited for negotiating arrangements that will create new, ongoing relationships between the Township and other providers (e.g., volunteers, agencies, businesses, etc.).

8.3 Anticipated Costs and Timing

Table 8 - 1 summarizes the total cost estimates by timeframe for each section of the Strategy, and Table 8 - 2 outlines in detail the anticipated costs and timeframe for implementing each of the Strategy's 131 recommendations..

Table 8 - 2: Implementation and Project Timeline Chart

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
SERVICE DELIVERY						
Service Capacity Development						
SD 1. Contract professional services to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Township's parks and recreation system.	Page 44	$60,000 (includes all outdoor assets, indoor/outdoor facilities, program services, detailed implementation plan)				$60,000
SD 2. Hire staff to take responsibility for program development/ coordination and, working with the Communications Officers, implementing services/marketing assets.	Page 44	one FTE at $60,000 per annum x 20 years				$1,200,000
SD 3. Purchase and implement a recreation management software system.	Page 44	$25,000 (includes annual subscription and 1st year implementation and training)				$25,000

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
Financing Service Development						
SD 4. Investigate the community's interest in establishing a parks foundation, and facilitate its development if there are volunteer leaders/ residents who are interested and willing to serve.	Page 49					
SD 5. Develop programs related to revenue generation to help finance parks and recreation services, such as a general donation option with taxes, commemorative bench and tree, and last minute ice.	Page 49					
SD 6. Conduct periodic reviews of rates and fees for parks and recreation services to determine need for incremental adjustments.	Page 49					
Partnerships, Collaborations and Agreements						
SD 7. Amend the Township/School Board agreement for Dwight Outdoor Rink to include any upgrades/ improvements the rink and area undergoes.	Page 51					
SD 8. Consider the future need/opportunity to extend the agreement to cover the entire outdoor area of the school property used for recreation.	Page 51					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
SD 9. Consult with the School Board about the possibility of a reciprocal use agreement for access to Irwin Memorial Public School classrooms and gym.	Page 51					
SD 10. Terminate the Dorset Pavilion and Community Park lease and, if the community is interested in retaining the Park, investigate the potential for Algonquin Highlands to assume the lease.	Page 52					
SD 11. Review any and all current agreements between the Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands regarding recreation and parks assets that may be used by residents of both municipalities.	Page 54					
SD 12. Work with local Indigenous groups to amplify and improve knowledge of historical significance.	Page 55					
Program Development and Delivery						
SD 13. Promote more water-based activities (e.g., canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding).	Page 58					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
SD 14. Reinstitute swimming lessons.	Page 58		+ cost to hire instructors			
SD 15. Develop a strategy for hiring and retaining swim instructors/lifeguards to support swimming lessons.	Page 58					
SD 16. Promote all-season recreation by expanding outdoor winter activities (e.g., snowshoeing, trail hiking, backcountry skiing, snowmobiling, ATVing).	Page 58					
SD 17. Provide opportunities for self-directed programming and activities on trails/ paths.	Page 58					
SD 18. Expand arts-based programming, especially in Township-owned public spaces.	Page 59		+ cost to hire instructors			
SD 19. Expand supply of non-sports programming by exploring try-it programming models (e.g., pilots, workshops, lesson series, short-duration programs, program packages, drop-ins).	Page 63		+ cost to hire instructors			
SD 20. Evaluate short-duration activities to measure their success in serving particular markets and to determine any potential for extension as long-term programming.	Page 63					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
SD 21. Explore providing pick-up sports through partnership with Irwin Memorial Public School.	Page 63		+ cost to secure app/platform			
SD 22. Develop additional programs and activities for children and youth aged 5 to 19 years.	Page 64		+ cost to hire instructors			
SD 23. Work with the Lake of Bays Public Library to deliver additional programming across the Township, particularly for children and youth.	Page 64					
Policies, Practices and Procedures						
SD 24. Consult with volunteer groups to identify opportunities to simplify/help with the process to meet requirements in delivering special events and/or participating as vendors.	Page 69					
SD 25. Consider a distinct stream of funding for visitor-oriented arts, culture and heritage services that can be allocated funding through the economic development budget.	Page 69					
SD 26. Work with the District of Muskoka to access funding for experiential based tourism initiatives.	Page 69					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
SD 27. Include an appropriate predetermined review period (e.g., every five years) in each policy.	Page 69					
SD 28. Designate separate times for tennis and pickleball, organized and casual play, ensuring equitable access to both prime and non-prime hours on courts through an allocation policy.	Page 74					
SD 29. Anticipate the need for an ice allocation policy if/when demand for use begins to create competition for available time.	Page 74					
SD 30. Develop a Community Group Affiliation Policy to clarify the types of assistance available to all volunteer organizations that meet eligibility criteria.	Page 74					
SD 31. Investigate potential to reduce insurance costs for community groups and instructors providing events and programs.	Page 74					
SD 32. Consider the need for policies that address affordable access, diversity and inclusion.	Page 74					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
Service Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation						
SD 33. Institute collaborative program/ service planning on a regular basis with other existing and potential providers, including invitations to participate as need or opportunity arises.	Page 78					
SD 34. Institute ongoing service monitoring and evaluation to inform service planning in the areas of facility/space use, programs and events, and participant and volunteer experience.	Page 78					
SD 35. Develop annual planning targets to allow outcomes to be measured and reported.	Page 78					
SD 36. Use new management software to develop comprehensive system-wide data collection to inform ongoing planning/evaluation work.	Page 78					
SD 37. Conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Strategy in ten years.	Page 78				$80,000	$80,000
Total Estimated Cost for Service Delivery:		$145,000	$240,000	$300,000	$680,000	**$1,365,000**

