



# 2014 future directions

## Master Plan for Parks and Forestry Final Report – May 2014





## **Parks and Forestry Master Plan**

### **FINAL REPORT**

**For:**  
**Community Services Department**



**Prepared by:**

Dillon Consulting Limited

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### Executive Summary

Mississauga has effectively planned its growth and achieved an admirable green system comprised of attractive and well managed parks, public open spaces and natural areas. These open spaces support a diverse range of activities and features including sports facilities, gardens, trails, cultural events, and heritage sites. The parks and broader natural heritage system which includes valley and stream corridors, woodlands and other natural features are important contributors to the City's physical and environmental health, social well-being and quality of life - supporting economic growth and establishing a legacy for future generations.

As the City moves forward into a new phase of growth it is changing from its suburban roots to a highly urbanized City, with intensification and redevelopment centred around a series of Growth Areas which include, most notably, the Downtown, major nodes in the Uptown, and Central Erin Mills Area, and several community nodes.

The public open space system is a critical component of the city-wide urban fabric and a key element in building the identity of new redevelopment areas. Parks and other public spaces are the framework for a range of leisure activities and social uses, supporting active recreation, quiet contemplation, public gatherings, and community events. The open space system is also the place for utilitarian and recreational cycling as identified in the Mississauga Cycling Master Plan, walking and nature observation. It supports and enhances natural habitat and provides ecological connections between the Lake Ontario Waterfront and Mississauga's river and creek systems.

Parks and open spaces are a large part of the broader public realm which additionally includes the connecting street system comprised of green boulevards, sidewalks, multi-use trails and bicycle lanes. The design of streets is important to the success and quality of life in downtown urban areas, connecting to and extending the function of the open space system, providing safe and attractive connections for pedestrians and cyclists, and contributing to greening of the city and the expansion of the urban forest canopy.

The City has engaged in strategic planning for parks and recreation services for some years through its various master plans. The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* is a component of *Future Directions*, which is a series of studies that direct indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, programs, parks and forestry services, fire and emergency services and libraries. The master plans will collectively provide the City with an understanding of what is important to residents; reflect their recreational, social, cultural, informational and educational needs; and establish a clear direction for strategies to address the City's future growth and development over the next few decades. The studies have shared common components of data collection, evaluation of current socio-demographics and forecasted change, and community consultation.

#### Vision for Parks and Forestry

*People choose Mississauga for its connected, vibrant outdoor public spaces, memorable experiences and recognize it as a leader in natural environment stewardship.*

The 2014 *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* will serve to guide the City's decisions regarding sustainable planning and management of parks and natural areas assets for continued enjoyment by its residents and visitors. It will receive a major review on a five-year basis together with the other components of Future Directions.

The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* is closely tied to the *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan* in that it responds to population forecasts, leisure trends and the needs assessment for recreation facilities and activities which are physically supported by the City's parks and natural areas.

The *Future Directions studies* address financial implications and through the use of a common evaluation tool suggest priorities to assist the City in delivering the findings and recommendations of the study over the next five years, and beyond.

Key Areas of focus for Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan included the following topics.

**Intensification:** How should the City deliver park services in intensified areas? What are the challenges for developing parks in areas of intensification and redevelopment?

**Stewardship:** What are the types of partnerships the City should be getting into? What is the right approach and model for partnerships? How can existing city services and functions be leveraged to support and expand partnership opportunities?

**Cultural diversity:** How does cultural diversity play a role and influence parks service delivery?

**Park development and redevelopment issues:** How can the City improve service delivery and address changing demographics and development trends as it relates to park design, development and redevelopment and maintenance?

**Quantifying economic benefits of parks:** How do parks influence property values; health; municipal revenue among other factors? In addition, 2014 Future Directions for Parks and Forestry provides an assessment of park needs within each of the City's six Service Areas, considering future growth projections.



Mississauga Celebration Square

### Recommendations

#### Park Planning

##### Parkland Requirements to Address Population Growth

The City's objectives for the provision of a minimum of 1.2 ha of parkland for every 1,000 residents and access to parks within 800m of residential areas have successfully directed the provision of parkland in Mississauga during its formative years. The 1.2 ha provision standard remains a reasonable target to direct growth moving forward as it approximates the allowable dedications under the Planning Act which equate to a population based standard of approximately 1.0 ha per 1,000 persons.

The estimated population of the City of Mississauga in the year 2014 is 756,590 persons. Using this population figure and the total amount of City and Community Parks of 1,747.55 ha (which excludes other open space types), the current per capita supply City-wide is approximately 2.31 ha per 1,000 persons, which is above the 1.2 ha target objective. However this is largely achieved with the generous supply of City parkland which includes extensive waterfront properties, Riverwood and other strategic parkland acquisitions that have been made over the years.

An evaluation of parkland needs at the Service Area level indicates that, using the provision target of 1.2 ha. per 1,000 persons, the current 2014 supply of parkland will generally support population growth across the Service Areas to 2036. The exception to this is Service Area 5 which currently has the lowest per capita supply. Growth in this service area is anticipated to be high as a result of the development of the Downtown, which at present is significantly underserved with a per capita supply of 0.72 ha per 1,000 persons.

A Service Area level analysis is useful only in that it provides a quantitative assessment of current and future parkland both as a baseline and against the City's target provision standard. As development plans are prepared the need for parkland should be closely evaluated within each of the City's planned growth areas.

Mississauga's strategic planning documents envision a vibrant downtown with a mix of residential and employment uses, pedestrian and transit-oriented streets, great parks and public spaces, and a range of venues that support entertainment, arts and culture, dining and shopping. The public open space system and a green, pedestrian-oriented street network are key elements in building the identity of the Downtown, as envisaged in the Downtown 21 Plan. The City has made significant inroads into the development of the planned system of parks which form an emerald necklace in the downtown, connecting to Riverwood, the City's Central Park, as described in the Strategic Plan. Notable, innovative accomplishments in the City Centre include the rejuvenation of Mississauga Celebration Square, and the development of Scholar's Green and Community Common.

While significant accomplishments in parks development have been achieved in the City Centre area, new parks and public open spaces will continue to be needed to meet the needs of urban dwellers and to achieve objectives for attractive, green, livable, walkable, connected urban communities throughout the City's growth areas.

##### Recommendation #1

- ⇒ The City should maintain the current tableland parkland standard of 1.2 ha per 1000 population, with access to parks within an 800m distance in residential areas as a minimum standard for new development areas. This standard does not include non-park open spaces such as hazard lands and natural areas, which may be acquired for conservation purposes.

The City's Parkland Acquisition Strategy and evaluation criteria were reviewed and discussed with staff as part of the 2009 Parks and Natural Areas Master Plan. The criteria were slightly modified to better align with the identified priorities of this plan which include: parkland to ensure growth needs are met; strategic acquisitions to support natural areas and green space connectivity; and, strategic connections along the waterfront. At this time the acquisition strategy and evaluation criteria have not been formally adopted.

### Recommendation #2

- ⇒ It is recommended that the City continue with its current approach to identifying strategic land acquisitions through its Parkland Acquisition Strategy, and formalize an evaluation criteria and a ranking system, with priorities for acquisition of lands that:
  - protect and enhance Natural Areas;
  - support the Waterfront Parks Strategy;
  - support strategic connections along the waterfront;
  - support completion of a continuous trails system;
  - support population growth and sustainable community design (where no or limited opportunities for parkland dedications exist).

### Parkland to Support Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Activities

The 2014 Future Directions Recreation Master Plan: provides a projection of outdoor recreation facilities needs over the 5 year term of the Master Plan. These requirements have been reviewed for implications for parkland acquisition in that additional parkland may be required to support the development of major indoor facilities or outdoor sports fields, or the redevelopment of an existing sports field should there be a forecasted need.

The findings of the 2014 Recreation Master Plan indicate that there are limited major outdoor facilities needed over the five year term of the plan. The potential development of an indoor soccer facility and soccer / multi-purpose field and a cricket pitch is noted at Park 459. For outdoor facilities a calculation strictly on the basis of per capita standards as shown on Table 4.2, following, would indicate a need for an increase in outdoor soccer fields as the population increases. However the Recreation Master Plan notes that utilization levels suggest that there is capacity within the existing supply to make up some of the forecasted need to 2019. As well the Recreation Plan recommends that other efficiencies including improvement to, or redeployment of, existing fields, and the use of artificial turf fields can minimize supply needs.

The recommendations of the Future Directions Recreation Master Plan for the provision of indoor and outdoor facilities to meet growth projections to 2019 which may have implications for parkland supply or park redevelopment are as follows. Refer to the Recreation Master Plan for more detailed information on the location of existing facilities and the rationale surrounding the recommendation.

- If the "smart growth" principles of intensification along the Highway 5/10 corridor are achieved, the development of an urban community centre should be considered in this vicinity with facility components to be determined based upon a needs and feasibility study triggered by opportunities to partner, land redevelopment opportunities, major transit project, etc. Co-location opportunities to establish a community hub should be discussed with social service agencies, Mississauga Public Library, school boards, private sector, etc.
- Work with the Parks & Forestry Division and Mississauga Public Library to establish criteria for evaluating and



acquiring surplus school sites, other strategic lands, or collaborative ventures for the purposes of addressing recreational gaps within neighbourhoods (e.g. within the Downtown intensification node).

- In advance of the Square One Older Adult Centre's expiring lease in 2017, undertake an Older Adult Space Provision Study that explores the ability of Mississauga's existing community centres to deliver enhanced services for the 55+ population. Where demands cannot be reasonably served by existing community centres, the Study should examine opportunities to secure integrated and/or stand-alone older adult spaces through creative opportunities such as use of complementary Civic facilities (e.g. Mississauga Public Library), surplus school lands, and/or developments within intensification corridors (e.g. Highway 5/10).
- Pending the outcomes of the City's ongoing internal indoor field analysis along with the land development project currently being prepared for the Hershey SportZone, provide one additional indoor turf field at either the Hershey SportZone or the Park 459 Sports Park.
- Although soccer fields should be targeted at a rate of 1 field per 2,800 residents, additional fields should be provided where supported by: utilization rates experienced after implementation of the Mississauga Sports Field Allocation Policy; achieving the required mix of lit versus unlit fields; the outcome of the Ontario Soccer Association's Long Term Player Development model; removal of school fields; and/or reduced reliance upon lower quality fields embedded within neighbourhoods.
- Proceed with the development of outdoor artificial turf as currently planned for Park 459.
- Evaluate the ability of existing soccer fields to support higher playing capacities (through the installation of irrigation, drainage, lighting, and/or artificial turf systems) while also evaluating underutilized minor and mini soccer fields for their ability to shift organized soccer use to another field and repurpose them for other needed uses or for the purposes of neighbourhood-based program delivery within the park.
- Construct 1 new ball diamond, with additional diamonds being considered if rationalized through further examination of: utilization rates upon the implementation of the Mississauga Sports Field Allocation Strategy; achieving the desired mix of lit versus unlit and softball versus hardball diamonds; and/or removal of school or neighbourhood diamonds.
- Conduct needed improvements to selected ball diamonds aimed at maximizing quality of play while identifying underutilized diamonds that should be focused on casual play or repurposed to other needed uses, including lower quality fields embedded within neighbourhoods.
- Identify opportunities to strategically consolidate the number of ball diamond locations in favour of developing additional multi-diamond venues capable of meeting sport development and sport tourism objectives.
- The City should explore the provision of new cricket pitches at Park 459, a location in Service Area 3 and/or south of the Highway 403 corridor.
- Construct a multi-use field at Park 459 to provide a venue prioritized for alternative field sports.

- Target a total of 19 additional tennis courts, subject to evaluation of utilization rates, confirmation of community demand, geographic distribution, and opportunities that present themselves through park development and redevelopment activities. The current provision of public courts in Service Areas 3 and 6 suggests these are areas of gap. Additional community club courts should be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly where the opportunity to partner exists.
- A total of 10 new basketball/multi-purpose courts should be constructed over the next five years, subject to confirmation of community demand and distributional assessments.
- New play sites should be provided on the basis of ensuring walkability, where residential areas have access within 800 metres unobstructed by major pedestrian barriers.
- In areas of intensification, the City should work with the land development industry to integrate play sites as part of higher density development projects given that new parkland will be increasingly difficult to find in established areas.
- Provide at least one fully accessible play site in each Service Area, suggesting that Service Areas 2, 3 and 5 should be the priority areas for new barrier-free play sites.
- Through the City's replacement program, rejuvenated play sites should integrate accessible/barrier-free features.
- Future spray pads should only be provided in instances where fitting into destination-type or waterfront park development, in intensification areas through agreements with the land development industry, and where combined

with civic infrastructure serving a dual purpose (e.g. public art or fountains in hardscaped parks).

- Provide small-scale satellite skateboarding venues in appropriate neighbourhood-level parks in lieu of constructing new multi-use ramp facilities over the next five years.
- Indoor skateboarding opportunities should be considered if the City wishes to create a youth recreation space, and validated through discussions with the local skateboarding community.
- Construct one new multi-use bike facility with a specific focus on mountain biking, designed in consultation with local youth and bike sport representatives.
- Develop a Downtown Core Recreation Provision Strategy that serves to identify current gaps in service and addresses engaging more residents in recreational pursuits. The strategy should address working in partnership with other agencies, building local capacity and utilizing available private and public spaces.

Although Future Directions primarily addresses a 5-year horizon, from a parkland supply perspective future population growth and outdoor facilities beyond 2014 will also need to be considered. Depending on the efficiencies achieved within the existing supply of outdoor fields, the application of facility provision levels to forecasted growth could result in the need for an increase in the number of outdoor fields over the long term, which could result in the need for additional parkland.

Considering Mississauga's built-out condition, and with anticipated growth by almost 100,000 persons beyond 2014, the Ninth Line parklands still likely represent the best opportunity for new outdoor facility development looking into the future. As noted in the foregoing

discussion some allocation of recreation needs in the 2014 Recreation Master Plan has been assigned to Park 459.

Minor recreation facilities such as play sites, basketball courts and spray pads are recommended to be provided on a service level standard. The realization of the recommendations contained within the Recreation Master Plan in regard to these facilities will need to be considered in the development of new parks as well as the redevelopment of older ones.

### Recommendation #3

- ⇒ The identification of new parkland and redevelopment of older parks should consider and be coordinated with the implementation of recommendations in the *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan* for the provision of sports fields and outdoor recreation facilities to address future population growth.

### Recommendation #4

- ⇒ The inventory of Ninth Line parks should be assessed as part of an overall land use review of the area for their capability to accommodate recreation facilities and leisure needs identified in *Future Directions*.

### Official Plan Revisions to Parkland Classifications

The City's Strategic Pillar for Change: Completing Our Neighbourhoods speaks to the provision of 'safe neighbourhoods that support a strong, connected and vibrant community - a place where all can live, work and prosper.' Contemporary thinking and placemaking recognizes parks and public spaces as major contributors to City greening; aesthetically pleasing spaces; enlivened streets; and healthy, social, walkable and connected communities.

The concept of a Community Park in urban intensification areas will need to broadly include all types of parks, including traditional parks to support structured recreational activities as well as smaller urban parks and public squares that may offer different forms of leisure pursuits and unstructured activities that appeal to urban dwellers and contribute to the urban form.

The development of new parks in urban intensification areas is not without its challenges however, as parkland assembly may be fragmented and there are competing interests for the available land base, including roads and servicing, other community facilities and infrastructure, and underground parking garages. These uses additionally challenge the design of parks and streetscapes limiting traditional tree planting and facility development opportunities and requiring more innovative and often expensive design and maintenance approaches.

Parks and open spaces are a large part of the public realm which additionally includes the connecting street system comprised of green boulevards, sidewalks, multi-use trails and bicycle lanes. The design of streets is important to the success and quality of life in the downtown, connecting to and extending the function of the open space system, providing safe and attractive connections for

pedestrians and cyclists, and contributing to greening of the city and the expansion of the urban forest canopy.

It is expected that many individual redevelopment/intensification projects will typically provide only limited land for public parks and open spaces. For this reason it is recommended that the City continue to plan its intensification on a precinct basis wherever possible, as has been undertaken in the City Centre through *Downtown 21*, and the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*. As part of the planning studies to implement growth management recommendations, a community-based assessment should be used to establish where and how much parkland should be included in redevelopment areas, in consideration of desired urban form, proximity to existing parkland and facilities, demographics, socio-economic factors, and projected growth.

Planning is underway for several key precincts including Inspiration Port Credit, Inspiration Lakeview and Vision Cooksville. To realize the full potential of the parks and open space system and its interrelationship with other aspects of the public realm in these communities, the Parks and Forestry department will need to have a key role in the development of these plans. The recommendations of these studies will need to be closely monitored for their consistency with the recommendations of Future Directions.

### Recommendation #5

- ⇒ The existing parkland and open space classifications comprising Destination Park and Community Park are appropriate categories and should continue to be used to describe the hierarchy of City-owned public parks, providing that parks are understood to include all types of public open spaces that support urban 'downtown' living. These would include smaller urban parks, public squares and connecting links as well as active recreation sites. Further articulation of

these park classifications may occur on an area-specific basis to direct planning and development in areas of intensification and redevelopment (e.g. as outlined in the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*).

### Recommendation #6

- ⇒ The City should continue to develop integrated open space and urban design plans for all new areas of redevelopment and intensification on a 'precinct' basis (Inspiration Port Credit, Inspiration Lakeview, and Vision Cooksville are examples). The recommendations of these studies will need to be closely monitored for their consistency with the recommendations of Future Directions.
- ⇒ For parks, and public and private spaces, these precinct plans should address the location, form, connectivity and characteristics of parkland relative to the existing parks and open space system and consider demographics, socio-economic factors, and projected population forecasts.

### Park Provision in the Downtown Growth Area

The Mississauga Growth area includes the intensification areas of the Downtown Core and portions of the Fairview, Cooksville and the Hospital Districts. A Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy has been undertaken to identify how much new parkland is required by the year 2041, how the parkland will be acquired, what types of park spaces can be realistically anticipated and where the City should focus their attention for acquisition of parkland within the Growth Area.

Today, the Mississauga Growth Area is currently deficient in park space, which hampers the long-term achievement of a diverse and robust public realm network that is characteristic of successful urban centres. Urban Park spaces are fundamental components of the broader public realm. Investment in parks and the public realm contribute to both the health of a community and have measurable economic benefits that typically exceeds the initial investments. In the face of substantial new growth projected for the Growth Area, this deficiency in park space will be exacerbated if no new park spaces are acquired.

To guide the planning and implementation of parkland and the public realm in the Downtown Growth Area (Downtown Core, Downtown Fairview, Downtown Cooksville and Downtown Hospital Districts), the City should implement the following recommendations of the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy (DGAPPS)*. The rationale and background analysis and additional discussion on the recommendations is included within the Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy.

### Recommendation #7

- ⇒ That the City continue to apply its current residential parkland dedication rate of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 people on all new residential developments within the Growth Area.

### Recommendation #8

- ⇒ That the City identify a goal of achieving a minimum of 13.7 hectares up to 51.5 hectares of new park space by the year 2041 (a minimum of 9.4 hectares by the year 2031). This translates into the Growth Area accommodating between 5.5 and 12.3 percent of the total growth area in parkland. The City should also update this objective, as population projections are adjusted over time.

### Recommendation #9

- ⇒ That every resident be located within a 5 minute walk (400 metres) from a public park outside of the Growth Area, or an Urban Park or Urban Square within the Growth Area.

### Recommendation #10

- ⇒ That the City adopt a new hierarchy of urban park spaces that includes Urban Parks, Urban Squares and Pocket Parks.

### Recommendation #11

- ⇒ That the City incorporate into its Official Plan, policies to protect the function and inventory, both existing and planned of park spaces/public realm and a planned approach to parkland acquisition.

### Recommendation #12

- ⇒ That all significant development proposals on a site greater than 1,000 sq. m. shall include an at-grade land contribution to the public realm network.



### Recommendation #13

- ⇒ That for a primarily residential development, not less than 7.0 percent and not more than 25.0 percent, of the net site area shall be set aside for an appropriate park component.

### Recommendation #14

- ⇒ That the City commit to a successful tree planting program within urban parks and the public realm network which outlines what tree species to plant, in what locations and how the trees should be planted.

### Optimizing Planning Tools

Although the City has achieved an admirable, innovatively designed grouping of parks in the City Centre area, analysis of the parks provision levels completed for the Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy reveals that there is a significant undersupply, both in the City Centre and in the broader Downtown Growth area. This is anticipated to continue as populations in the area increase unless additional parkland is acquired. While it may not be possible to offset the current parkland shortfall it will be important moving forward to continue efforts to acquire parkland wherever feasible. This will require a concerted effort in employing all available planning tools as well as enlisting the support of the development community.

The Environmental Scan undertaken for Future Directions has revealed that the mature municipalities of Toronto and Ottawa are utilizing all available planning tools to acquire and develop parkland to meet growth needs (Refer to case studies outlined in Section 3.3.2). Identified measures include use of Section 37 Height and Density Bonus provisions under the Planning Act, which affords additional development rights in exchange for the construction or installation of new community facilities such as parks and community centres, and public realm improvements such as streetscape improvements, transit

shelters or public art. As well both Toronto and Ottawa have developed municipal policies to address area-specific use of a specified portion of the collected Cash-In-Lieu (CIL) funds, and appear to be using CIL funds for the development and redevelopment of parks to meet growth needs.

The City of Mississauga has a Corporate Policy and Procedure to direct the dedication of land, cash-in-lieu of land, or a combination of land and cash. The policy identifies how land dedications and cash-in-lieu payments for parks purposes are made, and the nature and type of acceptable land dedications. The policy reiterates the standards of the Official Plan, and is consistent with the provisions of the Planning Act in the application of a parkland yield, or cash payment, calculated on the basis of, the greater of either 5% of the land area or 1 ha. for every 300 dwelling units, or 2% of the developable land area for office / commercial / industrial land.