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
FACILITIES						
Lake of Bays Community Centre, Baysville						
F 1. As part of a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Township's parks and recreation system, market the Lake of Bays Community Centre to establish a niche in serving the area's need for/use of arena and hall facilities.	Page 83					
F 2. As part of future upgrades, consider reconfiguring the existing office/lobby area to provide more administrative space.	Page 83					
F 3. As part of future upgrades, investigate the feasibility of providing an open, larger workout/weight area on the main level.	Page 83					
Dwight Community Centre and Library						
F 4. Develop programs that are amenable to the spaces available at the Community Centre.	Page 83					
F 5. Ensure future plans to expand the Library at Dwight Community Centre retain the Hall or, ideally, add multi-purpose recreation program space in the overall design.	Page 84					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
F 6. Consider a joint development and use agreement with the Library for a shared multi-purpose component of the building.	Page 84					
Seniors' Centres						
F 7. Notwithstanding the terms of the long-term lease agreements and decisions precipitated by the Asset Management Plan, investigate opportunities to adapt seniors' centres to program for other age groups, including intergenerational activities.	Page 85					
F 8. Investigate opportunities to move seniors' involvement in service provision in different directions under the existing lease agreements.	Page 85					
F 9. Use the commercial kitchen at the Baysville Autumn Leaves Centre for programming outside senior use hours.	Page 85					
Kitchens						
F 10. Consult with Simcoe Muskoka Public Health Unit to investigate the potential to use the large community centre hall kitchens for community programming and food producer rentals.	Page 86					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken | Task for Recreation Program/Event Developer

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
F 11. Initiate separate schedule for, and track, use of kitchens for programming and commercial uses.	Page 86					
Outdoor Tennis/Pickleball Courts						
F 12. Upon amendments to the agreement with the School Board, issue an RFP to redevelop the rink through upgrades, the addition of a concrete pad for pickleball/tennis courts, a roof to protect the rink/ courts from sun/snow throughout the year, and a new change hut/ storage shed.	Page 90					
F 13. Resurface the Van Seters tennis court.	Page 90		$30,000			$30,000
F 14. Once pickleball courts are available, designate the Van Seters court exclusively for tennis, and if demand warrants, add another tennis court here.	Page 90					
F 15. Monitor use of both tennis and pickleball courts to confirm demand for additional facilities and/ or dual use scheduling of existing courts to equitably accommodate both uses.	Page 90					

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
F 16. If required over the long-term, develop a four to six-court pickleball court facility for casual and organized activity, considering the higher number of courts to be able to accommodate tournament play, and a location removed from residential areas.	Page 90				$500,000	$500,000
F 17. Continue to implement AODA improvements/upgrades as itemized in the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2018-2023) and update the Plan for the period beyond 2023.	Page 91					
F 18. Incorporate the conclusions and recommendations of the Asset Management Plan for recreation facilities in planning and budgeting processes.	Page 91					
Total Estimated Cost for Facilities:			$30,000		$500,000	**$530,000**

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, WATERFRONTS AND TRAILS						
General Recommendations						
PT 1. Adopt the Parks Classification System provided in this Strategy.	Page 98					
PT 2. Ensure new residential developments incorporate adequate parkland, and connect to other parks, trails and/or recreation facilities where possible.	Page 99					
PT 3. Complete an accessibility audit.	Page 103		$40,000			$40,000
PT 4. Develop AODA compliant park standards.	Page 103					
PT 5. Make required accessibility upgrades to parks and trails (including playground safety, routes and wayfinding, seating, shade and bicycle parking) as part of ongoing maintenance and upgrades.	Page 103	Absorbed in regular maintenance/upgrade budgets for each park				
PT 6. Develop a Township-branded signage and wayfinding strategy for parks, trails, boat launches, facilities, heritage sites and main arterials.	Page 103		$30,000[39]			$30,000
PT 7. Develop an Environment-first Park Policy.	Page 104					

39 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 8. Use the park disposal/acquisition trees provided here as necessary to assist with land decisions.	Page 108					
PT 9. Develop, finalize, and implement the Park Beautification Program provided.	Page 109		Project dependent/Absorbed in regular maintenance/ upgrade budgets for each park			
PT 10. Undertake a water access study.	Page 110		$40,000[40]			$40,000
PT 11. Develop a trail strategy that addresses the items described.	Page 112		$40,000[41]			$40,000
PT 12. Add one full time staff for parks and trails.	Page 112	$40,000	$160,000	$200,000	$400,000	$800,000
PT 13. Undertake a comparative analysis to determine which is more cost effective - contracting out grass cutting. or hiring additional summer staff - and proceed accordingly.	Page 112					
Baysville Riverfront Park						
PT 14. For all intents and purposes (e.g., planning, discussion, and marketing etc.) consider Baysville Riverfront Park, Baysville docks east and west, Robertson Parkette, and Grist Mill Parkette as one site called “Baysville Riverfront Park”.	Page 114					
PT 15. Revitalize Bandstand.	Page 114	Absorbed in regular maintenance/upgrade budget				

40 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.
41 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 16. Revitalize Grist Mill monument.	Page 114	Absorbed in regular maintenance/upgrade budget				
PT 17. Add path through Grist Mill park are, connecting monuments, historical signage, and the Baysville waterfront trail.	Page 114		$7,000			$7,000
PT 18. Both Docks: Increase accessibility to dock area with railing to stairs and, if possible, a ramp to dock area.	Page 114		$3,200 (Railings) $8,000 (Ramp)			$11,200
PT 19. West Dock: Upgrade or replace pavilion: It would be advised to have an aluminum soffit/frame to the roof structure to avoid the water damage happening to the roof .	Page 114		$50,000			$50,000
PT 20. West Dock: Improve drainage to dock/pavilion area.	Page 114		$20,000			$20,000
Baysville Dam Park						
PT 21. Replace/upgrade gazebo and seating: Provide more seating, with ample space surrounding seating for maneuvering. Entries should be designed for easy access to all users and abilities.	Page 116		$50,000			$50,000
PT 22. Add seating along water's edge, and around ice rink (if present).	Page 116		$15,000			$15,000
PT 23. Replace/improve stairs.	Page 116		$50,000			$50,000

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 24. Continue to provide an ice rink on the parking lot in winter months.	Page 116	Cost absorbed in new Park/trail staff hire				
Lake of Bays Community Centre Park						
PT 25. Add pavilion near playground. Approach Lions Club to discuss potential for partnership.	Page 118		Dependent on arrangement with Lions			
PT 26. Add seating around playground.	Page 118	$9,000				$9,000
PT 27. Add splash pad.	Page 118		$150,000			$150,000
Van Seters Park (see also tennis/pickleball courts above)						
PT 28. Add shaded seating around tennis and basketball courts.	Page 120	$30,000				$30,000
PT 29. Separate basketball court from tennis courts, and provide permanent posts and nets.	Page 120	$50,000				$50,000
PT 30. Revitalize the Lions lookout tower.	Page 120		$80,000	Monitor and clear tree growth as necessary to maintain view		$80,000
Norway Point Park						
PT 31. Clear tag alders and scrub brush to expand swimming area and increase sightlines to the water.	Page 122	$12,000	Continue to clear plant regrowth			$12,000
PT 32. Add additional seating throughout the park.	Page 122		$24,000			$24,000
Dwight Beach						
PT 33. Offer beach rentals.	Page 124					
PT 34. Refinish and repair pavilion.	Page 124	$15,000				$15,000

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 35. Hydroseed areas where grass has been lost (to be reviewed annually).	Page 124	$5,000				$5,000
PT 35. Hydroseed areas where grass has been lost (to be reviewed annually).	Page 124		$5,000			$5,000
PT 36. Continue to allow parking on street.	Page 124					
Gouldie Park						
PT 37. Install playground.	Page 126		$20,000			$20,000
PT 38. Add seating.	Page 126		$8,000			$8,000
Dwight Community Centre Park						
PT 39. Create trail loop around park that connects to Huntsville Multi-purpose Trail and Dwight Beach.	Page 128			$12,000		$12,000
PT 40. In consultation with children and youth in Lake of Bays, add a new recreation amenity for children and youth.	Page 128		Cost depends on outcome of consultation			
Dwight Outdoor Rink (see also facilities recommendations)						
PT 41. Add a new larger warming/change hut.	Page 130		$15,000			$15,000
PT 42. Add a roof to the rink.	Page 130		$300,000			$300,000
PT 43. Add seating.	Page 130	$8,000				$8,000
Echo Valley Park and Trail						
PT 44. Review agreement with Huntsville Mountain Bike Association.	Page 132					
PT 45. Continue repairs to boardwalks.	Page 132	$25,000	$20,000	$25,000	$50,000	$120,000

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 46. Install rest area near pump track.	Page 132			$12,000		$12,000
Oxtongue Rapids Park						
PT 47. Undertake a Master Plan for this park that will address at minimum safety, signage, trail development, heritage, partnerships, etc.	Page 134		$65,000 [42]			$65,000
Dorset Lions Centennial Park						
PT 48. In partnership with Algonquin Highlands, and any interested community groups, revitalize the rink boards, and consider adding one or two relatively low-cost, low-maintenance amenities to the site, if funds can be raised.	Page 136		Cost depends on outcome of consultation/ partnership			
New Waterfront Park						
PT 49. Undertake a study to determine the location and feasibility of a new waterfront park.	Page 138		$40,000 [43]			$40,000
Centennial Park						
PT 50. Add pavilion suitable for events.	Page 139			$80,000		$80,000
PT 51. Add seating.	Page 139			$10,000		$10,000
PT 52. Add pathway around park.	Page 139			$6,000		$6,000
PT 53. Remove rotating gate.	Page 139					