Port Credit Waterfront

**Recommendation #15**

- ⇒ The City should continue to apply all available tools such as use of cash-in-lieu, and density bonusing and alternate provision standards allowed under the Planning Act and enabled by elements of the Official Plan and Zoning By-laws, to optimize parkland securement, development, and redevelopment. The City's policies in this regard should be re-examined to ensure that the best advantage is being achieved from these tools when other factors such as the encouragement of development are considered.

**Role of Publicly Accessible Open Space on Private Lands**

In denser urban areas, publicly accessible open space on private lands in the form of pocket parks and urban squares plays a key role in the character of an area, typically integrated to create an attractive setting for the building, provide amenities for the occupants, and to augment the public realm. North American cities such as Philadelphia and New York are also engaging private development in the quest to create public spaces through other innovations which may include sponsorship of 'pop-up' or temporary parks in parking spaces or underutilized parking lots, on roof deck spaces, or through lobby 'parks' and indoor market spaces.

As redevelopment and infilling occurs in Mississauga open space areas provided by private development such as urban squares, roof gardens, and landscaped amenity areas will constitute an important part of sustainability measures and the urban design character of new communities. They should be considered important elements toward 'placemaking', City greening and the provision of public or private amenity space. However, privately owned open space should be considered supplementary to, and not a replacement for the required provision of public parks and open space unless its acceptable to the City as a parkland dedication As privately owned lands the long term

future of these spaces as public space for future generations cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the responsibility for future maintenance of these spaces should be determined and Developer Agreements established to direct long term public use and maintenance. Discussions need to take place during the design and approvals stage to ensure that City standards are met.

**Recommendation #16**

- ⇒ Publicly accessible privately owned open space should be encouraged in new urban infill and redevelopment areas but should be considered supplementary to, and not a replacement for, the required provision of public parks and open space. Open space on private lands including urban squares, roof gardens, and landscaped amenity areas, will constitute an important part of the urban design character of new communities. The approvals process for these spaces should include clear developer agreements to direct long-term use and maintenance of the space.



### Park Development

#### Designing Parks for All Ages and Abilities

In addition to field sports that will be allocated based on a Service Areas assessment, the Future Directions Recreation study will evaluate the need for more local-serving recreation amenities. These include tennis courts, basketball courts and multi-purpose courts, and play sites. These minor outdoor facilities are likely to be able to be accommodated in existing parks and the identified needs for these facilities in each of the Service Areas should be considered in the planned development and redevelopment of parks. The Recreation Master Plan also provides guidance on bike facilities, outdoor pools, and outdoor ice rinks.

To support Provincial and Region of Peel mandates for the encouragement of physical activity, and wellness, the provision of opportunities that encourage informal use, as well as sports, in parks will also be an important consideration in the development and redevelopment. Community consultation undertaken to date indicates a need for certain improvements to encourage and enhance use of parks and trails, particularly by youth and older adults. Suggested improvements include more benches and areas for seating, shade structures, more accessible and looped walking trails, outdoor fitness equipment and play equipment oriented to youth (e.g. climbing structures, larger swings), Wi-Fi® and other technologies in parks, and signage to enable place based learning.

As well, the trend toward the use of parks as outdoor social spaces is evident in Mississauga and consultation with representatives from youth, older adults, and newcomer demographics suggest that parks are increasingly being used as places for meeting and socializing. In the future, the provision of social space will need to be considered in the development or redevelopment of all parks and spaces.

#### Recommendation #17

- ⇒ In the design of all new parks, and the rejuvenation of older parks, consider use by all-ages and abilities, design for safety using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and the provision of facilities and amenities that support social interaction, and unstructured recreation and leisure activities. These may include, as appropriate: child and youth-oriented play facilities; play sites (including traditional play sites and potentially natural play sites); outdoor fitness equipment; informal playing fields; gardens; shaded seating areas (e.g. trees or shade structures); picnic / barbecue facilities; Wi-Fi® hot spots; checker / chess tables; outdoor table tennis; community gardens; leash-free areas; event or performance space (e.g. bandshells); pathways and walking trails; wildlife viewing areas; and interpretation / education areas.

#### Washroom Facilities in Parks

Consultation with the community during Future Directions has continued to yield requests for the provision of washroom facilities in and water bottle filling stations in parks and along trails. In 2004 the City undertook a Washroom Study to clarify the City's basic level of service with respect to permanent washrooms, and to determine suitable locations within the existing park system for the development of new washroom facilities. The latter was based on a series of criteria that were developed to evaluate park eligibility, including relative weighting that was reflective of the park's functions, availability of servicing, level of use, frequency and duration of attendance, and season of use. Different types of washroom facilities and their associated costs were also evaluated. The ranking and prioritization resulted in recommendations for the provision of new washroom facilities in 15 additional parks which received a high

ranking based on their function as all-day destination parks (e.g. picnic parks or waterfront parks), or high-use for organized team sports, combined with destination facilities such as a spray pad or skateboard facility. The study anticipated these facilities in, as yet, undeveloped parks such as Park 459. Moving forward, the 2004 Washroom Study contains valid criteria for evaluating the eligibility of parks to receive permanent washroom facilities. The evaluation should continue to be applied as new parks are developed, or older parks are re-purposed and their current role and function is altered (for example if recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan for consolidation of sports fields for tournament use are realized). Similar criteria could be developed to evaluate the provision of water bottle filling stations since they require water service as well.

The evaluation applies only to the establishment of permanent washrooms and portable facilities may continue to be provided, as permissible, for special events, and non-serviced sites with regularly scheduled activities.

### Recommendation #18

- ⇒ The City's 2004 Washroom Study contains valid criteria for evaluating the eligibility of parks to receive permanent washroom facilities. The evaluation should continue to be applied as new parks are developed, or older parks are re-purposed and their current role and function is altered.
- ⇒ At the next iteration of Future Directions, the recommendations of the 2004 Washroom Study should be reviewed.

### Public Engagement

The City continues to engage its residents in consultation on its strategic planning studies as well as on the development of redevelopment of parks through its Placemaking activities. Although the City undertakes a range of activities to solicit opinions and is cognizant of the need to be inclusive and creative to encourage community participation, it is also recognized that there is a need to supplement traditional community meetings which often receive low attendance with other forms of public engagement.

Creative engagement activities that could be considered include:

- use of web-based resident surveys or emailed surveys to target groups;
- use of QR codes on temporary signboards at the park location or nearby community facility, linking to on-line information about a project or a survey;
- 'walking discussions' held at the park site;
- delivering public meeting presentations via WebEx (or equivalent on-line presentations), which allow for off-site participation (including the potential for interaction rather than just viewing);
- use of social media (such as Twitter and Facebook) to solicit input from followers;
- translation of materials into different languages;
- a traveling 'roadshow' with information on the project presented at community centres, shopping centres;
- direct outreach to specific target groups such as older adults, youth and multi-cultural groups through community contacts, including taking the presentation/information to where the audience is (group meetings, events).

The City may already be using some or all of these techniques at various times and the potential increase in public engagement costs would need to be weighed against the type and value to the project involved.

### Recommendation #19

- ⇒ Continue to engage the public in all parks development and redevelopment projects to ensure that community preferences and interests are integrated together with recommended facilities, and to fulfill Placemaking objectives. Consideration should be given to different types of public engagement activities such as meetings and open houses, as well as information technology such as Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media to supplement traditional community approaches. Engaging the public through a range of engagement activities expands the City's reach to the maximum number of potential participants.

### Park Redevelopment Criteria, Design Guidelines and Standards

In recognition of both aging park infrastructure in Mississauga and the role that existing parks will play in supporting population growth and changing leisure interests, the 2009 Future Directions Master Plan recommended that a prioritized list of parks for redevelopment be established to inform the capital budget process. The City has embarked on this and is completing a comprehensive inventory and asset replacement plan for parkland and associated facility assets. A lifecycle replacement model is anticipated to be completed by 2014.

It is important to note that a park redevelopment project is different from routine park facility repair and replacement which may happen on a different timeline as a 'one-of' replacement to address safety concerns, or as part of life cycle replacement. Park redevelopment typically addresses the park as a whole and may include changes to

facility types as well as reconfiguration of the design and layout of the park. There may be alignment of the two processes in the event that a park requires a major overhaul of several facilities or operational costs have increased as a result of aging infrastructure. Other factors that may trigger redevelopment include a need for the park and facilities to be more relevant in the context of contemporary leisure trends, or to address anticipated or known recreation needs and interests resulting from changing demographics as a result of intensification, the life-cycle of a neighbourhood or cultural shifts.

### Recommendation #20

- ⇒ Establish a prioritized list of older parks for redevelopment and identify annual budgets for systematic parks redevelopment / upgrading within the 10-year capital plan, based on identified priorities and employing additional analytics and assessment. To inform priority setting evaluation criteria should be established and applied. This could include the following considerations (refer to body of the Master Plan for additional details).
  - planned life cycle replacement of major outdoor recreation facilities;
  - implementing the recommendations of *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan*, including the potential for redeployment of underutilized sports fields in existing parks to meet identified needs;
  - implementing the recommendations of the *Credit River Parks Strategy*, the *Waterfront Parks Strategy* the *Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy* and the *Urban Forest Management Plan*, the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*, the *Older Adult Plan*, the *Youth Plan*, and the *Cycling Master Plan*.
  - significant changes in community demographics as identified through growth plans or other studies;

- increase in park usage and/or the nature of use has changed and is impacting the carrying capacity of the park or warrants rethinking of park facilities to support new activities.

#### Recommendation #21

- ⇒ Develop guidelines and standards for landscape, urban design elements, facilities and sustainability measures to be applied to routine facility repair and replacement within parks, and the development and redevelopment of parks. The plans and design guidelines will also be used for budgetary purposes.

Where capacity issues have been noted or when evaluating community requests for park improvements it can be helpful to track and monitor the frequency of use in key parks for a period of time. This type of assessment could be achieved in its simplest form by establishing park pathway counters, and drawing on observations by front-line staff. A user survey could also be employed that collects information on how frequently parks are being used and for what purpose, administered by park volunteers or summer students. Collectively, this information could help to support the argument that parks are well used and valued, as well as identifying those that are potentially over-utilized beyond their carrying capacity, or those that are not well used as they are no longer serving residents needs. The latter two being potential indicators for redevelopment.

#### Recommendation #22

- ⇒ Consideration should be given to developing and executing a means of tracking park utilization. This type of assessment could be achieved through information technology, by establishing park pathway counters, observations by front-line staff, or a survey of use conducted by volunteers or students. A park utilization assessment tool would be useful in supporting the argument that Mississauga's parks are well used and valued, as well as informing park redevelopment priorities by identifying those parks that are potentially over-utilized beyond their carrying capacity, or those that are not well used as they are no longer serving the needs of residents. Enhanced systems analysis of the City's parks provides confidence not only to residents related to the tax expenditure and services delivery, but also to current and prospective corporate sponsors enhancing stewardship.

#### Integrating Information Technology into Parks

Dialogue with youth representatives during the study process has indicated a strong interest in the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in Destination Parks. This has the most relevance for, and is increasingly found, in community facilities and urban parks in large cities, often provided in partnership with private sponsors. Similar to the process used in the 2004 Washroom Study, the City should consider undertaking an internal study to develop criteria for and conduct an evaluation of suitable locations for the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in selected destination parks where coverage is possible, and park usage warrants consideration. This should be accompanied by an investigation of opportunities for partnerships with corporate sponsors or technology service providers.

Other forms of information technology are also being employed in contemporary destination parks which video screens such as the one at Mississauga Celebration Square, digital information boards and videogame tables. These types of features are most appropriate in urban parks such as those in Mississauga's City Centre. These features, however, may significantly alter the character of a park, attract crowds and are vulnerable to vandalism. There may be opportunities for temporary installations in other destination parks as part of special events, although caution should be exercised in locations that may cause disturbance to wildlife or adjacent residences.

### Recommendation #23

- ⇒ Through an internal study, the City should develop criteria for and conduct an evaluation of suitable locations for the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in selected destination parks, and investigate opportunities for provision of the service in partnership with corporate sponsors or technology service providers.

### Trails and Pathways

Trails and pathways in parks continue to be highly used and sought after facilities in Mississauga's parks and open space areas. Comments received about potential improvements that would enhance the use and enjoyment of parks and enhance safety, include: better connectivity and the development of trail loops in the valley parks systems; maintaining trail surfacing; all-season use; lighting of trails; wayfinding and signage, and the provision of additional amenities that support trail use (e.g. benches and rest areas, washrooms and water filling stations); and outdoor fitness equipment. The need to enhance neighbourhood serving parks with short pathway loops that improve access to, and through, parks and encourage walking, was also noted, particularly in regard to encouraging activity levels amongst older adults.

Relative to other facilities, trails and pathways represent one of the best values for dollars invested as they appeal to a range of users and offer high returns in personal enjoyment and health benefits at a relatively low cost per person. Although the City has completed its Cycling Master Plan, the last study that addressed multi-use recreational trails holistically was conducted in 2001. The 2009 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan recommended an update to this study vis-a-vis a Park Pathway Study. Since then there are additional recommendations related to trails and pathways contained across several studies including a comprehensive study for the Credit River Parks. A Trail Lighting Policy has also been developed.

Considering the continued public interest in trails and pathways and the number of recent studies that are addressing trail development in different locations and the importance of pedestrian movement across open spaces and road right of ways the City should consider the need and value for a City wide pedestrian study. The study would consolidate and integrate the recommendations of other studies as related to multi-use trails and pathways, and pedestrian movement considering user safety and CPTED principles, natural environment protection, and accessibility. It would additionally provide: a hierarchy of recreation trail and pathway types to direct development; provide consistent design standards that address trail and pathway construction; establish maintenance standards and protocols; and provide guidelines for a set of consistent wayfinding, interpretive and regulatory signs within an overall park signage system.

### Recommendation #24

- ⇒ The City should plan to continue building towards a continuous and interconnected trail system which builds off of the existing network already established and new trail routes identified in other supporting studies such as the *Waterfront Parks Strategy* and the *Credit River Parks Strategy*.
- ⇒ Considering the continued public interest in trails and pathways and the number of recent studies that are addressing trail development in different locations and the importance of pedestrian movement across open spaces and road right of ways the City should consider the need and value for a City wide pedestrian study.

### Increasing Awareness of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Public input during both the 2009 and 2014 Master Plan development suggested that there is a need to increase the level of awareness of parks and recreation resources in the City, together with increased publicity of events and activities that take place in parks. The ongoing need for improvements in this regard was again raised through the current Future Directions dialogue with representatives from community organizations involving youth, older adults and newcomers. The City of Mississauga currently has a substantial amount of information about parks, recreation, and culture facilities and events on its web site, however there may be opportunities to improve the ease of access to this information.

### Recommendation #25

- ⇒ The City should investigate and implement opportunities for improved marketing and publicizing of parks and forestry resources, together with programs, events and activities that take place in parks, woodlands and natural areas. The value

of parks (health, economic, environmental) should be a key component of marketing. This should include consideration of improvements to portals on the City's web site and integration of information technology. These efforts should be coordinated across parks, forestry, recreation, library, fire, and culture services.

### Increasing Access to Parks

A clear message received during consultation was a need for better transit access to the City's major parks and facilities. The lack of direct bus access to Riverwood, which is identified in the Mississauga Strategic Plan as the city's 'Central Park', was noted, along with other potential opportunities such as a "hop-on-the-bus, hop-off-the-bus" transit ticket during special events or a permanent (peak season) shuttle between the waterfront parks. 'Developing a Transit-oriented City' is a fundamental pillar of the City's Strategic Plan and attention should be paid to establishing strategic route connections to the City's key parks and recreation facilities. Regularly scheduled, affordable and well-promoted transit service to key park destinations would open up access to a range of users who might currently be precluded or deterred from using parks as a result of physical or financial limitations, and could further help to reduce car dependency amongst the general populace.

### Recommendation #26

- ⇒ In advancing the implementation of a comprehensive, City-wide transit system that supports the Strategic Plan, the City through inter-departmental dialogue, should consider how to best provide regularly scheduled, affordable and well-promoted transit service to key parks and recreation facilities as a means of increasing public access and as part of reducing car dependency.



### Park Operations

#### Parks Operation Service Levels

Since the 2009 Master Plan was completed Parks Operations has continued to streamline its practices. Park service levels are defined and allocated on the basis of priorities which acknowledge the profile of the park with specialized parks receiving a higher profile and service level than typical neighbourhood parks. Operations staff utilizes the Infor Maintenance Management System to enter work completion tasks on-site and facilitate information sharing. Data collected is used to examine service level adherence, maintenance costs and hours performed for various functions of work.

Dialogue with staff noted that there could be further refinement of defined service levels for parks maintenance which acknowledge the variations in park types and usage within each priority level. For example parks with highly utilized sports fields require a different level of service than a park without sports fields. Similarly, highly designed urban parks and those with garden areas or specialized features require a maintenance level that exceeds that of a typical park. The department has made in-roads in addressing this with support for increased maintenance budget allocations for the City Centre parks.

#### Recommendation #27

- ⇒ The City should continue to review and refine its service levels for parks operations and maintenance, and consider the development of internal categories within existing defined service levels to be more reflective of the specific maintenance needs of different types of parks, or spaces within parks, based on facilities, function and / or level of usage. These categories may include gardens, waterfront parks, sports fields, urban parks and special event sites, and could result in different maintenance levels within individual sites.

#### Recommendation #28

- ⇒ The City should consider amendments to the Parks By-law to restrict active recreational uses within parks or areas of parks with substantial horticultural displays such as Kariya Park, Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, Riverwood and potentially at Park 508 (to be developed on the former Woodlands Nursery property).

#### Special Events Support

Events and other community activities are opportunities to promote social interaction, enliven parks and public spaces and celebrate Mississauga's cultural diversity and use of parks in Mississauga for community events is increasing. Although there is a special event strategy in place, dialogue with City staff suggests that additional work is still needed in defining and delivering operational support for these events in a manner that is cost effective and beneficial both to event organizers and to Parks Operations. Presently some community events result in unexpected or unplanned increases in park maintenance activities which draw personnel away from regularly scheduled responsibilities.



To provide an appropriate level of operational support, the Parks and Forestry Division in collaboration with the Culture and Recreation Divisions should study how best to support special events in parks including the feasibility of providing a dedicated operational resources team that would undertake activities prior to and following an event, e.g. deliveries, set up, take downs and rehabilitation of the park. The need for deployment of the operational resources should be coordinated in advance at the time of event planning and permitting process so that all relevant costs and charge-backs can be assessed and implemented.

### Recommendation #29

- ⇒ To provide an appropriate level of operational support the Parks and Forestry Division in collaboration with the Recreation and Culture Divisions should study how best to support special events in parks including the feasibility of providing a dedicated operational resources team that would undertake activities prior to and following an event, e.g. deliveries, set up, take downs and rehabilitation of the park.

### Informal Use of Playing Fields

One issue raised by both staff and community organizations was the need to identify and consistently enforce policies around the use of playing fields for informal pick-up games. It was conveyed that it is sometimes unclear to the public, and to youth in particular, which sports fields are off-limits (e.g. premium, fenced fields) vs. those that are available for use when they are not booked for permitted play. This uncertainty could be resolved by reviewing the inventory of playing fields, determining which are off-limits for casual use, and posting of signs at the facility. The approach may include the posting of temporary signs when fields are unavailable as a result of 'resting' or wet conditions. Fields that are available for casual use should be

identified in the City's Parks By-law and the message conveyed to the public.

### Recommendation #30

- ⇒ The City should clarify internally which playing fields are available for informal, pick-up use when not booked vs. those that are restricted or off-limits and develop and implement a means of communicating this information to the public in a manner that reaches the most residents and sports groups. This can be achieved through park signage as well as information technology that includes social media and place based communications using Wi-Fi®.

### Marinas

Long-term sustainability of recreational boating and charter boats on Mississauga's waterfront will require an ongoing commitment to marina and harbor functions and operations. The City's long-standing commitment to this is evidenced by major capital projects such as Lakefront Promenade Park and the redevelopment of the Port Credit harbor, and the recent funding of the 2014 dredging operations to reduce sediment levels in the Credit River harbor.

### Recommendation #31

- ⇒ Recreational boating and charter boat activities provide a dynamic focal point for Mississauga's waterfront and recreational, economic, and tourism benefits. In support of boating activities, the City should continue its commitment to the management and operations of marinas and the associated public amenity space as well as consider long-term marina and harbor service provision.

### Winter Use of Parks

There continues to be an interest by residents in all-season use of parks, including winter. This has been addressed by the City through prioritization of locations for snow removal of key trail linkages and the City operates several outdoor rinks as well as natural rinks in partnership with local residents. Community interest expressed during consultation extends to increasing the number of natural ice rinks in parks, toboggan hills, and providing amenities that support winter activities such as fire pits and warm-up shelters.



Winter at the Lake Ontario Waterfront

Providing for all-season use of selected parks is a means of encouraging outdoor physical activity year-round, and was identified by community representatives as a way of increasing social interaction particularly amongst newcomers to Canada who may feel even more isolated during the winter months. However, the unpredictable nature of winter weather, the cost of specialized facilities and increased operational costs can be significant drawbacks to accommodating this interest in more than a few selected park locations.

#### Recommendation #32

- ⇒ In developing new parks and redeveloping older parks the City should consider how to best optimize winter use of parks and the trail/pathway system in selected locations where there is sufficient community interest, appropriate infrastructure, and where it is financially viable.

### Extended Hours for Parks

Discussion with City staff revealed that there is interest by residents in extending park hours to accommodate different lifestyles, and to further consider 24 hour use of parks. The current Mississauga Parks By-law permits general use of parks between 7AM and 11PM, which is consistent with other GTA municipalities. The City of Toronto park hours are 5.30AM to 12.01AM which accommodates a modest extension of use. In New York City, closing hours differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and range from dusk to 1AM. Night-time use of parks requires additional lighting and surveillance and raises concerns over user safety, and noise and disruption for adjacent residents. As well for trail areas through natural areas night lighting could negatively impact wildlife.