42 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

43 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
Arena Beach						
PT 54. Employ geese deterrent methods.	Page 140	$2,000				$2,000
PT 55. Improve quality of beach.	Page 140		$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$15,000
PT 56. Add more seating.	Page 140	$6,000				$6,000
South Portage Park						
PT 57. Add wooden walkway along water's edge.	Page 141		$50,000			$50,000
PT 58. Naturalize shore along the road.	Page 141					
PT 59. Add seating.	Page 141		$6,000			$6,000
PT 60. Clear brush from historic signage	Page 141					
Grassmere/Hillside Beach						
PT 61. Undertake a design study to reconfigure parking area to accommodate more spots.	Page 142		$15,000			$15,000
Wolf Bay Beach						
PT 62. Add seating.	Page 143			$6,000		$6,000
PT 63. Add bike racks.	Page 143			$6,500		$6,500
PT 64. Improve beach area.	Page 143			$5,000	$5,000	$10,000
Rabbits Bay Boat Launch and Park						
PT 65. Repair docks.	Page 144		$25,000			$25,000
PT 66. Repair boat launch.	Page 144		$15,000			$15,000
Colebridge Park and Zach Cole's Playground						
PT 67. Redesign playground for safety and accessibility.	Page 145			$45,000		$45,000

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
PT 68. Add seating.	Page 145			$8,000		$8,000
Dorset Pavilion and Community Park						
PT 69. Do not add any facilities to this parcel while under the current lease agreement/ structure.	Page 146					
Glenmount Dock						
PT 70. Upgrade or replace pavilion.	Page 147		See PT 71			
PT 71. Replace/repair dock.	Page 147	$400,000				$400,000
Chimney Park						
PT 72. Undertake feasibility study for developing the parcel as a park..	Page 148			$30,000[44]		$30,000
Marion White Park						
PT 73. Approach the neighbouring property owner to assess their interest in purchasing the property. If they are not interested in purchasing it, the Township should list it on the market. In the interim, and if the property is unable to sell, the Township should naturalize the site.	Page 149					
PT 74. If the property is sold, earmark the funds earned for other parks and recreation capital or operating costs.	Page 149					

44 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
Glenmount Greenspace						
PT 75. Approach the neighbouring property owner to assess their interest in purchasing the property. If they are not interested in purchasing it, the Township should list it on the market. In the interim, and if the property is unable to sell, the Township should naturalize the site.	Page 150					
PT 76. If the property is sold, earmark the funds earned for other parks and recreation capital or operating costs.	Page 150					
Bigwin Island Parcel						
PT 77. Undertake a feasibility study for developing a park at Bigwin Island.. Bigwin Island Parcel.	Page 151		$60,000[45]			$60,000
PT 78. In collaboration with the District of Muskoka, undertake a study to develop the Fairy Falls parcel as a trail destination.	Page 152			$ 40,000		$40,000
Total Estimated Cost for Parks and Trails:		$602,000	$1,409,000	$490,500	$460,000	**$2,501,500**

45 Implementation and associated costs to be determined through the study.

Legend:

Operating costs | Capital costs | Study to be undertaken

Recommendation	Page	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Immediate (Year 1)	Short (Years 2-5)	Medium (Years 6-10)	Long (Years 11-20)	
ARTS AND CULTURE						
CL 1. Develop a separate arts, culture and heritage strategy, exploring and elaborating on the recommendations contained in this report and updating the work of the 2015 Arts and Culture Strategy for Huntsville and Lake of Bays.			$30,000			$30,000
Total Estimated Cost for Arts and Culture:			**$30,000**			**$30,000**

Appendix A: User Groups Engaged

Table A1: List of User Groups

#	Groups/Organizations	Responded to Survey?
1	Algonquin Snowmobile Club	Yes
2	Dorset Lions Club	Yes
3	Lake of Bays Marine Museum and Navigation Society	Yes (x2)
4	Baysville Curling Club	-
5	Lake of Bays ATV Club	Yes
6	Lake of Bays Sailing Club	-
7	Skate Muskoka	Yes
8	Happy Wanderers Snowmobile Club	-
9	Tall Pines Snowmobile Club	-
10	Muskoka Womens Hockey League	-
11	Hospital Group Hockey	-
12	Andrew Daniels Fish Stewardship Foundation	-
13	Archers in Muskoka	-
14	Baysville Riverfront Group	Yes
15	Baysville Community Group	-
16	Culture Days	-
17	Dorset Heritage Museum	-
18	Lake of Bays Association	-
19	Dwight Lions Club	-
20	Artists of the Limberlost	-
21	Lake of Bays Marina	-
22	Dwight Lions Club	-
23	Huntsville Girls Hockey/Sting Hockey Association	Yes
24	Dwight Farmers Market	-
25	Dorset Love Fest	-
26	Baysville Lions Club	-
27	Muskoka River X	-
28	The Limberlost Challenge	-
29	Township of Algonquin Highlands	-
30	Huntsville/Lake of Bays Chamber of Commerce	-
31	Cairn Family of Camps	Yes
32	Barbelles	-
33	SS Bigwin	-
34	Baysville Arts and Crafts Festival	-
35	Dwight Winter Pantry	-
36	Baysville Autumn Leaves Seniors Group	-
37	Dorset Seniors Group	-
38	Dorset Recreation Centre	-
39	Dorset Community Partnership	-

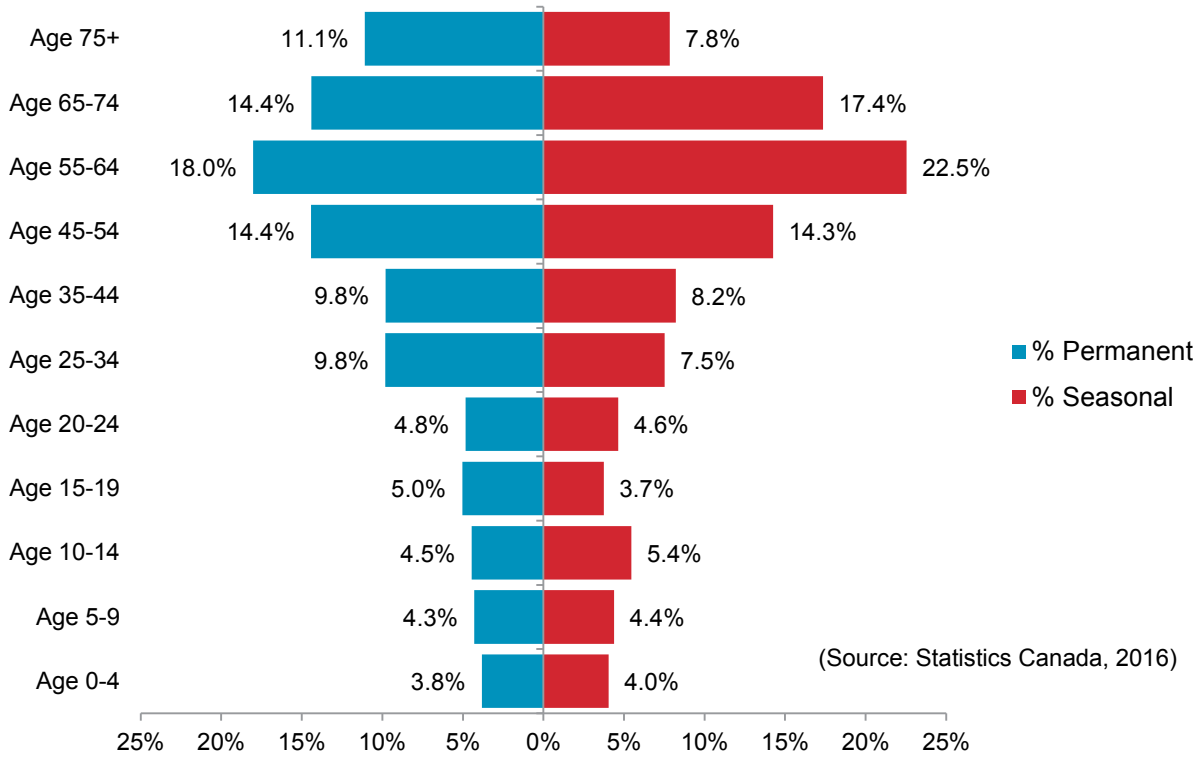
#	Groups/Organizations	Responded to Survey?
40	Huntsville Fire Inspector	-
41	Huntsville Fire Chief	-
42	H.O.L.D. (Hillside Oxtongue Lake Dwight) Community Group	Yes
43	Island Racing	-
44	College of Makeup Art & Design	-
45	Pen Lake Association	-
46	Marie Poirer Planning & Associates Inc.	-
47	Raven Lake Cottagers' Association	-
48	Safeguard Services	-
49	Brendish Computer Centre	-
50	Tasso Lake	-
51	Western University	-
52	Paint Lake Community	-

Note: Only the identifiable names of groups/organizations from list of contacts provided are listed.

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Appendix B: District of Muskoka Second Home Study (2017)

FIGURE 4 - MUSKOKA'S AGE STRUCTURE (PERMANENT VS. SEASONAL POPULATION)