24 hour use of municipal parks is not commonly permitted in most cities for the reasons noted above. It is most applicable to public spaces in urban areas with an active street life and should only be

considered where there is demand and good purpose, surveillance from neighbouring streets, no impact to residential areas, and with stringent enforcement of a Parks By-Law related to use and conduct.

Even without an extension of park hours there is a need to find a balance between park user needs, safety, CPTED principles, wildlife protection, and conflicts with adjacent uses when considering park and pathway lighting. The City through its Pathway Lighting Policy recommends focusing on the lighting of well-used connections between destinations while balancing these issues.



Ice skating at Mississauga Celebration Square

#### Recommendation #33

- ⇒ The City should selectively consider an extension of park hours to align with contemporary urban lifestyles, either across the park system, in selective parks, or seasonally. If implemented it should be accompanied by stringent enforcement of the Parks Bylaw as it relates to allowable uses and conduct.
- ⇒ The City may wish to review its lighting policy to consider lighting beyond pathway lighting and to review lighting of areas within parks particularly within intensified urban areas where there may be a desire to use parks or public spaces in the evening hours. When determining areas to provide lighting the balancing of user safety, CPTED principles, impacts to wildlife and adjacent land uses, and operational costs should be considered.

### Cemeteries

The City of Mississauga currently maintains ten cemeteries. Four cemeteries are in active use however burials are only performed in previously purchased plots. The City has introduced additional columbaria in recent years to meet an increased demand for cremations, which is driven by both a scarcity of land as well as cultural preferences, and continues to evolve its services to meet the needs of a diverse population.

The City's cemeteries are essentially at capacity for burials, and continuing land constraints will limit the number of traditional in-ground burial options available in the coming years in cemeteries across the Greater Toronto Area. The City's response to increased demand includes maximizing the number of saleable plots at existing cemeteries, capitalizing on increased demand for Columbaria niches and exploring the feasibility of additional cemetery lands within the City.

#### Recommendation #34

- ⇒ The City should, through its Cemetery Operations business analysis, continue to consider its options for a new cemetery location to meet projected needs, as well as other initiatives that address current trends in the bereavement industry as well as resident preferences.

### Partnerships

Partnerships are an effective way to facilitate community infrastructure development or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering services and programs, allowing funding organizations to achieve greater results with limited funds. The benefits of partnerships that accrue to both the City and the community are well recognized in Mississauga, and there are a number of partnerships that have developed around common goals and interests, including arts and culture, recreation facilities and programs, and environmental protection and stewardship. These include inter-departmental, community, agency and private sector.

The City of Mississauga has for many years been supported by its government agency partners as well as local community organizations in the delivery of specialized programs and facilities related to parks and forestry services. A key issue identified by the City for the 2014 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan is the investigation of, and recommendations for, specific types of partnerships in parks and forestry stewardship, including different approaches and models to partnering. The City recognizes a need to move forward with a multi-layered partnership approach to the management of parks and natural areas.

#### Supporting Existing Partnerships

The delivery of programs and other services through reliable, sustained volunteer efforts is dependent on the long-term viability of the organizations providing them. Although there are now three community grant programs in Mississauga (Community Grants, Arts and Culture, Cultural Festivals and Celebrations) as well as corporate grants, there is no grant stream specifically targeted to organizations that support parks, natural areas and forestry stewardship. Although grant funding has been approved to several organizations on an

annual basis, including in 2014, even the City's most valued partners in parks and environmental services have not received committed multi-year funding in the past.

The City's Living Green Master Plan (LGMP) recommends that the City **"Create an Environmental Community Grants Program" (Action 28)** with a funding structure to support and showcase community-based environmental initiatives. A budget request was made through Parks and Forestry to realize this recommendation. Community interests in Mississauga in addition to environmental stewardship initiatives include community gardens, leash-free areas, urban agriculture, and public gardens. To ensure the inclusion of organizations that partner in the delivery of these services the City should consider focusing a portion of the Grant Program toward parks related initiatives. This could be combined with the proposed Environmental Community Grants Program to be a Parks and Environment Community Grants Program.

### Recommendation #35

- ⇒ In looking at effective partnership models the City should first consider how to best support its strongest, most successful community partners who deliver key parks and forestry services that meet the City's strategic goals and who complement the City's own resources. In particular those that provide in-kind services that have a real financial value to the City such as reducing operating costs. This may mean a commitment to sustained annual funding by the City to serve as seed money to organizations that can demonstrate a sound business model and plans.

### Recommendation #36

- ⇒ The City should act on and implement the Living Green Master Plan (LGMP) recommendation to **"Create an Environmental Community Grants Program"** as part of the overall Community Grants Program with a funding structure to support and showcase community-based environmental initiatives. The program aims to promote a green culture within the resident community and creates an opportunity to build lifetime interest in the environment with Mississauga's youth. To include and encourage organizations that partner in the delivery of other parks related services the City should consider focusing a portion of the Grant Program toward parks related initiatives. This could be combined with the proposed Environmental Community Grants Program to be a Parks and Environment Community Grants Program.

### Strengthening Agency / Stakeholder Partnerships

The City of Mississauga currently partners with its government agency partners including Toronto Region Conservation, Credit Valley Conservation, Halton Region Conservation, the Region of Peel, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board and the Peel District School Board on a wide range of initiatives and projects of mutual benefit and interest. These are well established relationships with roles and responsibilities varying across the agencies depending on the initiative, and ranging from providing input as a stakeholder to being a financial partner in project delivery. These City and agency partnerships are highly successful and valued and have served residents well at both a local and a regional level for many years.

Initiatives with the Region of Peel and the conservation authorities include both strategic planning exercises, such as the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy, the Urban Forest Management



Plan, as well as major capital projects. A notable ongoing example of the latter is the Lakeview Waterfront Connection which will create a new natural waterfront park and trail connection from lakefill on the eastern Mississauga waterfront. The project is being undertaken by the Region of Peel and Credit Valley Conservation, with support from Toronto and Region Conservation and the City of Mississauga. The City also partners with both the Region and the Conservation Authorities on environmental restoration and planting initiatives.

With respect to new or extended opportunities with the Region of Peel, the Region is spearheading a range of policy development efforts and programs to support active living. The City should partner with the Peel Region Public Health in its effort to promote “Active Living” and leverage the Region as an advocate in providing evidence-based data to inform parks and recreation related decision making at the City (such as the San Francisco model). The Region is working with the United Way to coordinate events that bring the neighbourhood together, including recreational projects. There is an opportunity for the City to leverage the Region’s partnership with the United Way to support play site improvements

### **Recommendation #37**

- ⇒ The City should partner with the Peel Region Public Health in its effort to promote “Active Living” and leverage the Region as an advocate in providing evidence-based data to inform parks and recreation related decision making at the City. The Region is working with the United Way to coordinate events that bring the neighbourhood together, including recreational projects. There is an opportunity for the City to leverage the Region’s partnership with the United Way to support play site improvements.

### **Recommendation #38**

- ⇒ The City should continue to work with the school boards on joint facility development and joint-use agreements where mutually beneficial, and consider expanding its joint-use agreements to include facility maintenance and joint programming.
- ⇒ Where mutually beneficial, partnerships with the school board could be enhanced to allow for long-term student participation in maintaining parks and natural areas, in particular on sites where schools are co-located with parks or adjacent to natural areas.
- ⇒ The school boards should be encouraged to develop work plans within the curriculum that incorporate outdoor education components and build awareness of ecology, stewardship and the natural and cultural heritage of Mississauga.

### **Support for Volunteerism and Community Involvement**

Engaging in community partnerships includes tapping into the support of volunteers who can assist the City in reducing operational requirements. There is a growing interest in Mississauga for residents and the corporate community to want to participate. Through discussion with staff and community stakeholders it was identified that the City should enhance its processes and procedures to increase efficiency and make it easier for volunteer involvement. It was also noted that to be of the most value volunteer efforts should be coordinated and focused on areas of need, and partnerships should be ‘true’ in the sense that volunteers are available when the City needs them. Public education and awareness are essential to getting residents and community organizations on board particularly on environmental issues and partnerships in parks management.

A standardized volunteer program with volunteer recruitment processes and a recognition system would assist in establishing a strong and sustainable volunteer base in Mississauga. This should be augmented by a recognition program that consistently and appropriately acknowledges the efforts of volunteers and donors.

### Recommendation #39

- ⇒ The City should develop a Community Services Integrated Volunteer Program to increase efficiency, attract a strong and sustainable volunteer base in Mississauga, realize untapped potential volunteers within the community and make it easier for volunteer involvement. This should be augmented by a recognition program to acknowledge the efforts of volunteers and donors.

The Sponsorship and Corporate Development Division has a mandate to find and support strong community partners on behalf of the entire Community Services Department, administer the Corporate and Community Grants program, and provide support to community organizations. Discussion with several of Parks and Forestry's affiliates in stewardship indicated that they feel well supported in their activities by the City and by Parks and Forestry staff in particular. However, most NGOs don't have capacity or funds to cover operating costs and need sustained sources of funding to be successful over the long-term. It was identified that it would be of benefit to community organizations if the City could provide consistent support and assistance, to: 1) submit grant applications, 2) support volunteer fundraising activities, 3) help seek out external funding partners.

The City of Toronto through its Partnership Development Unit seeks out new community partners and assists community groups with their fundraising projects. More than just a grants program administrator the unit seeks out and channels support and funding from corporations, foundations and philanthropists. Working together with

community organizations they have successfully raised millions of dollars for parks, recreation and urban forestry projects for the benefit of Toronto's residents and visitors.

The Partnership Development Unit website notes that it is currently working with dozens of community groups and other organizations on a range of projects including:

- play sites;
- park improvements;
- tree and garden planting;
- recreation facility improvements; and,
- special projects.

### Recommendation #40

- ⇒ The City should investigate the feasibility of an expanded or more clearly identified role for the Sponsorship and Corporate Development Division in assisting the City's affiliate organizations in the following activities 1) grant applications, 2) support for fundraising activities, and 3) seeking out external funding partners and channeling donations.

### Growing New Partnerships

The City recognizes the importance of engaging in meaningful partnerships, whether it is with the community, agencies, stakeholders, or other levels of government. For partnerships to be meaningful, investments are required in time and resources, enabling relationships to be nurtured and deepen, and resulting in partners with strong a sense of ownership. From time to time the City receives unsolicited proposals for the development of specialized outdoor recreation facilities. A consistent mechanism and process for evaluating these opportunities is needed.



### Recommendation #41

- ⇒ The City should develop formal processes for evaluating partnership opportunities and invitations from external parties, whether they include community groups, agencies, or private sector. This would require formalization of a program and a process requiring organizations to submit a business plan to the City for initiatives of a scale that exceeds that of the Grant Program, or requires a substantial long-term operational commitment.

### Public/Non-Profit Partnerships

As demonstrated in the Environmental Scan (see Section 3.0), there is a growing trend in North American cities toward the use of partnerships in parks and recreation, including comprehensive service delivery by increasingly sophisticated not-for-profit organizations such as park foundations and conservancies with a mandate to oversee complex capital projects as well as programming elements (refer to City of Toronto, City of Calgary, and City of Ottawa case studies). It may be premature for the City to consider at this time a partnership model that broadly supports parks services at this time, however such organizations do not develop overnight and a supportive municipal culture is needed to allow the potential for them to evolve. Some of the foregoing recommendations will help in the migration to this model if the City wishes, and if there is interest by the not-for-profit sector. However further investigation is needed to determine the potential factors for success in these models and to evaluate if this is the right direction for the City.

### Recommendation #42

- ⇒ The City should investigate the opportunities for, and merits of, cultivating an advanced public/non-profit partnership models in the delivery of parks services such as the City of Calgary Parks Foundation, the City of Toronto Parks People, and the City of Ottawa Community Partnership Major/Minor Capital Programs.

### Corporate Sponsors

There are a number of effective community and corporate partners and sponsors in the stewardship of parks and natural areas (volunteer programs for tree planting, naturalization, and clean ups) run by the City and affiliated environmental groups. Many corporations now have responsibility pillars to the environment and to the local community and have established funding to support community initiatives. Currently, corporations seek out the City for funding opportunities. However, the City should be proactive in seeking opportunities to leverage corporate sponsorship and business partner relationships to expand reach activities, community engagement and reduce maintenance and operating costs over time.

### Recommendation #43

- ⇒ Through its Sponsorship and Corporate Development Unit the City should be proactive in seeking opportunities to leverage corporate sponsorship and business partner relationships that support stewardship of parks and natural areas.

### Public-Private Partnerships

Many community parks Mississauga were initially developed through funding provided by developers to a basic standard defined by the City. Beyond the parks' initial development the City assumed responsibility for parks maintenance and future replacement of facilities. Recently in the City Centre area, the City has developed several urban parks at a higher cost per acre, and with increased longer term maintenance and operational costs.

There is a growing trend in the US toward public private partnerships in the delivery and maintenance of parks and other City improvements through Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). BIDs which are similar to Business Improvement Areas commonly seen in Canada may be overseen by a nonprofit entity, and are typically associated with downtown and streetscape improvements. In the case of the Brooklyn Bridge Park in New York the BID concept extended to development and maintenance of a high profile park that developers can capitalize on to increase their market share. A similar initiative was undertaken by the Hudson River Park Trust with small annual levies assigned to both residential and commercial properties expected to generate \$10million in annual funding to offset the popular waterfront park's operating deficit and fund its rejuvenation.

#### Recommendation #44

- ⇒ There is a growing trend toward public private partnerships in the development and maintenance of parks and other City improvements through business or neighbourhood improvement districts which develop and apply special tax levies in areas which will receive significant benefit, particularly as a result of increases in real estate value, from major public infrastructure investment. The applicability and trend toward this in Canada should be followed and some investigation undertaken of its potential in Mississauga.

### Stewardship Models

The City has a number of park sites which have specialized maintenance needs, several of which are supported by volunteer efforts. The Riverwood site, located on the Credit River valley, has extensive natural valleyland components as well as horticultural gardens on the tablelands. The Riverwood Conservancy, a registered not-for-profit organization, works within an operational agreement with the City to offer a range of programming at the site and to undertake volunteer stewardship work.

Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens (BRG) located on Mississauga's waterfront has an extensive collection of rhododendrons that are a substantial asset to the City. The Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens Stewardship Committee (BRGSC) was subsequently established and maintenance of the gardens is now supported by the BRGSC and its volunteers. The BRGSC works with the City to promote, protect, and preserve this unique public garden by assisting with the planning and maintenance of the Garden, and raising community awareness, involvement and interest.

Park 508 is a recently acquired park site, which has its origins as a horticultural nursery and also has natural environment areas. The Queen Elizabeth II Rose Garden and Kariya Park in the City Centre are garden sites that are maintained by the City.

The City is considering whether a different and integrated approach is warranted for the stewardship of these specialized park sites, as well as for the Credit River Parks which are closely associated with Riverwood. Potential models include: 1) Separate Affiliates (current state); 2) One or more organizations with sub-committees; 3) An overarching parks trust or parks council with consolidated or separate volunteer bases for each site.

The determination of an appropriate stewardship model is subject to more in-depth discussions between the City and the various park stewardship organizations. However it can be noted at this time that if there is to be an increased reliance on volunteer organizations for the maintenance of these valued resources, the City should be prepared to identify and commit to a level of support that will cultivate and sustain long-term partnerships. This is necessary to avoid the challenges which are currently facing many not-for-profit and charitable organizations. During times of economic uncertainty and restraint the same financial limitations that cause municipalities to seek out partnerships affect members, participants, sponsors, and grant programs that support organizations. This results in an uncertain revenue stream potentially affecting the viability of the organization and, as a consequence, jeopardizing both the partnership and the asset.

A discussion and recommendations on how the City can better support volunteerism and advance partnerships is provided in the foregoing sections. These measures are particularly important if the City is interested in moving toward increased responsibilities for existing organizations such as The Riverwood Conservancy or the cultivation of an over-arching parks foundation such as found in Toronto and Calgary.

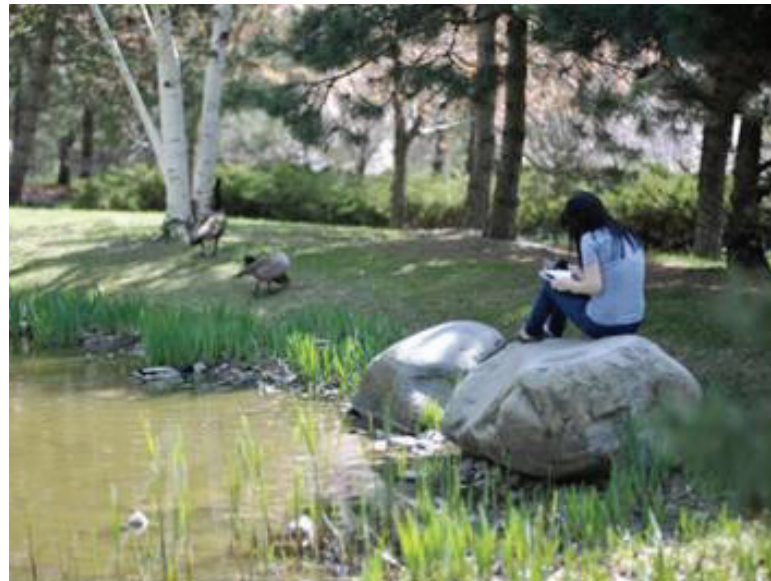
It would also be advisable for the City to complete a management plan for the Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, and potentially Park 508 so that long-term goals, objectives, public uses and management needs can be determined in consultation with the public, stewardship organizations, interest groups and other stakeholders.

### Recommendation #45

- ⇒ The City should study options for an integrated approach for the long-term management and stewardship of the garden sites, and the Credit River Parks in discussion with its community partners which include the BRG Stewardship Committee and The Riverwood Conservancy, and other stakeholders and interest groups.

### Recommendation #46

- ⇒ The City should complete a management plan for the Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, and potentially Park 508 so that long-term goals, objectives, public uses and management needs can be determined in consultation with the public, potential stewardship organizations, and other stakeholders and interest groups.



Kariya Park

### Forestry

Natural area management was a key issue during the 2009 Master Plan and the outcome was a series of recommendations that addressed a range of issues related to forestry services, including a recommendation for the preparation of a comprehensive Natural Heritage System Strategy. The City has since completed the study as the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy (NH&UFS) concurrent with an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) and collectively the two represent a comprehensive plan for action.

The City has embarked on a City-wide program to manage Emerald Ash Borer which is a significant threat to the health of Mississauga's tree canopy. Other ongoing initiatives include amendments to the Tree Permit By-law and Public Tree By-law, new street tree planting and tree replacements, funding for implementation of the Million Tree Program, woodland management programs to preserve natural areas, and tree plantings in partnership with the conservation authorities to increase biodiversity of natural areas.

Challenges facing Forestry services over the term of the Master Plan, and beyond, include management of other threats to the urban forest which include the Asian long-horned beetle, and other pests and diseases. Future invasive species risk response requires continuous monitoring and the development of proactive approaches to minimize costs and preserve tree assets where possible. Management of invasive plant species is also an increasing challenge. Giant Hogweed has attracted considerable public attention however management of buckthorn, garlic mustard, and wild parsnip is equally important. A City-wide invasive species management program is recommended in the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy.

With the completion and approval of the NH&UFS and the UFMP the City has a set of strategies and actions to direct Forestry services

over the foreseeable future. The recommendations of these plans should be funded and implemented based on identified priorities and in collaboration with the City's partners in environmental protection and management. It is expected that damage from the 2013 ice storm will present unanticipated costs in tree pruning and removal which may require the redeployment of resources and impact the advancement of planned Forestry initiatives.

#### Recommendation #47

- ⇒ With the completion and approval of the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy (NH&UFS) and the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), the City has a comprehensive set of strategies and actions to direct Forestry services over the foreseeable future. The recommendations of these plans should be funded and implemented based on identified priorities and in collaboration with the City's partners in environmental protection and management.



Rattray Marsh woodland trail





### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Purpose of Plan

Mississauga has engaged in strategic planning for parks and recreation services for some years through its various master plans. The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* is a component of *Future Directions*, which is a series of studies that direct indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, programs, parks and forestry services, fire and emergency services, and libraries.

The master plans will collectively provide the City with an understanding of what is important to residents; reflect their recreational, social, cultural, informational and educational needs; and establish a clear direction for strategies to address the City's future growth and development over the next few decades. The studies have shared common components of data collection, evaluation of current socio-demographics and forecasted change, and community consultation.

This report represents the 2014 update of the Parks and Forestry Master Plan.

#### 1.2 Overview of Objectives and Methodology

The 2014 *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* will serve to guide the City's decisions regarding sustainable planning and management of parks and natural areas assets for continued enjoyment by its residents and visitors. It will receive a major review on a five-year basis together with the other components of Future Directions.

The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* is closely tied to the *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan* in that it responds to population forecasts, leisure trends and the needs assessment for recreation facilities and activities which are physically supported by the City's parks and natural areas.

The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* addresses financial implications and through the use of a common Future Directions evaluation tool suggests priorities to assist the City in delivering the findings and recommendations of the study over the next five years, and beyond.

The *Parks and Forestry Master Plan* was initiated in October 2013, and included an intensive series of consultation activities including staff focus groups, a staff management team workshop, staff key informant interviews, agency key informant interviews and community focus groups. The purpose of these sessions was to identify the current state of parks and forestry services provision in the City, municipal accomplishments since the completion of the 2009 Master Plan, and key challenges moving forward. The consultation period was followed by a scan of trends in parks and forestry provision and examples of best practices in place in other municipalities.

Four public engagement sessions were held in the Spring of 2014 to review the recommendations of the Draft Master Plan.

### 1.3 Achievements Over the Last Five Years

The City's achievements in Parks and Forestry reflect its vision of protecting, restoring and enhancing Mississauga's natural features and the commitment to the City's strategic pillars of Move, Belong, Connect, Prosper and Green.

Recent highlights initiated by or related to Parks and Forestry activities are summarized below.

#### City Planning

- Mississauga was recently named the **top mid-sized City of the Future in the Americas** by Foreign Direct Investment (FDi) Magazine, out of 80 contenders in the category. Mississauga was also ranked first for business friendliness, second for economic potential, fourth for Foreign Direct Investment strategy and fourth for infrastructure.
- An update of the City's Official Plan was completed and approved by Council in 2010.
- The City's Cycling Master Plan has been completed and approved.

#### Park Planning

- The Natural Heritage & Urban Forest Strategy (NH&UFS) and Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) are completed and recommend a long-term strategic plan to manage the City's natural areas and urban forest.
- The City has completed the Credit River Parks Strategy which is a comprehensive plan to guide development, management and restoration activities for open space lands in the Credit River valley including a continuous trail connection from the City's north border to Port Credit.

- The Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy examined the existing park supply in the Downtown area, and recommends future provision levels and park types, as well as how these parks can be achieved and maintained.
- The City acquired approximately 87.4 hectares (231.5 acres) of parkland between 2009 and 2014.

#### Park Development

- The development of new parkland and open space included the opening of Scholar's Green, Community Common, O'Connor Park, Sanford Farm Park, Park 492, Samuelson Circle Trail and Stairway Connection, Queensway Trail and the Hershey Sport Dome.
- Redeveloped park sites included Mississauga Celebration Square, Riverwood, Lakeside Park, Harold E. Kennedy Park, Albert McBride Park, Ridgewood Park, Red Oaks Park, Bough Beeches Park, Madiill Common, Meadowvale Conservation Area Pedestrian Bridge and Boardwalk, Port Credit Memorial Park and other various community play sites and pathway systems;
- The City has updated and reprogrammed the highly successful Mississauga Celebration Square which received an Award of Excellence under the 2011 Mississauga Urban Design Awards. Both Parks and Forestry, and Culture Divisions helped to make Mississauga Celebration Square a success.
- O'Connor Park and Scholars' Green were recognized for awards under the 2012 program. Lakeside Park received an Award of Excellence under the 2013 Mississauga Urban Design Awards.
- Planning and design for the updating of Streetsville Village Square has been completed.



- The historic, former Bell Gairdner Estate on Lake Ontario, now renamed the Holcim Waterfront Estate has opened as a banquet facility.
- A Pathway Lighting Policy has been completed and approved by Council.

### Park Programming

- There is increasing use of parks in Mississauga for regularly scheduled outdoor programs such as the supervised play sites program, yoga and fitness 'boot camps'. For example, Mississauga Celebration Square recently ran a regular summer evening fitness program.
- The Riverwood Conservancy offers a series of outdoor nature-based programs including discovery walks.



Fitness activities at Mississauga Celebration Square

### Park Operations

- Implementation of the Remodeling for the Future Organizational review throughout the Recreation and Parks and Forestry service areas has been completed.
- The implementation of increased operational support for Mississauga Celebration Square was achieved.
- Parks Operations mobile technology for front line staff to digitally input work records in the field to track park maintenance activities and costs is complete.
- Sections of the off-road trail network throughout the City were recorded and are now available on Google Street View.

### Environmental

- Mississauga ranked eighth in the World Wildlife Fund's top 10 Canadian cities leading action on climate change.
- The approval of Living Green Master Plan and Peel Climate Change Strategy to implement priority actions to address climate change, including the expansion of public awareness and education and developing a community energy strategy.
- The implementation of the Let Your Green Show Campaign continues to motivate and encourage residents to take environmental action.

### Forestry

- An Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan has been developed, with committed funding over 10 years for the treatment, removal and replacement of affected trees. Other pest management programs are in place for: Asian Long-horned Beetle and Gypsy Moths.
- The encroachment management program inspected thousands of properties adjacent to parks and natural areas.

- One Million Trees Mississauga was launched as part of the City of Mississauga's Strategic Plan. Trees will be planted by City staff, partners and volunteers on public property, as well as by individuals, community groups, students, organizations and businesses throughout Mississauga on private. The goal is to plant one million trees by 2032.



Credit River

### Partnerships and Stewardship

- The City has forged a partnership with the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board on the joint development and use of shared indoor programming space and outdoor athletic facilities. Mississauga has also sustained its support and foster partnerships with several community organizations in terms of the delivery of specialized programs and facilities. Partnership agreements between the City of Mississauga and the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board for the development and use of shared outdoor athletic facilities are ongoing. There is potential to increase or enhance these partnerships.
- In addition to the Million Tree Program, which has been a successful partnership program in the City, there is also the City's Natural Area Program. The Parks and Forestry Division have been enhancing natural areas in City parks and green spaces since the 1980's. Work through this program is mainly done on altered or degraded land that may possess limited habitat or ecological values. The program encourages regeneration to a more natural state through the planting of tens of thousands trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses annually by dedicated volunteers.
- Beautification projects have been undertaken in Meadowvale, Applewood Trail, A.E. Crookes, Port Credit Memorial, Iceland, Mississauga Valley, Levi Creek and Lisgar utilizing thousands of volunteers.
- The City continues to work with Leash-Free Mississauga to support the development of leash free areas within Mississauga.

- The City of Mississauga has also supported community advocacies for managed community gardens in partnership with community-based organizations.
- The City has also partnered with schools to support food-growing opportunities. Examples of these advocacies are the Mississauga Sustainable Urban Agriculture, Community Gardens and School Learning Gardens project, Habitat Garden Education Project and One Million Trees Program.
- In order to foster an integrated approach to natural heritage management, the City continues to work with stewardship groups to provide programs and services in support of environmental education, stewardship, urban forestry, gardening and horticulture.
- The partnerships between the City of Mississauga and Ecosource and the Riverwood Conservancy are noteworthy. Ecosource has a long-standing relationship with the City in the development of community gardens and delivers other educational programs related to the Living Green Master Plan. The City of Mississauga oversees the development, management and operations of Riverwood while the Riverwood Conservancy provides programs and services to the community in nature and environmental education, leadership, gardening and horticulture.
- The City is working in partnership with the Region of Peel under their strategy Changing Course – Creating Supportive Environment for Healthy Living in Peel to engage diverse cultures and develop spaces that better meet the specific recreational needs of diverse populations, as well as a strategy to encourage physical activity.
- The City has a strong Urban Forestry partnership through the Region of Peel Urban Forest Working group, in which all area municipalities participate and health strategically plan to maintain and grow the urban forest in the Region of Peel.
- Mississauga has also forged partnerships with agencies and community organizations to sustain funds towards the adequate long term maintenance of a healthy urban forest. Many of the stewardship programs undertaken in parks and natural areas are spearheaded by Conservation Authorities and not for profit organizations (e.g. Evergreen, Credit River Anglers).



Riverwood



### 1.4 Vision

The following Parks and Forestry Vision was established in 2013 to guide parkland planning, development and operations.

*“People choose Mississauga for its connected, vibrant outdoor public spaces, memorable experiences and recognize it as a leader in natural environment stewardship.”*

*City of Mississauga Parks and Forestry, 2013*

### 1.5 Mission

The Mission statement of the Parks and Forestry Division is:

*“We are a dynamic team of staff, volunteers and partners working together to strengthen individuals, families, our communities and the environment through stewardship and by offering an encouraging lifeline learning, leisure and sustainable recreation experiences.”<sup>1</sup>*



Kariya Park

<sup>1</sup> City of Mississauga. 2014-2016 Business Plan Update and 2014 Budget. *Parks and Forestry*.

## 2.0 Plan Foundation

### 2.1 Linkages to the City Strategic Plan and Other Relevant Documents

The 2014 update of the *Future Directions* studies is preceded by extensive planning related to the City's growth and development, including an updated Official Plan. The current Mississauga *Official Plan* was adopted by City Council on September 29, 2010, pending decisions on appeals that were referred to the Ontario Municipal Board. Until such time, the affected areas of the plan are directed by the 2003 Official Plan.

The City planning approach outlined in the Official Plan includes:

- A new *Urban System* comprised of three distinct, yet, inter-connected components - the Green System, City Structure and Corridors;
- A *City Structure* based on a growth management strategy that identifies functional areas for density, height and appropriate growth: Downtown, Major Nodes, Community Nodes, Corporate Centres, Neighbourhoods, Employment Areas; and, Special Purpose Areas. These functional areas are further organized into a series of *Character Areas*; and,
- *Intensification Areas* where growth will be directed.

In place since 1992, with frequent updates, the City's *Strategic Plan* and *Strategic Action Plan* is the foundation for the City's policies and decision-making, including those related to parks and environmental planning.

The Strategic Plan outlines the following Vision for the Future.

#### Our Vision for the Future

*Mississauga will inspire the world as a dynamic and beautiful global city for creativity and innovation, with vibrant safe and connected communities; where we celebrate the rich diversity of our cultures, our historic villages, Lake Ontario and the Credit River valley. A place where people choose to be.*

In the City's Strategic Plan, the five '**Strategic Pillars for Change**' consist of:

- Developing A Transit-oriented City
- Ensuring Youth, Older Adults and New Immigrants Thrive
- Completing our Neighbourhoods
- Cultivating Creative and Innovative Businesses
- Living Green

Two of the Strategic Pillars of Change in the *Strategic Action Plan* are particularly applicable to the parks and natural areas.

### Completing our Neighbourhoods

**Direction** – Our Future Mississauga is a beautiful, sustainable City with safe neighbourhoods that support a strong, connected and vibrant community - a place where all can live, work and prosper. People can play as a child, walk to meet a friend, fall in love, raise a family and grow old.

**Principle** – Mississauga is a City that nurtures a unique quality of life within each neighbourhood, where residents value the beauty and variety of the natural environment, engage in active transportation and support a rich, healthy and prosperous social and cultural mosaic through all stages of the life cycle.

#### Strategic Goals

- Develop Walkable, Connected Neighbourhoods
- Build Vibrant Communities
- Create Great Public Spaces
- Celebrate our Community
- Provide Mobility
- Build and Maintain Infrastructure
- Nurture “Villages”
- Maintain a Safe City
- Create a Vibrant Downtown

### Living Green

**Direction** – Our Future Mississauga is a City that co-exists in harmony with its ecosystems, where natural areas are enhanced, forests and valleys are protected, the waterfront connects people to Lake Ontario, and communities are nurtured so that future generations enjoy a clean, healthy lifestyle.

**Principle** – Mississauga is a City that values its shared responsibility to leave a legacy of a clean and healthy natural environment.

#### Strategic Goals

- Lead and Encourage Environmentally Responsible Approaches
- Conserve, Enhance and Connect Natural Environments
- Promote a Green Culture

The *Living Green Master Plan* is an action plan that prioritizes policies and programs into actions to meet the environmental objectives of the Strategic Plan. The Living Green Master Plan identifies 49 actions for the City and the community to implement over 10 years, and was adopted in 2012.

Other related City planning documents which establish expectations for the future of the parks and open space system include: the *Waterfront Parks Strategy (2008)*; the *Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy (2014)*, the *Urban Forest Management Plan (2014)*, and *Sustainable Living: A Growth Management Strategy for Mississauga*.

The City's planning documents can be viewed on the City of Mississauga web site.



### 2.2 Background Studies

The background documents that were developed during the study to inform the Mississauga Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan include: the Parks Provision Report, the Environmental Scan, and the Consultation Summary Report.

The Parks Provision report includes the following information:

- Planning Context
- Existing Parkland Supply
- Community Ideas and Interests
- Future Parkland Requirements

The Environmental Scan Report includes:

- Community Context
- Summary of 'Hot Button' Issues
- The Value of Parks
- Trends and Best Practices Review

The Consultation Summary Report is an internal document which includes a summary of who was consulted, what topics were discussed, and key input received from City staff, members of Council and external agency partners.

### 2.3 Population and Socio-Demographic Profile

Community Services uses Service Areas for planning and tracking the provision of parks, recreation facilities and services, based on logical geographic boundaries that consider smaller planning unit boundaries imbedded within, as well as physical barriers. These Service Areas are referred to in the analyses for Future Directions. The six Service Areas in Mississauga are illustrated on Figure 1, on page 11 of this report.

#### 2.3.1 Historic and Current Population

The estimated population for the City of Mississauga in 2014 is 756,590 persons, up 28,890 or approximately 4% from the estimated population of 727,700 at the time the 2009 Future Directions Master Plans were prepared. The population recorded in the 2011 short-form Census is 713,443, reportedly making Mississauga the 6<sup>th</sup> largest City in Canada. This represents an increase of 7% over the reported population in the 2006 Census and a 16% increase since the 2001 Census (excluding Census under-coverage).

According to the data contained in the Socio-Demographic Profile report prepared for Future Directions, the greatest population growth between the 2006 and 2011 Census was experienced in Service Area 1 which increased by 13%, with Service Area 2 increasing in population by 9%, followed by Service Area 5 with an increase of 7%. Other Service Areas experienced population growth of less than 5% (i.e., Service Area 3 has increased by 3% while Service Area 6 has increased by 2%). Service Area 4 has remained relatively stable with a small decline of less than 1%.

For the purposes of Future Directions, the estimated 2014 population within each of the six Service Areas is shown on **Table 2.1 2014**

### Population by Service Area.

**Table 2.1: 2014 Population by Service Area**

Year	Service Areas						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
2014	168,530	163,300	40,650	99,650	192,740	91,720	756,590

Source: Statistics Canada 2011, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants 2013

### 2.3.2 Age Structure

In 2011, the median age of Mississauga's population was 38.5 (up from 36.7 in 2006) while the Region of Peel was 36.9 (up from 35.6). For the Province the median age in 2011 was 40.4 years (up from 39.0)<sup>1</sup> which is on par with the rest of Canada, indicating that Mississauga still has a slightly younger population, although aging at a similar rate.

Key shifts in Mississauga's age structure between the 2006 and 2011 census periods were:<sup>2</sup>

- 24% increase in senior population (65+), with those over the age of 85 (approximately 1.2% of the total population) undergoing a 40% increase.
- 35.5% increase in the 60-65 year old age group.
- 21.6% in the 50-54 year old age group (which was the highest total increase of 10,220 persons).
- 3.3% decrease in the under 14 age group.

These population trends can be expected to continue over the long-term as a result of the continued aging of the "baby-boomers" which is a national trend, coupled with longer life expectancy.

The Socio-Demographic Profile prepared for Future Directions further notes that:<sup>3</sup>

- the 35-54 year old age group makes up over one third of the overall population and has increased steadily.
- the greatest proportional growth over this time period has been seen in the 55-64 age group which makes up a large portion of the baby boom generation.
- the 35-54 year old and 55+ year old age groups together now make up a majority of the overall population in Mississauga.
- the 10-19, 20-34 and 35-54 age groups experienced some growth in numbers, although the proportion of these cohorts remains relatively unchanged since 2006.
- the population under the age of 10 experienced a decline in population since 2001, as well as a proportion of the overall population.

Seniors, youth and children are key age groups tracked for the purposes of evaluating parks and recreation facility needs. Mapping of age cohorts contained in the 2013 Socio-Demographic Profile report is summarized, below. Mapping of other relevant age cohorts can be viewed in the report.

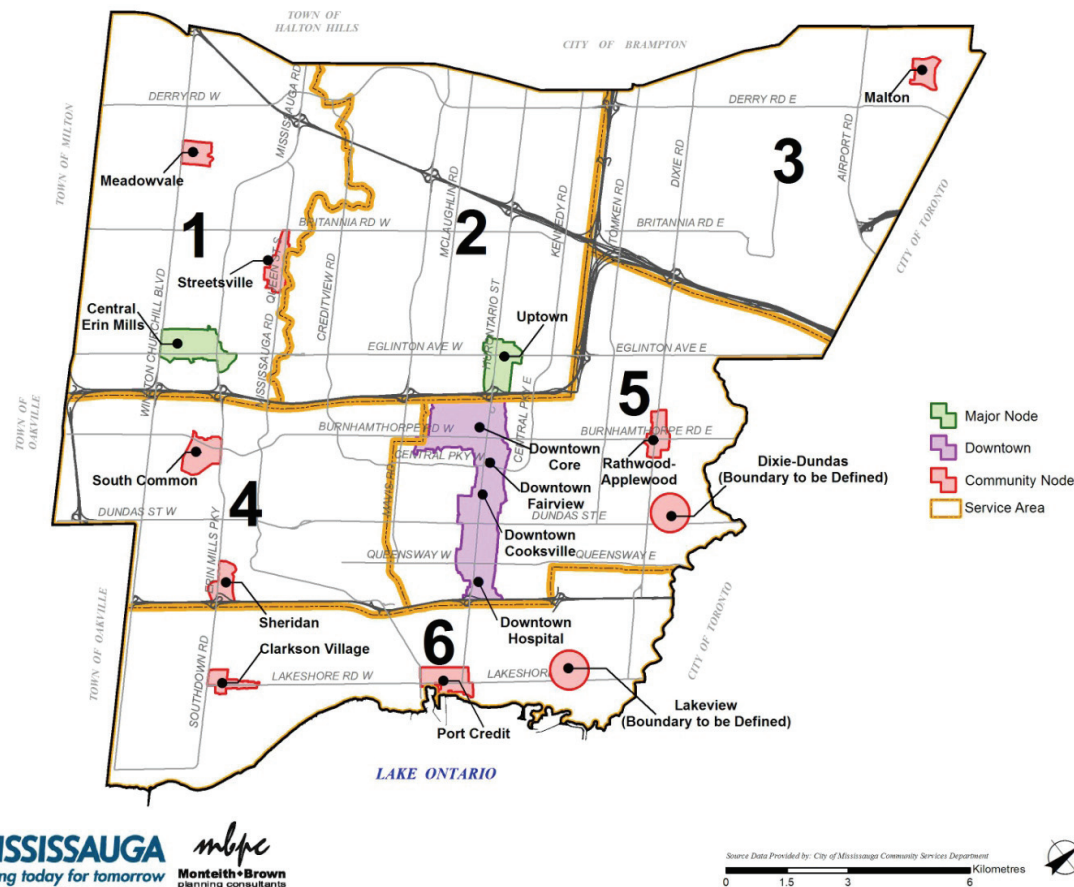
- the highest concentrations of seniors over 70 years of age can be found in Service Area 4 (Erin Mills), Service Area 5 (Applewood and Dixie (north of the Queensway) and Service Area 6 (Lakeview, south of the Queensway).
- the highest concentrations of youth 10-19 years of age can be found in Service Area 1 (Churchill Meadows, in particular), Service Area 2 (East Credit and southern part of Hurontario communities) and Service Area 3.
- the highest concentrations of children 0-9 years of age can be found in Service Area 1 (Churchill Meadows, in particular) and Service Area 3.



Cycling at JC Saddington Park

**Figure 1: City of Mississauga Areas of Intensification By Service Area**

2014 Future Directions  
Intensification Areas



Source: Mississauga Socio Demographic Profile Report, Monteith Brown

### 2.3.3 Language and Immigration

According to the 2011 Census, 96.5% of residents in Mississauga indicated that they were able to speak one or both of the official languages (English or French). Approximately 47% identified a non-official language, as their mother tongue (first language learned and still understood); with 27% identifying that they spoke a non-official language at home.<sup>5</sup>

The top five unofficial languages spoken across the City in 2011 were Urdu (3%), Polish (2%), Punjabi (2%), Arabic (2%) and Chinese (1%).<sup>6</sup> Other non-official languages reported spoken at home included: Spanish, Tagalog, Portuguese, Tamil, and Vietnamese. See **Table 2.2: Top 5 Unofficial Languages by Service Area in Mississauga – 2011.**

The National Household Survey (NHS), a voluntary survey conducted in 2011 in conjunction with the short-form Census, contained information related to immigration which is summarized for Mississauga in the Socio-Demographic Profile report. Reportedly, on a City-wide basis, just over half the population of the City (53%) was foreign-born with recent immigrants to Canada (between 2001 and 2011) representing 35% of the total.

Representation of foreign-born population was shared fairly equally across the Service Areas with Service Area 2 and 3 having the largest proportion of foreign-born population (61%) in 2011, closely followed by Service Area 5 (59%). Service Area 6 had the least foreign-born population at 33%.

In 2011 Service Area 3 had the largest proportion of recent immigrants since 2001 (42%), followed by Service Area 5 (38%) and Service Area 1 (36%). Service Area 6 had the least number of recent immigrants at 23%.

**Table 2.2: Top 5 Unofficial Languages by Service Area in Mississauga - 2011**

Service Area	Top Five Unofficial Languages Spoken 2011
1	Urdu (4%), Arabic (2%), Chinese (2%), Mandarin (2%), Polish (2%)
2	Urdu (4%), Punjabi (3%), Cantonese (3%), Chinese (2%), Arabic (2%)
3	Punjabi (17%), Urdu (4%), Italian (2%), Gujarati (2%), Hindi (2%)
4	Urdu (3%), Polish (3%), Mandarin (2%), Chinese (2%), Arabic (1%)
5	Polish (4%), Urdu (3%), Arabic (3%), Spanish (2%), Tagalog (2%)
6	Polish (3%), Portuguese (1%), Spanish (1%), Russian (1%), Italian (1%)

Source: Mississauga Data: 2011 Census Results Language.

**Table 2.3: Average Private Household Income by Service Area, 2005 and 2010**

Service Area	Average Income (2005)	Average Income (2010)
1	\$94,208	\$102,849
2	\$88,036	\$93,863
3	\$62,126	\$65,630
4	\$101,967	\$101,841
5	\$68,014	\$72,111
6	\$102,156	\$115,819

Source: 2005 data is derived from 2009 Future Directions, Monteith Brown Consultants; 2010 data is derived from Future Directions 2014: Socio-demographic Profile. December 2013.