48%

of Muskoka's Second Home population is 55+

+3.3%

More 75+ residents in permanent population vs. seasonal

22%

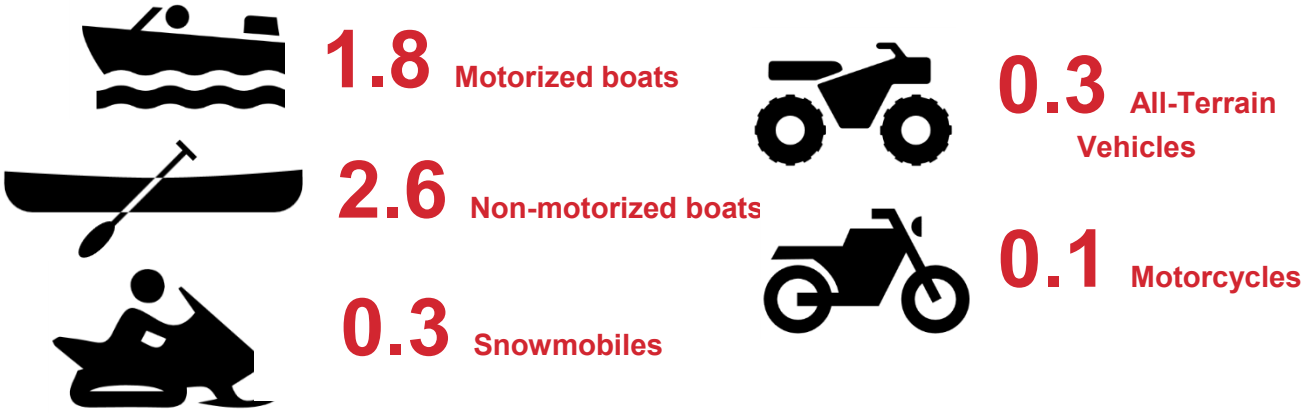
of Muskoka's Second Home and permanent populations are under 25

Conversely, **Figure 5** suggests that there are significant differences in household income between Muskoka's permanent and seasonal populations. 76% of seasonal households earn over $100,000 annually (up from 70% in 2013 and 55.5% in 2004), compared to 28% of permanent households (which has also increased from 22% in 2013 and 9.8% in 2004). In both 2013 and 2004, the Township of Muskoka Lakes had the highest proportion of Second Home households earning more than $100,000 annually (64.3% in 2004 and at 72.3% in 2013). In 2017, however, the Town of Gravenhurst reports 78.2% of Second Home households earning over $100,000, compared to 77.8% in Muskoka Lakes.

5.4 Recreational Activities and Public Facility Use

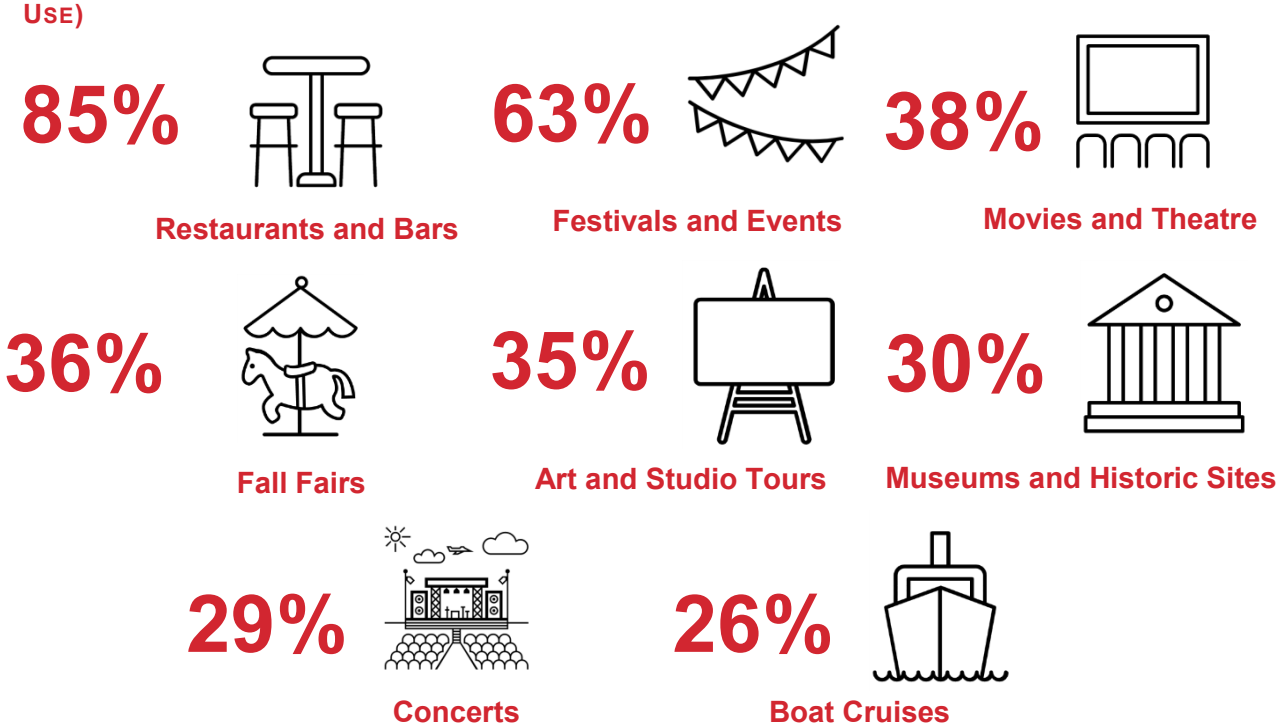
Second Home households engage in a wide variety of activities while in Muskoka. Often, these activities include the use of recreational vehicles. Ownership of a variety of vehicle types is outlined in **Figure 18**. Non-motorized boats remain the most common recreational vehicles in Muskoka, followed by motorized boats, figures which remain unchanged since 2013.