### 2.3.4 Household Income

The average income of Mississauga residents in 2011 from all households reported in the NHS was \$95,053, up from the 2005 average of \$71,393 reported in the 2009 Future Directions. When compared to the 2010 average income of \$85,772 for the Province as a whole, Mississauga has a higher than average income. The average private household earnings by Service Area is estimated in the Socio-Demographic Profile prepared for the 2014 Future Directions, and compared to the estimated household earnings provided in the 2009 Future Directions, with similar findings. The average household income varies substantially across the City's six (6) Service Areas with Service Area 6 reporting the highest earnings. Service Areas 1 and 4 represent the next highest earnings, with Service Area 1 having surpassed Service Area 4 where household earnings have remained static. Earnings for Service Areas 3 and 5 are the lowest in Mississauga and are now well below the Provincial average where in 2005 they were slightly above. Refer to **Table 2.3: Average Private Household Income by Service Area, 2005 and 2010**.

Despite a City-wide higher than average income in Mississauga, the percentage of persons identified as low income by Statistics Canada was 14% of Mississauga's population, across all age groups, with Service Area 3 (19%) and Service Area 5 (18%) demonstrating the highest percentage of low income population.

### 2.3.5 Household Formation and Family Structure

Similar to what was reported in 2009; the average household size in Mississauga in 2011 was 3.2 persons while province-wide it was 2.6 persons. The higher than average household size in Mississauga has remained consistent since the 2001 Census.

Data provided in the 2011 Census indicates that there is a significantly higher proportion of households with 4+ persons in Mississauga and Peel in general than in Ontario, which is reflective of its high percentage of ground-related housing. See **Table 2.4: Comparison of Number of Persons per Household**.

**Table 2.4: Comparison of Number of Persons per Household (as a % of Total Households)<sup>7</sup>**

Persons per Household	Canada	Ontario	Peel	Mississauga
1 person	27.6%	25.2%	15.4%	17.7%
2 persons	34.1%	32.4%	24.1%	25.6%
3 persons	15.6%	16.4%	19.2%	19.5%
4 persons	14.3%	16.0%	22.6%	21.6%
5 persons	5.4%	6.4%	10.6%	9.4%
6+ persons	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	6.2%

Source: Mississauga Data. Households, Families, Marital Status and Housing. [http://www5.mississauga.ca/research\\_catalogue/K4\\_2011Census\\_Household\\_s\\_Families\\_Marital\\_StatusHousing.pdf](http://www5.mississauga.ca/research_catalogue/K4_2011Census_Household_s_Families_Marital_StatusHousing.pdf)



### 2.3.6 Population Forecasts

The City of Mississauga growth forecasts provides population, housing units and employment forecasts for the period 2011 to 2041. The City of Mississauga undertakes growth forecasts to provide input into planning and managing growth in the City and to inform the Development Charges By-law Review, service and infrastructure planning, and to provide input to the Region of Peel's growth allocation exercise. Hemson Consulting Ltd. was retained to update Mississauga's growth forecasts. Their work is outlined in the report titled Long Range Growth Forecasts City of Mississauga 2011 – 2051. In November 2013 Mississauga Council adopted the 'Steady Growth' scenario outlined in Hemson's report.<sup>8</sup>

Highlights from the report that are relevant to parks provision include:

- The City is now in a post-greenfield phase. Mississauga has effectively transitioned from a rapidly growing suburban community to a mature urban community.
- Population growth will be accommodated through intensification and redevelopment within the existing built up area.

- Mississauga will continue to become more focused on higher density housing forms, particularly apartment development in the Downtown Core, infill in Major and Community Nodes and through redevelopment along intensification corridors.
- A projected population of 777,250 by 2019 (Future Directions planning horizon), 784,760 by 2021, and 829,100 by 2031, with most of the growth being directed to nodes, corridors and the downtown core.

According to the Socio-Demographic Profile report prepared for Future Directions, the greatest positive change in forecasted population between the 2014 and 2019 will be experienced in Service Area 5, followed by Service Areas 1, 2 and 6.

**Table 2.5: Future Forecasted Population Growth, 2014-2019**, following, shows the forecasted population over 5-year increments to 2019, by Service Area. Not captured in the current population estimates are the Inspiration Lakeview and Inspiration Port Credit projects in Service Area 6, which are in the early stages of planning.

**Table 2.5: Future Forecasted Population Growth, 2014-2019** (Source: City of Mississauga, 2013)

Service Area	Year						Population Increase	% Growth
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019		
1	168,530	170,310	171,830	172,430	172,980	173,560	5,030	3%
2	163,300	165,100	166,200	166,720	167,210	167,780	4,480	3%
3	40,650	40,730	40,710	40,680	40,590	40,550	-100	0%
4	99,650	100,090	100,190	100,160	100,070	100,000	350	0%
5	192,740	192,660	194,060	196,180	198,520	201,010	8,270	4%
6	91,720	92,360	92,910	93,480	93,950	94,350	2,630	3%

### 2.3.7 Intensification

The 2013 study undertaken by Hemson Consulting report titled *Long Range Growth Forecasts City of Mississauga 2011 – 2051* identifies Mississauga as “effectively transitioned from a rapidly growing suburban community to a mature urban community”. With a steady population growth adopted by the City, Mississauga will continue to see intensification and redevelopment within the existing built-up area, particularly in the Downtown Core, along with infill in Major and Community Nodes along intensification corridors.

The overall demographic outlook for the City prepared by Hemson is a gradual slowing of population growth as a result of the build-out of ground-related housing which was largely family-oriented, and a shift to smaller households in higher density units. The Hemson report notes that population will also become more diverse over time as new housing attracts more single person and non-family households in a wider age range than in the past. Tempering this outlook is the understanding that several of the high density residential units developed in the City Centre in recent years have generated a marked number of elementary school-aged children, as noted by the Peel District School Board as part of the study consultation.<sup>9</sup> This suggests that there is some willingness by couples with children to occupy apartments and condominiums in Mississauga’s downtown, which has an implication for parks and recreation facilities provision.

As illustrated on Table 2.5 previously, the rate of growth in areas of the City is expected to differ considerably. Between 2014 and 2019, Service Areas 5 is anticipated to experience the greatest population increase (8,270 persons) as a result of intensification, followed by Service Area 1 (5,030 persons) and Service Area 2 (4,480) while areas 3 and 4 will remain stable. Service Area 6 is expected to grow by 2,630 persons by 2019 however this forecast does not include population increases associated with the Inspiration Port Credit and

Inspiration Lakeview projects. The Lakeview node in particular is anticipated to receive significant intensification. The City is currently working with the community to develop master plans for these areas and monitoring of these plans will be needed to ensure that parkland needs are addressed.

## 2.4 Trends

### 2.4.1 Trends in Park Planning and Development

The consideration of existing and emerging trends is important to effectively plan for parks and recreation needs. The 2009 Future Directions studies identified a number of trends related to an aging population, cultural diversity and changing leisure preferences that were of relevance to parks and natural areas development, management, and programming, and provided benchmarking of Mississauga’s response to these trends and influences. The majority of these trends are still relevant today. The following sections provide key highlights of the more notable trends that continue to influence parks and forestry service delivery in the City.

#### An Expanded Role for Parks and Green Spaces

In Canada’s large urban areas, there is an increasing proportion of residents with less disposable income to purchase leisure services and with the added issue of rising oil prices thereby transportation costs many people will look closer to home for their leisure activities. When combined with an aging population and diversified cultural preferences these trends suggest that there will be greater pressure on locally provided public parks, green spaces and natural areas to meet residents needs for rest, relaxation, recreation and socializing. Consequently parks are increasingly taking on new and expanded roles within the spectrum of recreation facilities.

While parks have long been associated with sports and active recreation, the use of parks and public spaces for arts and cultural activities is on the increase, with parks of all types being used for community and cultural events, performances and as space for art exhibits. This is increasingly evident in Mississauga supported by the City's cultural diversity, community interest and City support for arts and cultural programming. As well, cultural resources that define a community's history and identity include parks, gardens, and landscapes. As a 'community of communities' maintaining a visible presence and continuity of Mississauga's heritage requires preservation and re-purposing of heritage buildings and landscapes. There is an increasing public support for these efforts



Kariya Park officially opened in July of 1992 to honour the eleventh anniversary of Mississauga's twin-city relationship with Kariya, Japan.

An increasing awareness of the value and importance of natural systems in cities is bringing societal shifts in behaviour, adjustments to patterns of urban growth, and new roles for both planners and residents as stewards of the natural environment. Education is critical to realizing this long-term shift and can comprise formal and informal programming, hands-on learning and stewardship opportunities. Parks and natural areas play an important role in environmental education, offering the benefits of direct experience with flora and fauna, the motivation to explore, discover, and learn and providing a valuable resource for closing the educational gap in understanding how our ecosystems interact. Exposing children and youth to nature by providing ready access to parks and natural areas is key to fostering an early sense of stewardship for the natural environment.

As the desire to use local parks increases, revitalization of older parks to align with community interests will be important to increasing opportunities for positive outdoor recreation experiences. Park projects can also help develop community and social capital through engagement of all sectors including youth, families, seniors, different ethnic groups, and different socio-economic groups. Local residents have become increasingly effective stewards and advocates for their parks and natural areas in cities across North America, and organized groups are helping in environmental initiatives and the revitalization of parks from unused, empty places into places for community programs and social interaction.

### Trends Related to Intensification

Current approaches to urban planning that influence parks provision include densification, complete communities, smart growth, active transportation and 'living green'. The philosophy behind these approaches is to limit or mitigate the negative effects of urban growth on the natural environment and social communities. Optimizing opportunities in new and redeveloped urban infrastructure to support natural systems and the urban forest by employing low-impact development solutions and integrating greening solutions will be important contributors to these objectives.

With trends suggesting that people will be spending more time in their local communities, there will be increased demands for and usage of existing parks and natural areas, which can have an impact on both the capacity of the park and its facilities as well as on associated operational and maintenance costs. This is true in Mississauga as population growth and migration contribute to increasing urbanization in key areas of the City. In response it will be important to continue to provide a range of green spaces in redeveloping, built-up urban areas. As a consequence the function and form of parks is changing, as evidenced by the recently developed parks in the City Centre area.

While introducing new large parks may be difficult in established areas, smaller "infill" green spaces can still provide usable community social places, single outdoor recreation facilities, and contribute to a connected network of green spaces. These "other" public spaces will likely play a greater role in the future in ensuring continued access to park-like places that fulfill the expanded role of parks and green spaces. Where land bases exist larger brownfield redevelopment projects may yield larger, multi-purpose parks that support more traditional activities in one location.



Outdoor table tennis suits small urban parks

### Encouragement of Physical Activity and Social Interaction

Parks, greenbelts and natural areas provide the infrastructure for a public health approach to eliminating sedentary lifestyles and related health problems. There is an increasing prevalence of obesity amongst North Americans of all ages including children and youth, and some ethnic groups are observed to have higher than average obesity rates. Being outdoors is found to be a powerful correlate of mental well-being and access to outdoor recreation facilities, parks and activities is positively associated with increasing physical activity levels amongst all ages. Creating and enhancing amenity spaces which allow for recreation "can result in a 25 percent increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times a week," and those that were particularly close were "43 percent more likely to exercise 30 minutes most days than those with poor access." <sup>10</sup>



Being able to conveniently walk from home to destinations such as stores, parks and trails, combined with safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing surroundings are important factors in increasing physical activity levels for seniors and older adults. By providing parks, municipalities allow residents to be more physically active which directly improves health.

Dialogue with the community suggests that for older adults and newcomers, parks can also play an important role in connecting them to other people, and to the community-at-large, which is key to psychological and emotional well-being. Newcomers can benefit from the opportunities parks provide for social interaction and as spaces that support cultural activities.

Parks also offer children and youth programming opportunities to help with self-identity, and sense of belonging as an antidote to social alienation, vandalism, violence and the social costs associated with these issues. Dialogue with youth in Mississauga has suggested that parks are important to them, providing that the facilities and amenities support social and physical activities of interest to them. Parks and natural areas create opportunities for social interaction. Recreation within communities reduces alienation, loneliness and anti-social behaviour and promotes ethnic and cultural harmony as well as builds strong families.<sup>11</sup> Parks have also been known to reduce levels of juvenile delinquency and crime in communities.<sup>12</sup>



Fitness 'boot camp' at Mississauga Celebration Square

### Demand for Unstructured Activities

The mandate of municipalities includes ensuring all residents have affordable access to services. With increasingly involved and busy lifestyles people are looking for outdoor activities that can be undertaken at their leisure and which compliment other interests such as sports, nature observation, arts and culture, gardening and dog walking. Parks, green spaces and natural areas can provide no-cost or reasonable cost leisure activities, supporting individuals and families in their efforts for an active lifestyle, and providing opportunities for enjoyable social and outdoor recreational experiences that suit a range of interests.

Of particular interest is the growing trend among municipalities to provide natural play sites and playscapes to meet the public's demand for unstructured activities. Natural play sites have been have received growing interest across Canada. While they have predominantly been developed on private lands and on school properties, natural play sites on municipal lands have been developed in Toronto, Hamilton, and Edmonton. They provide an alternative to structured play sites and integrate natural and built features that may include music, art, and sensory experiences.

Natural play sites provide a range of benefits, both physical and social. The integration of play with a child's natural surroundings creates an appreciation for nature. While the play sites encourage children to be active, activities incorporating the natural environment and topography also help them improve fine motor skills. Social skills and creativity are also developed through sensory play.



Dundas Natural Playground, City of Hamilton

### Information Technology

The integration of Information technology in municipal parks is being undertaken in cities across North America, notably in Calgary and New York City. Information technology, which includes mobile applications (Wi-Fi® hot spot) and geographic information systems (GIS) improves services delivery, programming, and enhances the public's experience. While information technology can be costly to implement, it is particularly of value in destination parks and trails, by enabling place based learning and enhancing a person's experience of their natural environment. Information technology is also valuable in urban parks. It can be used to expand the types of amenities and attract a larger more diverse range of visitors, which can thereby increase use and enjoyment of the park.

Beyond enhancing user experience, information technology is also particularly important to enable efficient and effective data collection, monitoring and systems analysis of the usage of the City's parks,



trails, its users, and also their experiences. Enhanced systems analysis of the City's parks provides confidence not only to residents related to the tax expenditure and services delivery, but also to current and prospective corporate sponsors enhancing stewardship.

### All Season and 24-Hour Use of Parks

Tied to a number of the aforementioned trends is an increasing interest by residents in the winter and 24 hour use of local parks, green spaces and natural areas. This offers benefits of: expanding low-cost, close to home recreation opportunities; increasing opportunities for individuals of all age groups to be active outdoors year-round and all day; and optimizing the use of parks and open space resources.

All season use of parks was an expressed interest in dialogue with community members of all ages in Mississauga, with suggested park improvements including trail and pathway clearing, community ice rinks and amenities such as fire pits and warming shelters that would encourage use.

There is also increasing pressure in a number of parks to keep the lights on past the current time of 11pm. Introducing 24 hour use would respond to a desire and expectation of the public to improve accessibility of parks in the area. There are opportunities for increasing lighting in parks and trails, and the potential for 24 hour use of parks. Discussions during consultation suggested lighting entrances to parks and important trail linkages while leaving the open and natural areas dark to avoid intrusion on adjacent neighbourhoods and natural areas. Lighting in parks would also need to give consideration to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) requirements.

Implementation of all-season use of parks can present significant cost challenges, and will likely need to be selectively applied to locations where interest is highest or that offer the most benefit to the most residents. However the costs need to be considered relative to the health and social benefits and in comparison to resources allocated to single purpose outdoor facilities such as sports fields, which have a limited season and are oriented to a narrow range of users.



Evening ice skating at Mississauga Celebration Square

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<sup>1</sup> Mississauga Data: 2011 Census Results Age and Sex.  
[http://www5.mississauga.ca/research\\_catalogue/K\\_3\\_2011\\_Census\\_Age\\_Sex.pdf](http://www5.mississauga.ca/research_catalogue/K_3_2011_Census_Age_Sex.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Monteith Brown Planning Consultants. Future Directions 2014: *Socio-Demographic Profile*. December 2013

<sup>5</sup> Mississauga Data: 2011 Census Results Language.  
[http://www5.mississauga.ca/research\\_catalogue/K\\_5\\_2011\\_Census\\_Language.pdf](http://www5.mississauga.ca/research_catalogue/K_5_2011_Census_Language.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Monteith Brown Planning Consultants. Future Directions 2014: *Socio-Demographic Profile*. December 2013

<sup>7</sup> Long Range Growth Forecasts City of Mississauga 2011 – 2051

<sup>8</sup> Long Range Growth Forecasts City of Mississauga 2011 – 2051

<sup>9</sup> Personal communication during interview with the Peel District School Board.

<sup>10</sup> Active Living Resource Centre. *Active Facts: Parks, Trails and Recreation*. National Center for Bicycling & Walking. Bethesda, MD

<sup>11</sup> Parks and Recreation Ontario, *The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue*. 1992

<sup>12</sup> Edmonton & Area Land Trust, *Municipal Benefits from Natural Areas, Parks and Rural Landscapes*.

### 3.0 Delivering the Service

#### 3.1 Current Service Delivery

Mississauga effectively planned its growth and has achieved an admirable open space system comprised of 3,187.78 ha (7,877 acres) of parks, greenbelts and open space lands, 270 km (167.4 miles) of trails and pathways, and 2.1 million trees in the City (1 million on public lands and the remaining in private ownership). In addition, there are approximately 2,737 ha<sup>1</sup> (6,763 acres) of natural areas largely concentrated on the valleys of the Credit River, the Etobicoke Creek and Sixteen Mile Creek and the City currently manages 152 publicly owned woodlands and natural areas. Much of these environmental lands offer opportunities for trails, and nature-oriented passive recreation uses, together with their ecological attributes and functions as riverine systems and floodways.

Within the open space system there are more than 500 public parks. As can be seen on Figure 2, following, there is an excellent geographic distribution of parkland, with the City having largely achieved its target objective for the provision of parks within 800 metres of all residential areas over its six Service Areas. The Destination parks and open space offer a diverse range of activities and amenities, from sports to gardens, to cultural events and heritage features, within attractive and well-managed settings. Included in the City's parks and open space system is 22 km of publicly accessible shoreline on Lake Ontario with a diverse array of parks. Use and management of the waterfront parks is directed by the Waterfront Parks Strategy which was completed in 2008, and which still serves as the guiding document.

As the City's population continues to increase there will be expectations for continued levels of service delivery in parks. This will require that areas of the City that are subject to intensification will continue to be provided with the same, or better, quality of parks that are available today, and that older parks are rejuvenated to meet the needs of future residents. These improvements will need to be made with a view to addressing current and emerging recreation trends, identified community needs, and to enhance the design quality, and social and environmental attributes of the park to meet contemporary expectations.

Recreation trends and the reported experience in Mississauga over the past five years suggest that parks and open spaces in the future will be more frequently and intensely used by all ages and that there will be continued interest in no-cost activities such as trails, and for areas in parks which allow for spontaneous as well as programmed uses.

##### 3.1.1 Existing Standards and Classifications

Historically, Mississauga's open space network has consisted of two (2) designations:

- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space

Within the Public Open Space designation the parks classifications in use in the Official Plan for planning and inventory purposes comprise Destination Parks and Community Parks. Other non-parkland public open space lands comprise Greenbelt and Cemeteries.

Private Space, which is generally considered to include lands that are used for private cemeteries, conservation, nursery gardening, agriculture, and golf courses, is also acknowledged for its

contributions to non-intensive, outdoor uses. However these lands are not necessarily accessible to the public.

Existing parkland standards and classifications that have guided new community planning in Mississauga for some time are described below.

- A target provision standard of 1.2 ha. of parkland per 1,000 population for residential districts. This is total for all parks (Destination Parks and Community Parks)
- Parks should be generally accessible for residents within 800 metres from their homes, and be as centrally located within a residential neighbourhood as possible

The park classifications, as confirmed in the 2009 Future Directions Recreation and Parks Master Plan, are provided on **Table 3.1**. Discussions with staff indicate that there are no plans to formally change or adjust the parks planning criteria at this time. However there is currently a study underway for the City of Mississauga which is reviewing parks provision in the Downtown area, including consideration of an area-specific parks typology.

**Table 3.1: City of Mississauga Open Space Classification System**

Open Space Classification System
<b>Public Open Space</b>
<b>Destination Parks<sup>2</sup></b>
Accommodate recreation interests of City residents through the provision of major facilities (e.g. golf courses), the preservation of unique historical, cultural, or significant natural areas. They may also meet the need for community-level parkland or serve an area greater than the City. Destination Parks may serve a unique function such as a waterfront park, major tournament sports park, or special use park.
<b>Community Parks<sup>3</sup></b>
Intended to accommodate recreation interests for the local residential area through provision of sports fields for organized use, space/equipment for unorganized activities and passive use, preservation of woodlands, multi-purpose year round activities (where feasible), visual relief and aesthetic qualities.
<b>Greenbelt<sup>4</sup></b>
Lands designated Greenbelt are generally associated with natural hazards or significant natural areas where development is restricted to protect people and property from damage and to provide for the conservation of the natural heritage features and areas. Permitted uses include passive recreation activities where they are compatible with the viability of the natural area, while respecting appropriate buffers from watercourses and valley slopes.

## 3.1.2 Existing Parkland Supply

**Table 3.2**, following summarizes the 2014 City-wide supply of parks and open space within the classifications commonly used, and based on the lands inventory provided by the City. For comparison purposes to meet current population needs and growth, the supply includes parks that are slated for development or in progress.

**Table 3.3** provides a breakdown of the amount of parkland within each of the Service Areas and identifies the per capita rate of provision in 2014, in comparison to the City-wide target (1.2 ha per 1,000 persons), and as a comparison between Service Areas.