FIGURE 18 - RECREATIONAL VEHICLE OWNERSHIP PER SECOND HOME HOUSEHOLD



Seasonal residents also take advantage of a number of entertainment opportunities in Muskoka, and **Figure 19** presents proportions of Second Home households who report engaging in these activities. Restaurants and bars remain the most common attractions frequented by Second Home households, rising from 81.9% in 2013 to 85% in 2017. The attractiveness of festivals has also grown from 50% in 2013 and 2004 to 63% in 2017, while movie- and theatre-going remained static (38% in both 2013 and 2004).

FIGURE 19 - ENTERTAINMENT AND ATTRACTIONS (% OF SECOND HOME HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING USE)



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Appendix C: Draft Lake of Bays Beautification Program

LAKE OF BAYS PARK BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM

DRAFT/SAMPLE

INTRO

With the emphasis on tourism and the natural environment in Lake of Bays, elevating the quality and visual appeal of park spaces is an opportunity to reinforce Lake of Bays as a key Ontario destination for enjoying beautiful parks, nature and picturesque villages.

Lake of Bays has a number of community organizations that contribute to park beautification through fundraising, mobilizing for upgrades and maintaining gardens. This park beautification program supports coordinated efforts, thoughtfully planned park improvements and cohesive materials that create a strong sense of place throughout the Township.

PURPOSE/VISION

The purpose of this program is to:

- Develop a unifying aesthetic for major parks in Lake of Bays
- Establish a set of standards for materials used in beautification projects
- Identify and prioritize parks for beautification
- Act as a guide for action – a document that can be presented to prospective funders with clear rationale for park improvement priorities and the potential for a finished product

MATERIALS STANDARDS

WALKWAYS







LIGHTING







SEATING







SIGNAGE







SHELTERS







GARDENS AND PLANTERS







TREES AND VEGETATION

Plants and Shrubs for Shade


Cornus alternifolia


Cornus canadensis


Dicentra cucullaria

Plants and Shrubs for Sun


Ceanothus americanus


Coreopsis lanceolata Sterntaler


Geum triflorum

Plants and Shrubs for Wet Areas


Cephalanthus occidentalis


Cornus sericea


Iris versicolor

PARKS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM

In selecting parks for the program, the following questions should be considered:

- Does the park host programs, activities or events for residents and visitors (or is it planned to)?
- Is the park a destination for residents and visitors (or is it planned to become one)?
- Is the park visible from an arterial or main street?
- Does the park have significant historical, cultural or natural heritage features?
- Parks that meet the most of these criteria should be prioritized for the park beautification program; improvements can be made to additional parks on the list as funding comes available.

Given the criteria above that the park should be used by visitors, parks classified as "Major Parks" in the parks classification system are most suitable for the park beautification program. Table C1 lists the Major Parks in the Township and scores them based on the criteria for inclusion in the program.

Table C1: Scores of Major Parks in Lake of Bays

Park	Does the park host programs, activities or events for residents and visitors (or is it planned to)?	Is the park a destination for residents and visitors (or is it planned to become one)?	Is the park visible from an arterial or main street?	Does the park have significant historical, cultural, or natural heritage features?	Total (out of 4)
Baysville Riverfront Park (Baysville Riverfront Trail, Robertson Parkette, Grist Mill Parkette)	Y	Y	Y	Y	4
Baysville Dam Park	N	Y	Y	Y	3
Lake of Bays Community Centre Park	Y (hockey games, tournaments?)	Y	N	N	2
Van Seters Park	Y (pickleball/tennis tournaments)	Y (it will be for pickleball)	N	N	2
Norway Point Park	N	Y	N	Y	2
Dwight Beach	Y	Y	N	Y	3
Gouldie Park	N	Y (if add playground)	Y	Y	3
Dwight Community Centre Park	Y	Y	Y	N	3
Dwight Outdoor Rink	Y	N	N	N	1
Echo Valley Park	N	Y	N	Y	2
Oxtongue Rapids Park	N (any snowmobile events?)	Y	N	Y	2
Dorset Lions Centennial Park	Y (community events?)	N	Y	N	2

Based on the scoring in Table C 1, the priority for parks eligible for the park beautification program is as follows:

Table C 2: Park Eligibility for Park Beautification Program

Score	Park	Additional considerations for priority
Top priority (4/4)	Baysville Riverfront Park	
Medium priority (3/4)	Dwight Beach Dwight Community Centre Park Gouldie Park Baysville Dam Park	After Baysville Riverfront Park, focus should switch to Dwight. Order here is based on level of use and visitor appeal.
Low priority (2/4)	Van Seters Park Lake of Bays Community Centre Park Norway Point Park Echo Valley Park Oxtongue Rapids Park Dwight Outdoor Rink	Van Seters is listed first, as recommendations in the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy for additional courts will likely lead to the park being a destination for residents and residents of neighbouring municipalities. The remaining list is not in order of priority; park improvements can be made at the Township's/community's discretion.
Least Priority (1/4)	Dorset Lions Centennial Park	

Baysville Riverfront Park scored the highest for priority. It is a focal point in the community and has already received a number of community-funded upgrades over the years such as stone walkways and upscale benches and light posts. If the materials used in Baysville Riverfront Park are still available and have been well-received by the community and staff, they can serve as the standards for this beautification program. In that way some of the work has already been done at Baysville Riverfront Park. The Township would address upgrades of these features at Baysville Riverfront Park before introducing the same elements to parks in the medium priority category.