**Table 3.2: City-wide Supply of Parks and Open Space**

<i>Park or Open Space Type</i>	<i>Supply (ha)*</i>
<i>Destination Parks</i>	413.93 ha**
<i>Community Parks</i>	1,333.62 ha
<b>Total Parks</b>	<b>1,747.55 ha***</b>
<i>Woodlots (within parks)</i>	220.20 ha
<i>Golf Course</i>	82.32 ha
<i>Greenbelt (incl. non-accessible lands)</i>	1,130.51 ha
<i>Cemeteries</i>	7.20 ha
<b>TOTAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE</b>	<b>3,187.78 ha</b>

Source: City of Mississauga Parks and Open Space Inventory

\* Forecasted supply of parks includes parks that are in progress as of 2014

\*\* For the purposes of analyses in this plan Destination Parks excludes Braeburn Golf Course (82.32 ha)

\*\*\* Includes the Ninth Line parks now within the City's urban boundary

**Table 3.3: Summary of Parks Supply by Service Area**

Year	SERVICE AREA						CITY
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Existing Parks Supply</b>							
2014 pop.	168,530	163,300	40,650	99,650	192,740	91,720	756,590
Destination Parks	-	157.08*	-	59.86	9.69	187.30	413.93
Community Parks	416.38	185.32	93.59	199.97	252.22	186.14	1,333.62
<b>TOTAL PARKS</b>	416.38	342.40	93.59	259.83	261.90	373.44	1,747.55
<b>ha / 1000</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>2.09</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>1.35</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>2.31</b>

\* Excluding Braeburn Golf Course (82.32 ha in Service Area 2)



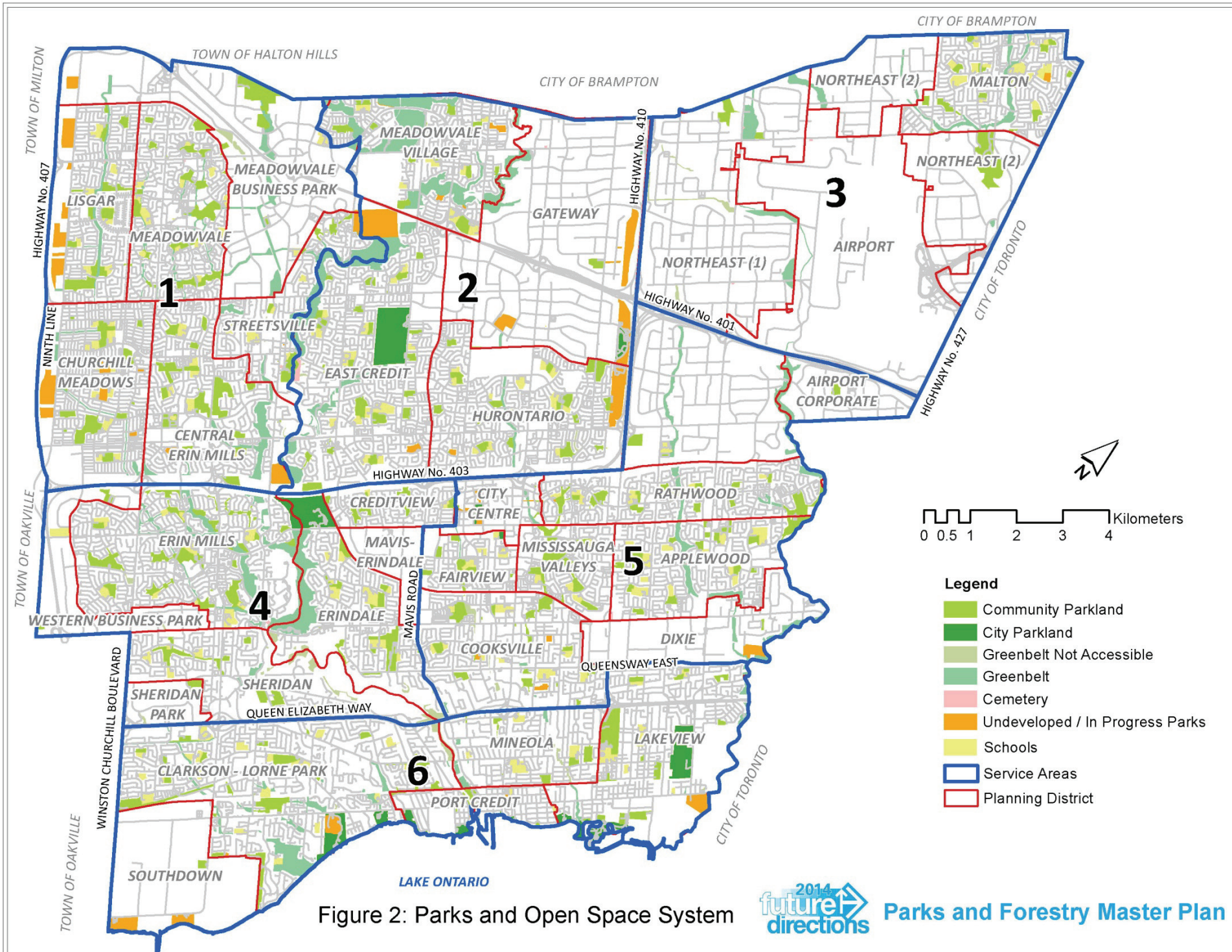


Figure 2: Parks and Open Space System



### 3.2 Key Areas of Focus

The process for the Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan to date has included an intensive series of consultation activities including staff focus groups, a staff management team workshop, staff key informant interviews, agency key informant interviews and community focus groups. Public engagement sessions will be held in early 2014 once the Draft Master Plan has been completed.

In each of the focus groups and interviews the consultant team asked questions around several hot button issues that were identified by senior management:

**Intensification:** How should the City deliver park services in intensified areas? What are the challenges for developing parks in areas of intensification and redevelopment?

**Stewardship:** What are the types of partnerships the City should be getting into? What is the right approach and model for partnerships? How can existing city services and functions be leveraged to support and expand partnership opportunities?

**Cultural diversity:** How does cultural diversity play a role and influence parks service delivery?

**Park development and redevelopment issues:** How can the City improve service delivery and address changing demographics and development trends as it relates to park design, development and redevelopment and maintenance?

**Quantifying economic benefits of parks:** How do parks influence property values; health; municipal revenue among other factors?

Participants at each session were also asked to identify other issues and challenges facing parks and forestry service delivery at the City.

There were a range of issues that emerged as a result of the discussions with all parties, with some common themes emerging.

The following is a high-level summary of the consultation sessions and key areas of focus for the Parks and Forestry Master Plan.

#### 3.2.1 Intensification

Contemporary thinking and placemaking recognizes parks and public spaces as major contributors to City greening; aesthetically pleasing spaces; enlivened streets; and healthy, social, walkable and connected communities. Acquiring sufficient parkland to support the recreation and leisure needs of future residents as the population expands is important, but will be challenging in areas of intensification where there will be limited opportunities for the addition of land. As evidenced in Mississauga's City Centre area, the trend in dense urban areas is toward smaller urban parks and public squares that may offer different forms of leisure pursuits and unstructured activities that appeal to urban dwellers and contribute to the urban form.

Parks, green space and the urban forest are vital components of a healthy urban environment, and are widely marketed as assets by the development industry. However there are competing interests for the available land base, including roads and servicing, other community facilities and infrastructure, and underground parking garages. These uses additionally challenge the design of parks and streetscapes limiting tree planting and facility development opportunities and requiring more innovative and often expensive design and maintenance approaches.

Increases in population may also trigger the need for additional facilities such as community centres and sports fields which are land consumptive. In the core areas the City will be challenged to acquire the amount of parkland that has been identified as necessary to meet active recreation needs. Efforts toward rejuvenation and re-purposing of existing parks will be important, together with the provision of

connections to existing parks via trails, the sidewalk system and transit.

Providing and maintaining a healthy and interconnected urban forest and ecosystem will be additional challenges as urban uses intensify, and risk of environmental threats such as pests and invasive species increase.

With intensified use of existing parks for new types of activities and community events, and with different types of urban parks being developed, operations and maintenance needs will also increase. Designing for long-term sustainability as well as innovation, will be key and the alignment of maintenance service levels with different types of parks will be important.

Creative ways to meet parks and facility needs will be important for responding to intensification and will require ongoing collaboration and dialogue between City departments and with the development industry.



Event at Celebration Square

### 3.2.2 Stewardship and Partnerships

For more effective delivery of parks services, many municipalities are increasingly entering into partnerships with external agencies that have mandates for related service delivery in the fields of public health, education, and environmental protection. As well they are looking to not for profit community organizations and foundations to assist in the stewardship of parks and natural areas and to deliver related specialized programs.

Discussions during *Future Directions* highlighted that the City currently has a number of successful and committed partners. Partnerships are recognized as both important and necessary. The City would like to enhance and augment their current relationships with new and diverse ones as well as better processes, and a number of ideas for new partnerships, and enhancement of existing ones were proposed. Continuity of funding programs was noted as something that could be improved upon for key partners that the City has come to rely on. There is a growing trend in Mississauga for residents and the corporate community to want to participate. It was noted that to be of the most value, volunteer efforts should be coordinated and focused on areas of need, and partnerships should be 'true' in the sense that they are available when the City needs them.

To ensure that the partnership will be effective, a clear operating and policy framework will be in place to guide activities in a manner that is consistent with the City's corporate objectives. Several partnership programs being undertaken in other municipalities that the City of Mississauga may wish to consider are profiled in Section 3.3 Environmental Scan.

There is also an increasing trend in major North American cities toward partnerships with these types of organizations in the

implementation of capital projects, based on their eligibility and track record in securing sponsorships, donations and non-traditional funding partners. Cities such as Toronto, Calgary and Ottawa have established community partnership programs that support capital projects in parks service delivery.

In the U.S, there is an increasing move toward park trusts that enable the development industry to financially contribute towards the development and long-term maintenance of public infrastructure, including major parks, that provide significant benefit to a specific development area. However, with different tax policies in the U.S. the same opportunities have not yet materialized in a significant way in Canada.



Fountain at Mississauga Celebration Square

### 3.2.3 Cultural Diversity

Mississauga is culturally diverse which brings a range of different interests and activities into the parks. Non-traditional sports are increasing in popularity, and bring different demands for land area and associated amenities. With a limited land-base to expand facilities, parks of the future will need to be reflective of the demographics of the community, and methods for obtaining relevant analytical data should be employed. Parks should serve diverse ages, abilities and income levels and should be designed as such.

Parks are viewed as opportunities for positive community social interactions and increasing public awareness of parks, facilities, and leisure and recreation programs was viewed as a means of engaging all different cultures. It was noted that the opportunities for a community to provide feedback during design consultations could be improved, perhaps through frontline staff in recreation centres, park user surveys, or the use of mobile technologies. The use of social media is also proving to be a good opportunity to allow the public to provide the City with feedback.

Arts and cultural events are happening more and more in parks. As the population increases so does the demand for these special events. Session discussions brought to light the fact that the increasing frequency of these events in community parks has impacts on their quality, as well as operations staff routines and budgets. In addition to the internal impacts of special events, there are also external impacts to the community adjacent. There needs to be a balance between noise and traffic congestion for residents/tenants in the surrounding area. There is also a need to determine a better way to support special events and to improve the process and efficiency of identifying support needs and delivering support services so the responsibility of operations of events and increased maintenance of parks remain manageable

### 3.2.4 Park Development/Redevelopment

The City of Mississauga is culturally diverse and along with the rest of Canada is trending toward an aging population, although in the near future the socio-demographic profile will continue to include families, youth and children as a significant component of the population.

There is a desire and public expectations for improved accessibility, innovation and higher quality facilities in both new and rejuvenated parks. Many existing parks are currently geared towards traditional organized sports and activities for children and youth. Moving forward there is a need to ensure that parks are accessible and able to be enjoyed by all segments of the population.

To support older adults and improve accessibility, parks need to be safe, walkable and connected to adjacent land uses, with 'destinations' and amenities within the park where users can rest and enjoy the setting. Frequently suggested park improvements from older adults include outdoor exercise equipment, seating areas, shade structures and gazebos for small gatherings, rest and sun protection; spray pads; more local park pathways, as well as areas within parks for unstructured activities and programming such as tai chi, outdoor fitness and yoga.

As well, Mississauga's youth are looking for different activities and amenities that would encourage them to visit and use parks. Most noted features were youth-oriented play structures (climbing walls and climbing webs are examples), skate facilities, benches and areas for social gathering, and access to WiFi.

Opportunities for increasing lighting in parks and trails, and the potential for 24 hour use of parks were also noted, along with a desire to complete linkages within the City's trail and pathway system. The need to encourage and facilitate winter seasonal use of parks was also identified.

### 3.2.5 Economic Benefits of Parks

One of the key topics for the 2014 Parks and Forestry Master Plan is a desire to demonstrate the value that parks, open space and natural areas bring to a City, in particular the economic benefits. Quantifying the economic benefits of parks and open spaces would help to better position parks services in relation to other City services and infrastructure needs that compete for both land and budgets, and might contribute to investment and buy-in by the development community. Parks, open spaces, natural areas, forests and even street trees convey social, health and economic benefits that could be better recognized. Further elaboration on these benefits is provided in the Environmental Scan, following.

*All successful cities astonish with their human-made and natural beauty. People choose to live and businesses choose to invest in beautiful cities. – Toronto Official Plan*



### 3.3 Environmental Scan

The Future Directions Parks and Forestry Environmental Scan was prepared as a background document to the Parks and Forestry Master Plan. It discusses the key benefits and values of parks, provides a snapshot of Mississauga's current state, provides insight into how other municipalities are addressing similar issues and challenges to Mississauga, and proposes best practices in Parks and Forestry service delivery that the City may wish to consider.

The following sections summarize key findings of the Environmental Scan report, beginning with the benefits and values of parks, open space and natural areas and followed by the Best Practices review aligned along topics that are relevant to Mississauga's Parks and Forestry services.



Cycling at the waterfront

#### 3.3.1 The Benefits and Value of Parks and Open Space and Natural Areas

Since the earliest establishment of towns and cities, parks and public spaces have historically been known as social meeting and gathering places, with trends in the more recent history of City development focusing on physical play and recreation. Parks and public spaces are also well recognized as adding a certain level of aesthetic quality to the neighbourhood as a whole. Although they continue to perform these important roles, a new, holistic view of parks, green spaces and natural areas has emerged which identifies them as contributing to public health benefits, social capital, ecosystem services, and the economics of the greater community. The benefits that parks, open space and natural areas offer accrue to all members of society.

The following sections provide a scan of contemporary literature on the subject.

#### Health Benefits

There are a number of studies showing that parks and natural areas yield both positive **physical and psychological health benefits** to those who use and live around them. Parks provide a space for many kinds of physical activity and there is a strong correlation between proximity to parks and increased physical activity levels.

World Health Organization and Canadian guidelines have new recommendations for healthy activity levels. Adults aged 18 and older should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate- to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week, in sessions of 10 minutes or more. As of 2009 "just over 15% of Canadian adults meet [the] new physical activity guidelines"<sup>5</sup> This lack of physical activity and increased sedentary lifestyle contribute to increasing obesity levels in Canada as well as North America. Overweight and obese individuals



are at risk of developing a variety of other health issues. One solution to this problem is to provide more parks and play sites in close proximity to where people live. Creating and enhancing amenity spaces which allow for recreation “can result in a 25 percent increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times a week and people with the best access to a variety of built and natural facilities were 43 percent more likely to exercise 30 minutes most days than those with poor access.”<sup>6</sup> Access to parks may encourage residents to be more physically active which directly improves personal health, thereby reducing health spending and related costs.

There are also more subtle ways that parks are beneficial. Physical activity has been known to relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety, and improves a person’s mood and psychological well-being.<sup>7</sup> Exercise releases chemicals in the brain that may ease anxiety and depression symptoms and it can reduce immune system chemicals that can worsen symptoms. Parks and natural areas are linked to improving respiratory problems such as asthma in both children and adults. Shade from trees in parks can also provide protection from UV radiation, “which has been positively linked to increased incidences of skin cancers.”<sup>8</sup> As well, interest was expressed by both the general public and from City Councillors that Mississauga parks should have more shade structures. Although shade structures are provided in some parks, there is increased demand for shade structures in more and more parks. This can be attributed to an aging population, greater awareness of health issues related to heat and sun exposure, and increased interest in passive activities such as walking and people-watching.

In addition to these physical benefits, exposure to nature has also been demonstrated to have a positive impact on psychological health. Research shows that children with ADD/ADHD concentrate better and have a general reduction in symptoms after spending time in nature compared to those who didn’t.<sup>9</sup> It has also been noted that long

suffering dementia and Alzheimer’s patients seem to have decreased symptoms following time in gardens or after horticultural therapy.<sup>10</sup> Nature is soothing for the body and mind. Simply viewing natural landscapes can improve one’s wellbeing. Surgical patients who viewed trees after surgery had shorter hospitalizations, less need for painkillers, and fewer negative comments in the nurse’s notes than those patients who did not.<sup>11</sup>

In summary, parks provide a number of health benefits, including an area for physical fitness, improving air quality, and aiding in mental health and wellness. In providing these benefits, parks help to **decrease health costs** associated with certain health issues. The Parks Health Benefits Calculator (PHBC) is a means of tabulating the collective economic savings through the use of parks for exercise. Sacramento, California has 5,141 acres of parks and amenities for its residents. Using the PHBC, they determined the medical savings realized by City residents because of park exercise and found that 78,000 people engaged actively enough in parks to improve their health, 72,000 of them were under the age of 65 and 6,000 were older. Medical savings in 2007 were estimated at \$19,872,000.<sup>12</sup>

*In parks, families and friends can come together to have fun, celebrate important occasions or just relax and take time out. This immense social value is part of the ‘glue’ of a health society. – Parks and Greenspaces Business Unit, Liverpool City Council*

### Social Benefits

Parks provide social benefits by helping to build healthy communities, stabilize neighbourhoods, encourage community involvement and strengthen social ties. This value is increasingly referred to as ‘**social capital**’. Residents in neighbourhoods parks have stronger social connections, and neighbourhoods with community gardens are more stable, losing fewer residents over time.<sup>13</sup> Recreation also reduces alienation, loneliness and anti-social behaviours, promotes harmony, and builds strong families, which form a stronger society.<sup>14</sup> Studies show that “parks are valued even by those who do not use them.” Over half of the respondents of an Edmonton, Alberta study said that they did not use parks themselves, but reported receiving benefits from them anyway. Volunteer initiatives in parks can also be quantified for their benefits. It was estimated that in the province of Alberta the value of volunteer contributions in the year 2000 amounted to \$287.1 million, which is the equivalent to 8,572 person years of employment.<sup>15</sup>

In Liverpool, UK more than 30 parks have direct links to community and Friends groups. Their involvement in decision making directly improves community empowerment and well being. 3148 hours were contributed by volunteers in 2009 through Heritage Guiding and Education and 4231 hours worth of volunteer activity in the local Nature Reserves.<sup>16</sup>

For example the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania tallied the financial contributions made to these groups in 2007 as well as volunteer hours and converted them to a dollar figure (\$18.17/hour). Combining these two figures yielded a community cohesion value of \$8,600,000.<sup>17</sup>

### Environmental Benefits

Parks, open spaces and natural areas **contribute to a City’s environmental health**. There are a number of ways the environment receives benefits from parks including reducing air and water pollution and reducing the amount of stormwater runoff in urban areas. Trees and plants are very efficient at removing pollutants and particulates from the surrounding air. It was reported in 2011 that the tree canopy in the City of Mississauga sequesters 7,400 tonnes of carbon, stores 203,000 tonnes of carbon, and removes 492 tonnes of air pollution annually. It also helps to reduce energy consumption by 79,000 MBTUS and 7300 MWH annually.<sup>18</sup>

A study completed in 1994 noted that trees in New York City “removed an estimated 1,821 metric tons of air pollution.”<sup>19</sup> Plants and trees also help to regulate temperatures in an urban setting.<sup>20</sup> Trees can help to mitigate climatic effects, particularly the urban heat island effect.. “The evaporation from a single large tree can produce the cooling effect of ten room-size air conditioners operating 24 hours a day.”<sup>21</sup>

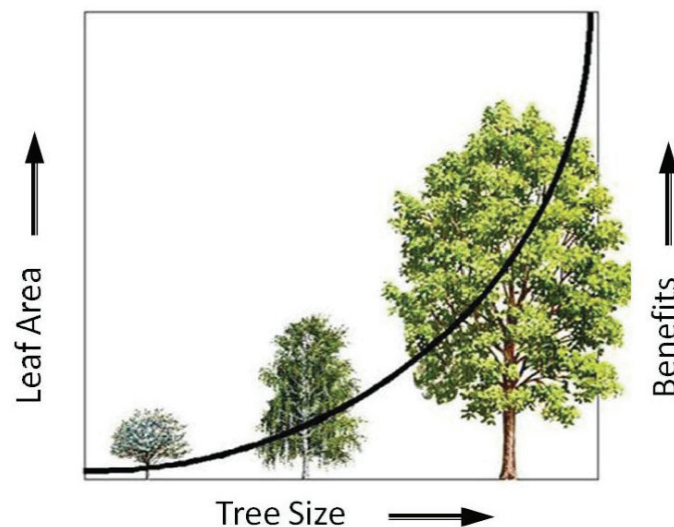
In addition to improving air and water quality, parks and natural areas also regulate urban stormwater. Plants, trees and their surrounding soil “remove polluted particulate matter from the water before it reaches storm sewers.” They absorb nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, which pollute streams and lakes.<sup>22</sup> and mitigate stormwater issues that can result from the extent of impervious surfaces including roads, sidewalks, parking lots, and rooftops, which prevent water from soaking into the ground.<sup>23</sup> Parkland captures precipitation, slows runoff, allows evaporation, and allows infiltration to recharge groundwater. Thus urban green spaces can function like “miniature storage reservoirs.”<sup>24</sup>

There are a number of economic benefits derived from the ‘**natural capital**’ contributions that parks and natural areas make. Natural capital is the extension of the economic notion of market-based capital to goods and services relating to the natural environment (ecosystem services). Plants and trees help the urban environment in many ways including pollution mitigation, carbon management, and regulating the microclimate.

The City of Mississauga estimated the structural value of all trees in the City, as of 2008, at \$1.4 billion. The urban forest provides an ecosystem service by removing 429 metric tonnes of air pollution annually. This has been valued at \$4.8 million annually. Trees in the City store 203,000 tonnes of carbon, with an associated value of \$5.8 million annually. Also, according to the *Peel Region Urban Forest Strategy*, Mississauga saved \$1,236,800 annually during heating and cooling seasons due to the climatic regulation of the tree canopy.<sup>25</sup>

*People spend their money, time and energy resources with the expectation of receiving benefits, not for the delivery of services themselves. Citizens don't buy programs or services; they buy the expectation of benefits. – Conceptualizing the Benefit of Public Leisure Services, Jack Harper & Ken Balmer*

Washington, D.C., used an Air Quality Calculator to determine that the parks and trees in their City removed 244 tons of carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and sulphur dioxide in 2005. Based on the dollar values assigned to these pollutants, the savings was \$1,130,000.<sup>26</sup> A closer demonstration of this is a study undertaken by the David Suzuki Foundation<sup>27</sup> which examined the value of ecosystem services provided by both the 5,838 hectare Rouge National Park and the area's three major surrounding watersheds, covering a total of 64,623 hectares in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The findings of the report reveal that the Rouge and its surrounding watersheds provide an estimated \$115.6 million



**Figure 3: Benefits of Trees as Leaf Area and Tree Size Increases.**

Source: City of Mississauga Urban Forestry Management Plan.

(\$2,247 per hectare) in non-market economic benefits for residents in the GTA each year. The ecosystem services that contribute most to the total study area's natural capital assets are pollination services, stored carbon worth, and wetland habitat.

Additionally, parks and natural areas reduce infrastructure costs by mitigating stormwater impacts. Watershed conservation has proved cost-effective in reducing water pollution which results in environmental and financial benefits for communities. Studies show every 10% increase in forest cover in a given area decreases treatment and chemical costs by roughly 20%, until 60% of the area is forested (US EPA)<sup>28</sup> Trees more effectively and less expensively manage the flow of stormwater runoff than concrete sewers and ditches. They intercept rainfall, and unpaved areas absorb water,

slowing the rate at which it reaches stormwater facilities.<sup>29</sup> By knowing the stormwater retained by parks and what the cost of treating the water would have been, Seattle obtained a total annual Stormwater Retention Value of \$2.3 million for its park system<sup>30</sup>, which at 6,200 acres is comparable to Mississauga's 6,700 acres of parkland and open space.



Mississauga has an extensive trail and park pathway system that contributes to healthy communities

### Economic Benefits

As described in the preceding sections, the economic benefits of parks are frequently referred to in association with health, social and environmental benefits. The following sections examine other key sources that support this position.

### Property Values

Crompton's "Proximate Principle" states that the "market value of properties located proximate to a park or open space (POS) are frequently higher than comparable properties located elsewhere,"<sup>31</sup> which leads to higher property taxes that can be collected by the municipality. This assumption is echoed in the assessment criteria used by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) which is responsible for property assessment in Ontario. When assessing a property, MPAC looks at the key features of property. There are as many as 200 different factors considered, but 5 major ones that account for 85% of the value. One of those five deals with the location of a property, including its proximity to transit, schools, libraries and parks.<sup>32</sup>

As evidence, Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) studied real estate values in Mississauga in an effort to quantify the monetary value that residents place on living near green space.<sup>33</sup> Residential properties were studied that were located within 100 metres of natural spaces using data drawn from the MPAC's databases to carry out a hedonic analysis.



The study resulted in the following findings.

- On average, natural features in south Mississauga increase individual property values by about \$8,010, or about 2.4% of the average property value in the area.
- Natural features in north Mississauga increase individual property values by about \$10,273, or 3.6% of the average property value.
- The closer a home is to the natural feature, the greater the impact of the feature on the home's value.
- In total, the study found that natural features add more than a quarter of a billion dollars (\$255,446,956) to real estate values in just two areas of Mississauga.

This trend was also discovered in the United States. According to the (American) National Association of Home Builders “parks and recreation areas may enhance the values of nearby land up to 15-20 percent,” see the list below for some other statistics to consider:

- The average value of a property adjacent to a greenbelt is 32% more than that of properties that are not.
- Homes facing parks sold for 20% more than those 1 block away.
- Proximity of a park is 5% of the average selling price.
- Greatest value for parks occurs when they are greater than 148 acres.

Similarly, a study of Pennyback Park in Philadelphia saw property values increasing “from about \$1000 per acre at 2,500 feet from the park to \$11,500 per acre at 40 feet from the park.”<sup>34</sup> It is important to note that some types of parks are more desirable than others and there are instances where parks can have a negative effect. There is evidence that spaces used for “athletic activities and large social gatherings are much less preferred than natural areas.”<sup>35</sup> Parks that are excessively busy, unattractive and poorly maintained, and in

undesirable neighbourhoods, all contribute to a decrease in property values when in close proximity. “Property values near parks are affected primarily by two factors: *distance* and the *quality of the space*,” as for park quality, “beautiful natural resource parks with great trees, trails, meadows, and gardens are markedly valuable to surrounding homes. Excellent recreational facilities are also desirable (though with some reductions in value due to issues of noise, nighttime lighting, and parking),” and parks with dangerous or frightening aspects can reduce nearby property values.”<sup>36</sup> Developers of communities also see parks as a huge asset and often use it in their own marketing material.

### Private Sector Investment

A second economic benefit of parks and public open spaces is the attraction of private sector investment. A study on intensification undertaken for the Region of Peel<sup>37</sup> notes that investment in facilities and public spaces by the public sector can also encourage general intensification by providing sought after services and amenities and increasing the quality of life and market demand to live and work in an area. Part of the attraction of intensification is that it allows people to live in neighbourhoods that they might not ordinarily be able to afford, with access to high quality service and amenities including commercial/retail services, access to cultural and social attractions, parks and public open space and recreational areas. Downtown Brampton and Mississauga City Centre are both noted as prime examples of this effect.

*No single park, no matter how large and how well designed, would provide citizens with the beneficial influences of nature; instead parks need to be linked to one another and to surrounding residential neighborhoods. —Frederick Law Olmsted*



The High Line, a reclaimed raised rail corridor in New York turned park, is a good example of how an urban park can create an upswing in demand and value of the land surrounding it. By June of 2009 when the first section opened, “dozens of new buildings had already sprouted up around it,” It was predicted that new development around the park “will bring \$4 billion in private investment and \$900 million in revenues to the City over the next 30 years.”<sup>38</sup>

### Tourism

Parks-based tourism revenue generated through park visits and special events is also an economic benefit. In Seattle in 2009, parks-based tourism was a large contributor to the City’s economy.

Approximately 35% of visitor spending was in parks. That year, the collective increase in wealth from park-based tourism was just over \$30 million.<sup>39</sup>

### Direct Use Values

When residents use City owned parks, trails and facilities municipalities also reap economic benefits versus when residents choose amenities provided by the private marketplace. Parks provide value through accommodating activities such as sports, bicycling, skateboarding, walking, picnicking, bench sitting, and visiting the gardens. These are considered ‘direct use values.’ Most of these uses are free of charge, but their value can be calculated by comparing them to prices at commercial facilities. A study undertaken of the 5,000 acres of parks in Boston, Massachusetts found that they provide a number of direct uses. These uses were measured in a telephone survey of residents and then “multiplied by a specific dollar value for each activity. Based on the level of use and those values, it was found that in 2006 the park and recreation system provided a total of \$354,352,000 in direct use value.”<sup>40</sup>

### Summary of Benefits

There are a number of benefits that parks and natural areas provide for a City as a whole. These interrelated categories include health, social, environmental, and economic. Health, social and environmental benefits can also result in economic rewards for cities. Direct economic benefits relate to property values, private sector investment, tourism and direct use values.

Following is a snapshot of benefits received from parks and trees.

### Health and Social

- Health care savings for physically active users of Sacramento Parks in 2007: \$19,871,863.
- Community Cohesion Value of park supporters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2007: \$8,600,000.
- In the province of Alberta the value of volunteer contributions in the year 2000 amounted to \$287.1 million, which is the equivalent to 8,572 person years of employment.<sup>41</sup>
- In Liverpool, UK, 3148 hours were contributed by volunteers in 2009 through Heritage Guiding and Education and 4,231 hours worth of volunteer activity in the local Nature Reserves.<sup>42</sup>

### Environmental

- The structural value of all trees in Mississauga, as of 2008, was estimated at \$1.4 billion.
- Mississauga’s urban forest provides an ecosystem service by removing 429 metric tonnes of air pollution annually, valued at \$4.8 million annually while carbon storage has an associated value of \$5.8 million annually.
- City of Mississauga saves \$1,236,800 annually (heating and cooling seasons) due to microclimate regulation.

### Property Values

- Natural areas in the City of Mississauga increase individual property values from approximately 2.4% to 3.6% of the average property value in the area. Natural features add more than a quarter of a billion dollars (\$255,446,956) to real estate values in North and South Mississauga.
- According to the National Association of Home Builders “parks and recreation areas may enhance the values of nearby land up to 15-20 percent”
- The average value of a property adjacent to a greenbelt is 32% higher than that of properties that are not. Homes facing parks sold for 20% more than those 1 block away. Proximity of a park is 5% of the average selling price. The greatest value for parks occurs when they are larger than 148 acres.<sup>43</sup>

### Private Sector Investment

- The High Line in New York City, New York is predicted to bring \$4 billion in private investment and \$900 million in revenues to the City over the next 30 years.

### Tourism

- Seattle, Washington observed in 2009 that the collective increase in wealth from park-based tourism was just over \$30 million.

### Direct Use Value

- Boston, Massachusetts found that in 2006 the park and recreation system provided a total of \$354,352,000 in direct use value.

### 3.3.2 Best Practices Review

The following sections focus on the issues identified by the City with respect to parks and forestry services and further discussed through staff and stakeholder consultation. A scan of how mature cities in North America are addressing similar challenges facing Mississauga is provided, using selected case studies and examples. The success factors and best practices that are pertinent to Mississauga, and which the City may wish to consider in the development of new strategies and policies are highlighted for all topics. A more detailed account of all these examples can be found in Appendix C

### Park Planning and Development

Mississauga has entered its mature state as a City, with build-out nearly complete and future prospects of population growth through intensification and infill development. Increases in population will necessitate the continued provision of new parks and recreation facilities. However with a limited land base, parks in new development areas are expected to be smaller and less frequent. Coupled with a now aging park infrastructure in some of the older areas, and without benefit of the development charges the City has realized in the past, these realities bring new financial challenges in the delivery of parks, recreation and forestry services.

As a mature city, Toronto has faced these challenges for many years. With its recent surge in high density residential development the City is employing the use of **multiple planning tools** including parkland dedication and subdivision agreement for parkland acquisition and development. One example is Canoe Landing Park, which is located in a master planned development at City-Place on the Toronto Railway Lands. As a brownfield restoration (railway lands) the land-base for the park was able to be secured through parkland dedication. As part of the Subdivision Agreement the developer was responsible

for the design and construction of the basic park, with Section 37 Height and Density Bonusing provisions under the Planning Act used to provide specialized park amenities, including public art. In this example combining the use of all available planning tools, and the cooperation of the developer has resulted in an outstanding public space. Although Section 37 is not useful in the City Centre area as there is no height limitation in the zoning by-law, it may be a useful tool in the other growth areas of the City.

With respect to the **use of cash-in-lieu for parkland acquisition and development**, Toronto and Ottawa are interesting examples. Toronto has introduced policies for allocation of collected cash-in-lieu payments that split funds equally between parkland acquisition and parkland development, and further on a district and a city-wide basis. The city has also introduced a policy which states that any payments of cash-in-lieu of land be conveyed through the alternative rate provision in excess of 5 percent of the site area will be used to: acquire parkland that is accessible to the area in which the development is located, or to improve parks in the vicinity of the development. Ottawa has also established policies that balance the use of funds between parkland acquisition and park development, and further between City-wide uses and district level. This practice could help the City of Mississauga target funds to areas of need as it intensifies while maintaining a reserve fund for City-wide parkland acquisition.

It is interesting to note that, although interpretation of the Planning Act suggests otherwise, both Toronto and Ottawa have established policies that allow use of cash-in-lieu for park improvements in areas where the funds have been collected. Mississauga may wish to examine this option further as the ability to use cash-in-lieu funding to improve existing parks would be of significant benefit in areas of intensification which may have limited opportunities for new parks.

Refer to the Recommendations section for details of the City of Toronto and Ottawa cash-in-lieu policies.

In reference to **prioritizing parkland development and redevelopment** Toronto has also released the City of Toronto Parks Plan (2013 – 2018) which includes comprehensive actions that will assist in prioritizing park improvements. Key actions include undertaking an inventory of park improvement needs with a 20 year plan for implementation, and committing to more trees and shade in parks using ‘heat vulnerability’ mapping to identify and prioritize locations for tree planting and shade structures. Studies like these could help the City of Mississauga prioritize park redevelopment as well as identifying key locations where tree planting and shade structures would provide the most benefit.

## Partnerships

Partnerships are an effective way to facilitate community infrastructure development or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering services and programs to the public. The City of Mississauga has for many years been supported by its community organizations in the delivery of specialized programs and facilities related to parks and forestry services. Through the Future Directions discussion, certain issues were raised in relation to stewardship and partnerships in the management of parks and forestry. These are discussed in this section.

First and foremost, the City would like to **enhance and augment current relationships with existing partners**, while seeking a **process and ideas to encourage new partnerships**.

With respect to this, volunteer organizations often face challenges in sustaining their activities in the absence of sustained sources of funding, staff support or leadership. The continued support from City

staff and sustained levels of funding are viewed by the City's affiliate organizations as essential to their success. Funds that may be generated by the City is leveraged, when possible, to take advantage of regional, provincial or federal grant programs thereby extending an organization's capabilities. Formalizing all community partnerships might help elevate the importance of them and encourage new ones.

A number of opportunities were identified to expand stewardships and partnership programs in the City of Mississauga. Many corporations now have strategic plans with objectives to giving back to the local community through environmental and other community initiatives. This increases volunteer potential for stewardship programs. Similarly, partnerships with both school boards exist in joint facility development, joint use agreements and stewardship and there may be opportunities to expand these opportunities or define new ones. As well, the trend shows that residents of Mississauga want to volunteer particularly with environmental stewardship. Hence, there may be untapped potential within the community and through neighborhood associations.

The City has expressed interest in a strategy and a process to find and organize partners instead of having partners seek the City out. It was also identified that there needs to be an effective alignment of directing volunteers to areas in need of specific work and having them available when needed.

The City of Toronto works with Parks People, which is a not-for-profit organization with goals to serve as the catalyst for better parks across Toronto. The City also has a Partnership development Unit within the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department. The Partnership Development unit helps grassroots community groups such as Parks People with its fundraising projects, and works with donors from multiple sources, including corporations. The City, through its Partnership Development Unit and Parks People has benefited from

the injection of millions of dollars for parks, recreation, and urban forestry projects. Similarly, Calgary's Parks Foundation is a long-standing not-for-profit organization that was established as an agent of the City of Calgary that since the 1980s has taken a leadership role in the creation, protection and enhancement of the City's parks and green spaces. Lastly the Town of Apex, North Carolina, USA has comprehensive joint use agreements with the county school district to help meet demand by using school building facilities to deliver parks and recreation programs and services.

There are also a number of North American examples of **partnerships oriented to funding of capital projects**, which is an area that Mississauga has not yet ventured into. The City of Ottawa has a Community Partnership for Major/Minor Capital Programs which supports improvements and additions to facilities related to parks and recreation, and cultural facilities on a cost-sharing basis between the City and community groups. Another North American example is the San Francisco Parks Alliance which is a partnership that includes the City, Neighbourhood Parks Council, the San Francisco Parks Trust, and resident representatives. This model uses a P3 funding model to obtain funds from grants and donors for park development, and in turn provides funds to community groups and the City. Similarly, the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation is a public private partnership that includes multiple government agencies in the City of New York. This model was successful in creating a financially self-sustaining park that minimizes the City resources for annual operation and maintenance, or eventual capital improvements and replacements.



### 3.4 Forestry

The urban forest is an important part of the City of Mississauga. It is essential to the lasting success of the City's environmental, social and economic health and well-being. The urban canopy provides important ecosystem services including stormwater mitigation, air and water pollution filtration, carbon sequestration and storage as well as social, health, and economic benefits.

Mississauga has a tree canopy comprising approximately 2.1 million trees. The canopy cover of the urban forest is approximately 15%. Most of the trees are in relatively good health, but are small in stature and the City has begun to recognize how important this urban forest is through its planning and programs. The City has completed a *Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy (NH&UFS)* and an *Urban Forest Management Plan* to help improve the health, sustainability and performance of its public and private urban forest.

A number of challenges and threats to the urban forest exist, and the objectives of the Forestry Unit are to help mitigate, respond and prevent these issues. Invasive species, pests and pathogens have impacted the City's urban forest which causing significant decline in some areas. Trees are often in conflict or competition with municipal infrastructure, and are limited to less than optimal planting areas. Extremes in climatic conditions are also causing stress on the urban forest. In recent years these include heat and drought in the summers, flooding, and ice storm damage in the winter.

Over the next several years key actions identified as priorities in the Urban Forest Management Plan include: monitoring the status of the urban forest, formalizing the involvement of city forestry staff in planning and information sharing related to trees, developing consistent and improved city-wide tree preservation and planting specifications and guidelines, expanding and improving the public

tree inventory, improving street and park tree maintenance operations, developing and implementing a tree risk management protocol, implementing an urban forest pest management plan, and updating the Private Tree Protection By-law to support urban forestry objectives.



Credit River Valley



### 3.5 Community Ideas and Interests

The City of Mississauga has undertaken a variety of initiatives in order to engage the public, stakeholder and interest groups, as well as City staff. These events helped to provide insight into community values and priorities related to parks and forestry services in Mississauga. The following key points were derived from the 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, which was an online survey conducted with Mississauga residents:

- 1,135 residents were surveyed;
- 75% of the residents expressed overall satisfaction with parks and forestry services in Mississauga;
- Residents overwhelmingly agree that funding environmental initiatives is important, followed by community gardens and expanding public environmental education;
- When asked about whether or not to cut service levels to maintain taxes or raise taxes to maintain service levels, almost an equal number of respondents supported one or the other (33% and 31% respectively).

There were also several community stakeholder focus groups held as part of the Future Directions Master Plans consultation. Community stakeholder and interest group sessions included:

- a Blue Sky Workshop on Intensification, Inclusiveness, and Youth, convened by the Recreation consulting team;
- a Parks and Forestry Community Stakeholder Focus Group which was attended by several of the City's partners in parks, gardens and natural areas stewardship;
- a session on ideas and issues for Youth convened by City staff which engaged youth community contacts in an in-person focus group session and via Twitter; and,

- a survey questionnaire of preferences amongst Older Adults conducted with community contacts by City staff.

Four public open houses were held in the Spring of 2014 to obtain feedback on the Future Directions draft recommendations.

Key areas of focus raised in both the community stakeholder and public sessions included:

- the need for strategic partnerships such as with school boards, corporate sponsors and developers;
- accessibility to parks for all ages, cultures, abilities was relayed as important, including sports fields that are open for informal play without a permit;
- increasing community awareness about Mississauga parks and activities and programs in parks;
- youth-oriented facilities and targeted activities are needed;
- the change in demographics is creating demand for new types of sports and a desire for self-directed activities such as outdoor fitness equipment;
- making parks unique, experiential and multi-seasonal;
- improvements to outreach and methods of communication;
- better security in parks and on pathways, including the clearing of sidewalks and pathways/trails, increased lighting;
- improved park facilities including: more benches, seating and rest areas at parks and trails; improved access to washroom facilities;
- need to improve and complete connectivity of the trails system;
- need to collect data on frequency of park use;
- promotion of local ecological stewardship;
- a variety of opportunities exist for partnerships with local organizations that can provide volunteers for parks.

A more detailed account of comments received from the public engagement sessions can be found in Appendix B.

<sup>1</sup> Mississauga Data, 2013 Land Use.

<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/mississaugadata>

<sup>2</sup> 2004 Future Directions for Recreation and Parks (formerly Destination Park)

<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> Mississauga Plan

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. *Physical activity levels of Canadian adults, 2007 to 2009*.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-625-x/2011001/article/11552-eng.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Active Living Resource Centre. *Active Facts: Parks, Trails and Recreation*.

National Center for Bicycling & Walking. Bethesda, MD.

<sup>7</sup> Gies, Erica. *The Health Benefits of Parks - How Parks Help Keep Americans and Their Communities Fit and Healthy*. Trust for Public Land. 2006. San Francisco CA.

<sup>8</sup> Croy, Owen., *Green Spaces Deliver Many Benefits*. Green is Good, May/June 2001

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, Andrea Faber., Kuo, Frances E., *Could Exposure to Everyday Green Spaces Help Treat ADHD? Evidence from Children's Play Settings*. Applied Psychology: Health and Well Being. Volume 3, Issue 3. November 2011.

<sup>10</sup> Jarrott, Shannon., Gigliotti, Christina. *Comparing Responses to Horticultural-Based and Traditional Activities in Dementia Care Programs*. *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*. 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Sherer, Paul. M. *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>12</sup> Harnik, Peter., Welle, Ben. *Measuring the Economic Value of a Destination Park System*. 2009

<sup>13</sup> Gies, Erica. *The Health Benefits of Parks - How Parks Help Keep Americans and Their Communities Fit and Healthy*. Trust for Public Land. 2006. San Francisco CA.

<sup>14</sup> Parks and Recreation Ontario, *The Benefits of Parks and Recreation: A Catalogue*. 1992

<sup>15</sup> Berrett, Tim. *The Economic Significance of Recreation and Parks*. National Recreation Summit. 2011

<sup>16</sup> Liverpool City Council, *The Value of Parks and Greenspaces*.