IMPLEMENTATION

FUNDING

Funding for this program can come from a number of sources:

- Township parks reserve/park reserve fund
- Park Foundation/donation program
- Economic Development funds?
- District funds for tourism?
- Other tourism-related grants

EXECUTION

Townships parks should be upgraded following the implementation plan provided in the Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Strategy. The implementation plan was developed to be sensitive to the prioritization identified in Table C 2. When the time comes to perform upgrades on the parks listed, the process is the same, except for choosing the elevated materials provided in this program as opposed to the regular standard materials used for non-beautified parks.

Appendix D: Water Access Assessment Terms of Reference

Water Access Assessment Terms of Reference

The Township's water access are a critical aspect of waterfront recreation in Lake of Bays. Keeping these locations in good condition while maximizing their potential to ensure they can accommodate future demands should be a focus of the Township, as use is anticipated to grow in the future. The impact of fluctuating water levels and ensuring climate resiliency at water access is also an important consideration.

While some preliminary investigative work was undertaken during the development of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Strategy, this primarily consisted of documenting the location and function of key boat launches, with pressing issues. The Township conducted a Water Access Point Inventory (by French Planning) in 2004, which was helpful in setting a baseline, however it is now almost 20 years old, so the information is likely out of date. The Township is due to conduct renewed detailed site investigative work to gather technical information to help understand how each location may be improved over the short, medium and long term to best serve the community.

The Parks, Open Space & Recreation Strategic Plan recommends it is suggested that this investigative work be undertaken to help establish an updated baseline regarding existing conditions. This may be done on an individual location by location basis, or as one larger project over a six-to-eight-month period under one contract. The latter approach would be more efficient and provide a more immediate understanding of existing conditions, but would be a significantly larger contract. If only a small budget can be dedicated each year, this work can be separated into individual projects on an as-needed basis over many years.

Key components of water access assessment work include:

- Legal, topographic and bathymetric surveys
- Facility condition assessment
- Concept development
- Cost estimates
- Prioritization

The following provides further details on how this work may be undertaken and how the findings from this work can be used to help identify future improvements to the Township's water access. This information may be used in the development of a terms of reference for the procurement of this work.

1. Legal, Topographic and Bathymetric Survey

Each water access should be surveyed to understand the site's existing conditions. This includes:

- Legal survey of each property including the identification of any easements
- Topographic survey, which includes but is not limited to:
    - » Elevations with the site boundary and extending a minimum of 5 metres onto adjacent properties
    - » Location of all trees over 10 cm
    - » Identification of groupings of vegetation
    - » Above and below grade utilities
    - » Edge/limit of all surface materials (concrete, asphalt, granular, natural surfaces)
    - » Structures (docks, launch ramp, sheds, and other associated buildings)
    - » Signage and other amenities (trash cans, bollards, etc.)
    - » Shoreline condition and features
- Bathymetry from shoreline edge to a minimum of 8-12 metres into water to understand the depth of water surrounding the launch, which will help identify potential underwater obstructions and the potential need for dredging or limitations regarding boat size

2. Facility Condition Assessment

Each location should be inventoried, documented, and assessed regarding the existing features of each site and their condition. This includes:

- Photographic inventory
- Assessment of all structures and their anticipated life expectancy. This includes pavement, docks/in water structures, boat launch ramps and their associated infrastructure
- Ingress and egress to/from the site from the adjacent road to understand any challenges associated with the property in terms of safe vehicular movement and sight-lines associated with roadway traffic

3. Concept Development

From the information gathered through the site surveys and facility condition assessments, each water access site should be reviewed and assessed for their potential and/or need for future enhancements. Key considerations should include but are not limited to:

- Safe vehicular access
- Turning movement for vehicles with trailers
- Parking configuration
- Potential for off-site and/or overflow roadside parking
- Docking and launch facilities
- Potential for additional amenities (boat washing, small craft launch, swimming area, seating, signage)

4. Cost Estimates

Based on the completed facility condition assessment and concept developed for each water access site, a cost estimate should be prepared to understand the cost of the recommended capital improvements for budgeting purposes. This estimate should include both hard and soft costs associated with implementing the improvements.

5. Prioritization

In unison with the costing, the priority for site improvements should be determined. This priority sequencing should consider:

- Immediate need and quick wins
- Aging infrastructure and safety concerns
- Frequency of use to prioritize spending on popular/well used launch locations
- Potential future demand associated with proposed improvements (i.e. will enhancements encourage more users)
- Balanced spending based on available financial resources (available budget)

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