<sup>17</sup> Harnik, Peter., Welle, Ben. *Measuring the Economic Value of a Destination Park System*. 2009

<sup>18</sup> Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Region of Peel, Credit Valley Conservation, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton, Town of Caledon. *Peel Region Urban Forest Strategy*. 2011

<sup>19</sup> Sherer, Paul M., *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>20</sup> Edmonton & Area Land Trust., *Municipal Benefits from Natural Areas, parks and Rural Landscapes*.

<sup>21</sup> Sherer, Paul M., *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>22</sup> Sherer, Paul M., *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>23</sup> Sherer, Paul M., *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>24</sup> Harnik, Peter., Welle, Ben., *Measuring the Economic Value of a Destination Park System*. 2009.

<sup>25</sup> Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Region of Peel, Credit Valley Conservation, City of Mississauga, City of Brampton, Town of Caledon. *Peel Region Urban Forest Strategy*. 2011

<sup>26</sup> Harnik, Peter., Welle, Ben. *Measuring the Economic Value of a Destination Park System*. 2009

<sup>27</sup> David Suzuki Foundation., *Canada's Wealth of Natural Capital: Rouge National Park*. September 2012

<sup>28</sup> Edmonton & Area Land Trust., *Municipal Benefits from Natural Areas, parks and Rural Landscapes*.

<sup>29</sup> Sherer, Paul M., *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More Destination Parks and Open Space*. The Trust for Public Land, 2006

<sup>30</sup> The Trust for Public Land, Center for Destination Parks Excellence. *The Economic Benefits of Seattle's Park and Recreation System*. 2011

<sup>31</sup> Crompton, John L., *The Impact of Parks and Open Spaces on Property Values*. Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, Winter 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. *MPAC Residential Property Value Assessment*. 2013.

[http://www.mpac.ca/property\\_owners/how/how\\_mpac\\_assesses\\_property.asp](http://www.mpac.ca/property_owners/how/how_mpac_assesses_property.asp)

<sup>33</sup> Credit Valley Conservation. *The Credit River Watershed - Property Value Appreciation: Impacts of Natural Features*. 2011

<sup>34</sup> Walker, Chris. *The Public Value of Urban Parks*. 2004

<sup>35</sup> Crompton, John L., *The Impact of Parks and Open Spaces on Property Values: A Review of Empirical Evidence*. National Recreation and Park Association, Journal of Leisure Research, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2001.

<sup>36</sup> The Trust for Public Land; Center for Destination Park Excellence. *The Economic Benefits of Seattle's Park and Recreation System*. 2011.

<sup>37</sup> N. Barry Lyon., *Intensification Incentives in Peel Region*, March 2010.

<sup>38</sup> Schwartz, Anne, *Good Parks are Good for the Economy*. Gotham Gazette, June 24, 2009. <http://www.gothamgazette.com/index.php/environment/250-good-parks-are-good-for-the-economy>

<sup>39</sup> The Trust for Public Land; Center for Destination Park Excellence. *The Economic Benefits of Seattle's Park and Recreation System*. 2011.

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<sup>40</sup> Harnik, Peter., Welle, Ben. *Measuring the Economic Value of a Destination Park System*. 2009

<sup>41</sup> Berrett, Tim. *The Economic Significance of Recreation and Parks*. National Recreation Summit. 2011

<sup>42</sup> Liverpool City Council, *The Value of Parks and Greenspaces*.

<sup>43</sup> Shellito, Michael T., *Marketing & Branding Parks and Recreation as an Economic Engine*. National Symposium, Scottsdale Arizona.

## 4.0 Recommendations

### 4.1 Park Planning

#### 4.1.1 Parkland Requirements to Address Population Growth

The City's Official Plan target objectives for the provision of a minimum of 1.2 ha of parkland for every 1,000 residents and access to parks within 800m of residential areas have successfully directed the provision of parkland in Mississauga during its formative years. The 1.2 ha provision standard includes all classifications of parkland (Destination Parks and Community Parks). It remains a reasonable target to direct growth moving forward as it approximates the allowable dedications for residential development under the Planning Act which equate to a population based standard of approximately 1.0 ha. / 1000 population.

The objective for the provision of parks within 800m has been largely met across the City, with a few gaps in coverage where physical barriers exist. When Official Plan objectives for a walkable and connected city form are considered, maintaining an 800m provision standard for parks, which is approximately a 10 minute walk, is a realistic target. Notwithstanding, public open space areas in new development areas may be located at less than this distance to achieve urban design objectives.

The estimated population of the City of Mississauga in the year 2014 is 756,590 persons. Using this population figure and the total amount of City and Community Parks of 1,747.55 ha (which excludes other open space types), the per capita supply is approximately 2.31 ha per 1,000 persons, which is above the 1.2 ha target objective. This is made possible by a number of large Destination Parks including a substantial amount of parkland on the City's waterfront, as well as strategic acquisitions such as the Ninth Line parks. It should be noted that some listed parks in the City's inventory include sites with significant natural areas which may be accessible for trails and passive uses, but are not suitable for the development of active recreation facilities such as sports fields; whereas the 1.2 ha per 1000 population provision target was established largely to address recreation needs. Therefore, although the City continues to exceed its per capita target objectives for parkland City-wide, the existing supply should not necessarily be considered sufficient for meeting forecasted active recreation needs in the future. Evaluation of parkland and recreation needs at a Service Area level (or ideally at a community level) is a better determination of whether each area of the City is well-supplied with parkland and positioned to accommodate forecasted population growth.

Table 4.1, following, shows the parkland supply in 2014 for each of the City's six Service Areas (including parks that are currently in progress). It further identifies future parkland requirements for each of the Service Areas using population forecasts that were prepared for the Future Directions studies for planning horizons up to 2036 which consider infilling and redevelopment within a number of nodes throughout the City (Refer to Figure 1 on p 12).

The evaluation indicates that, using the provision target of 1.2 ha. per 1,000 persons, the current 2014 supply of parkland will generally support population growth across the Service Areas to 2036. The exception to this is Service Area 5 which currently has the lowest per

capita supply. Growth in this service area is anticipated to be high as a result of the development of the Downtown. Based on the current forecasted growth to 2036, and to maintain the 1.2 ha per 1,000 persons provision target, there will be a need for an additional 1.6 ha of parkland to be developed in Service Area 5 by 2026, with an escalating need for more parkland up to an additional 26.5 ha when the population reaches the forecasted 240,360 persons.

This exercise is useful only in that it provides a quantitative assessment of current and future parkland both as a baseline and against the City's target provision standard. As illustrated on Figure 1, growth is anticipated to take place through redevelopment in several concentrated areas of the City. When current objectives to achieve attractive, green, livable, and walkable communities are considered, the need for parkland should be more closely evaluated within each of the growth areas. The *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*, which is currently underway at the City, is specifically examining parkland needs and opportunities within the Downtown (Downtown Core, Downtown Fairview, Downtown Cooksville and Downtown Hospital). Preliminary findings from the study indicate that the Downtown Growth Area which had an estimated population of 33,900 in 2011 is significantly underserved with the parkland per capita approximating only 0.72 ha. per 1,000 persons. As well, the City is currently undertaking master plans for the Inspiration Lakeview and Inspiration Port Credit nodes in Service Area 6. Population growth within these areas may trigger the need for new parks or upgrading of existing parks, as well as recreation facility renewal and/or expansion. Due to the ongoing nature of these projects, park service levels should be more fully considered through detailed planning for these project areas.

Mississauga's strategic city planning documents envision a vibrant downtown with a mix of residential and employment uses, pedestrian and transit-oriented streets, great parks and public spaces, and a

range of venues that support entertainment, arts and culture, dining and shopping. The public open space system and a green, pedestrian-oriented street network is a key element in building the identity of the Downtown, as envisaged in the Downtown 21 Plan. The City has made significant inroads into the development of the planned system of parks which form an emerald necklace in the downtown area, connecting to Riverwood, the City's Central Park, as described in the Strategic Plan. Notable and innovative accomplishments in the past five years in the City Centre area include the rejuvenation of Mississauga Celebration Square, and the development of Scholar's Green and Community Common.

While significant accomplishments in parks development have been achieved in the City Centre area, new parks and public open spaces will continue to be needed to meet the needs of urban dwellers and to achieve objectives for attractive, green, livable, walkable, connected urban communities throughout the City's growth areas.

### Recommendation #1

- ⇒ The City should maintain the current tableland parkland standard of 1.2 ha per 1000 population, with access to parks within an 800m distance in residential areas as a minimum standard for new development areas. This standard does not include non-park open spaces such as hazard lands and natural areas, which may be acquired for conservation purposes.

An acquisition strategy and evaluation criteria are key to the identification of priorities for strategic land acquisitions that are essentially competing for the same resources. The City has a process of monitoring opportunities for strategic land acquisitions to meet target objectives for parkland and recreation facilities across the Service Areas, to complete gaps in the publicly owned system of natural areas and greenbelt lands, and to protect and expand public



access to the waterfront. Strategic land acquisition is achieved using accrued cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication funds that are earmarked for land acquisition.

The City's Parkland Acquisition Strategy and evaluation criteria were reviewed and discussed with staff as part of the 2009 Parks and Natural Areas Master Plan. The criteria were slightly modified to better align with the identified priorities of this plan which include: parkland to ensure growth needs are met; strategic acquisitions to support natural areas and green space connectivity; and, strategic connections along the waterfront. At this time the acquisition strategy and evaluation criteria have not been formally adopted.

### Recommendation #2

- ⇒ It is recommended that the City continue with its current approach to identifying strategic land acquisitions through its Parkland Acquisition Strategy, and formalize an evaluation criteria and a ranking system, with priorities for acquisition of lands that:
- protect and enhance Natural Areas;
  - support the Waterfront Strategy;
  - support strategic connections along the waterfront;
  - support completion of a continuous trails system;
  - support population growth and sustainable community design (where no or limited opportunities for parkland dedications exist).

Refer to Appendix A for Parkland Acquisition Evaluation Criteria and Ranking System.



Lake Ontario shoreline

**Table 4.1: Summary of Parkland Supply to Meet Population Growth**

Population	Service Area						City Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Current Parkland Supply							
2014 pop.	168,530	163,300	40,650	99,650	192,740	91,720	756,590
Destination Parks	-	157.08*	-	59.86	9.69	187.30	413.93
Community Parks	416.38	185.32	93.59	199.97	252.22	186.14	1,333.62
TOTAL PARKS	416.38	342.40	93.59	259.83	261.90	373.44	1,747.55
ha / 1000	2.47	2.09	2.30	2.60	1.35	4.07	2.31
Future Parkland Requirements by Census Year (to maintain target of 1.2 ha / 1000 persons)							
2019 pop.	173,560	167,780	40,550	100,000	201,010	94,350	777,250
ha	208.27	201.34	48.66	120.00	241.21	113.22	932.70
Additional ha Required	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021 pop.	174,470	168,860	40,370	99,760	206,290	95,010	784,760
ha	209.36	202.63	48.44	119.71	247.55	114.01	941.71
Additional ha Required	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2026 pop.	177,280	171,790	40,200	99,620	219,630	97,410	805,930
ha	212.74	206.15	48.24	119.54	263.56	116.89	967.12
Additional ha Required	0	0	0	0	1.66	0	0
2031 pop.	180,310	174,590	40,770	100,340	231,900	101,190	829,100
ha	216.37	209.51	48.92	120.41	278.28	121.43	994.92
Additional ha Required	0	0	0	0	16.38	0	0
2036 pop.	182,990	177,570	41,470	101,160	240,360	110,450	854,000
ha	219.59	213.08	49.76	121.39	288.43	132.54	1024.80
Additional ha Required	0	0	0	0	26.53	0	0

### 4.1.2 Parkland to Support Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Activities

#### Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment

The 2014 Future Directions Recreation Master Plan: provides a projection of outdoor recreation facilities needs over the 5 year term of the Master Plan. These requirements have been reviewed for implications for parkland acquisition in that additional parkland may be required to support the development of major indoor facilities or outdoor sports fields, or the redevelopment of an existing sports field should there be a forecasted need.

The findings of the 2014 Recreation Master Plan indicate that there are limited major outdoor facilities needed over the five year term of the plan. The potential development of an indoor soccer facility and soccer / multi-purpose field and a cricket pitch is noted at Park 459. For outdoor facilities a calculation strictly on the basis of per capita standards as shown on Table 4.2, following, would indicate a need for an increase in outdoor soccer fields as the population increases. However the Recreation Master Plan notes that utilization levels suggest that there is capacity within the existing supply to make up some of the forecasted need to 2019. As well, the Recreation Plan recommends that other efficiencies including improvement to, or redeployment of, existing fields, and the use of artificial turf fields can minimize supply needs.

**Table 4.2: Summary of City-wide Facilities Needs with Implications for Land Area**

Outdoor Facility Type	Existing Supply (2014)	Supply Required <sup>1</sup> (2019)	Fields Needed (Surplus)
<b>Soccer Fields</b>			
Artificial <sup>2</sup>	6	6	0
Lit Senior <sup>3</sup>	11	17	6
Unlit Senior	90	78	(12)
Minor/Mini	125	111	(14)
School <sup>4</sup>	14	14	0
<b>Ball Diamonds</b>			
Lit	43	43	0
Unlit	68	60	(8)
<b>Cricket Pitches</b>			
All	6	7.5	1.5

Source: Derived from 2014 Future Directions Recreation Master Plan with notations as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Derived by applying the proposed service level to the forecasted 2019 population.

<sup>2</sup> Artificial soccer fields are deemed equivalent to 3 unlit fields

<sup>3</sup> Lit Senior soccer fields are deemed equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields and existing supply includes 14 equivalent school fields

<sup>4</sup> School soccer fields were not assigned a per capita service level.

<sup>5</sup> Existing cricket pitch supply includes 3 multi-use pitches shared with soccer

The recommendations from the Recreation Master Plan for the provision of indoor and outdoor facilities to meet growth projections to 2019 which may have implications for parkland supply or park redevelopment are listed below. Refer to the Recreation Master Plan for more detailed information on the location of facilities and the rationale surrounding the recommendation.

- If the "smart growth" principles of intensification along the Highway 5/10 corridor are achieved, the development of an urban community centre should be considered in this vicinity with facility components to be determined based upon a needs and feasibility study triggered by opportunities to partner, land redevelopment opportunities, major transit project, etc. Co-location opportunities to establish a community hub should be discussed with social service agencies, Mississauga Public Library, school boards, private sector, etc.
- Work with the Parks & Forestry Division and Mississauga Public Library to establish criteria for evaluating and acquiring surplus school sites, other strategic lands, or collaborative ventures for the purposes of addressing recreational gaps within neighbourhoods (e.g. within the Downtown intensification node).
- In advance of the Square One Older Adult Centre's expiring lease in 2017, undertake an Older Adult Space Provision Study that explores the ability of Mississauga's existing community centres to deliver enhanced services for the 55+ population. Where demands cannot be reasonably served by existing community centres, the Study should examine opportunities to secure integrated and/or stand-alone older adult spaces through creative opportunities such as use of complementary Civic facilities (e.g. Mississauga Public Library), surplus school lands, and/or developments within intensification corridors (e.g. Highway 5/10).
- Pending the outcomes of the City's ongoing internal indoor field analysis along with the land development project currently being prepared for the Hershey SportZone, provide one additional indoor turf field at either the Hershey SportZone or the Park 459 Sports Park.
- Although soccer fields should be targeted at a rate of 1 field per 2,800 residents, additional fields should be provided where supported by: utilization rates experienced after implementation of the Mississauga Sports Field Allocation Policy; achieving the required mix of lit versus unlit fields; the outcome of the Ontario Soccer Association's Long Term Player Development model; removal of school fields; and/or reduced reliance upon lower quality fields embedded within neighbourhoods.
- Proceed with the development of outdoor artificial turf as currently planned for Park 459.
- Evaluate the ability of existing soccer fields to support higher playing capacities (through the installation of irrigation, drainage, lighting, and/or artificial turf systems) while also evaluating underutilized minor and mini soccer fields for their ability to shift organized soccer use to another field and repurpose them for other needed uses or for the purposes of neighbourhood-based program delivery within the park.
- Construct 1 new ball diamond, with additional diamonds being considered if rationalized through further examination of: utilization rates upon the implementation of the Mississauga Sports Field Allocation Strategy; achieving the desired mix of lit versus unlit and softball versus hardball

diamonds; and/or removal of school or neighbourhood diamonds.

- Conduct needed improvements to selected ball diamonds aimed at maximizing quality of play while identifying underutilized diamonds that should be focused on casual play or repurposed to other needed uses, including lower quality fields embedded within neighbourhoods.
- Identify opportunities to strategically consolidate the number of ball diamond locations in favour of developing additional multi-diamond venues capable of meeting sport development and sport tourism objectives.
- The City should explore the provision of new cricket pitches at Park 459, a location in Service Area 3 and/or south of the Highway 403 corridor.
- Construct a multi-use field at Park 459 to provide a venue prioritized for alternative field sports.
- Target a total of 19 additional tennis courts, subject to evaluation of utilization rates, confirmation of community demand, geographic distribution, and opportunities that present themselves through park development and redevelopment activities. The current provision of public courts in Service Areas 3 and 6 suggests these are areas of gap. Additional community club courts should be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly where the opportunity to partner exists.
- A total of 10 new basketball/multi-purpose courts should be constructed over the next five years, subject to confirmation of community demand and distributional assessments.
- New play sites should be provided on the basis of ensuring walkability, where residential areas have access within 800 metres unobstructed by major pedestrian barriers.
- In areas of intensification, the City should work with the land development industry to integrate play sites as part of higher density development projects given that new parkland will be increasingly difficult to find in established areas.
- Provide at least one fully accessible play site in each Service Area, suggesting that Service Areas 2, 3 and 5 should be the priority areas for new barrier-free play sites.
- Through the City's replacement program, rejuvenated play sites should integrate accessible/barrier-free features.
- Future spray pads should only be provided in instances where fitting into destination-type or waterfront park development, in intensification areas through agreements with the land development industry, and where combined with civic infrastructure serving a dual purpose (e.g. public art or fountains in hardscaped parks).
- Provide small-scale satellite skateboarding venues in appropriate neighbourhood-level parks in lieu of constructing new multi-use ramp facilities over the next five years.
- Indoor skateboarding opportunities should be considered if the City wishes to create a youth recreation space, and validated through discussions with the local skateboarding community.
- Construct one new multi-use bike facility with a specific focus on mountain biking, designed in consultation with local youth and bike sport representatives.



- Develop a Downtown Core Recreation Provision Strategy that serves to identify current gaps in service and addresses engaging more residents in recreational pursuits. The strategy should address working in partnership with other agencies, building local capacity and utilizing available private and public spaces.

### Implications for Parks

Although Future Directions primarily addresses a 5-year horizon, from a parkland supply perspective future population growth and outdoor facilities beyond 2014 will also need to be considered. Depending on the efficiencies achieved within the existing supply of outdoor fields, the application of facility provision levels to forecasted growth could result in the need for an increase in the number of outdoor fields over the long term, which could result in the need for additional parkland.

Considering Mississauga's built-out condition, and with anticipated growth by almost 100,000 persons beyond 2014, the Ninth Line parklands still likely represent the best opportunity for new outdoor facility development looking into the future. As noted in the foregoing discussion some allocation of recreation needs in the 2014 Recreation Master Plan has been assigned to Park 459.

Minor recreation facilities such as play sites, basketball courts and spray pads are recommended to be provided on a service level standard. The realization of the recommendations contained within the Recreation Master Plan in regard to these facilities will need to be considered in the development of new parks as well as the redevelopment of older ones.

### Recommendation #3

- ⇒ The identification of new parkland and redevelopment of older parks should consider and be coordinated with the implementation of recommendations in the *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan* for the provision of sports fields and outdoor recreation facilities to address future population growth.

### Recommendation #4

- ⇒ The inventory of Ninth Line parks should be assessed as part of an overall land use review of the area for their capability to accommodate recreation facilities and leisure needs identified in *Future Directions*.



Jack Darling Park spray pad

### 4.1.3 Parkland in Areas of Intensification and Redevelopment

The City's Strategic Pillar for Change: Completing Our Neighbourhoods speaks to the provision of 'safe neighbourhoods that support a strong, connected and vibrant community - a place where all can live, work and prosper'. Parks have long been considered key components of community planning and Mississauga's suburban residential areas have been built around a strong network of parks, schools and greenspaces. The traditional role of parks - that they provide open space for recreational facilities and programs – is widely evident in these areas. Efforts toward rejuvenation and re-purposing of existing parks and the establishment of new parks and public spaces within an enhanced urban fabric will need to be continued in the growth areas of the City in order to maintain parkland per capita target objectives and to address outdoor recreation facilities needs as identified in the *Future Directions* master plans.

The city-wide parks and recreation planning exercises completed for Future Directions are supplemented by more detailed, area-specific studies that address park planning including the *Waterfront Strategy*; *Building Mississauga around Places: A Vision for City Centre Parks and Open Spaces in the 21st Century*; the *Downtown 21* study and the more recent *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*, and the *Credit River Parks Strategy*.

The *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy* is expected to more specifically articulate an appropriate quantity and type of parkland for the City Centre, Cooksville and Hurontario corridor growth areas.

Contemporary thinking and placemaking recognizes parks and public spaces as major contributors to City greening; aesthetically pleasing spaces; enlivened streets; and healthy, social, walkable and

connected communities. The current parkland and open space classifications comprising Destination Park, Community Park, and Greenbelt contained within the Official Plan are relevant and reflective of the evolution of the City's parks and open space system. However, in the absence of a finer grain of park classification that addresses a more urban context, the concept of a Community Park in urban intensification areas will need to broadly include all types of parks, including traditional parks to support structured recreational activities as well as smaller urban parks and public squares that may offer different forms of leisure pursuits and unstructured activities that appeal to urban dwellers and contribute to the urban form.

A central issue in achieving this in Mississauga is the capacity to essentially "revise" the existing urban form to one based on a new model. With a limited landbase to support new parks, the City will need to consider how to redevelop its extensive, existing park properties to better address recreation and leisure needs for the residents of the future. As well, re-orienting the City's built form should consider opportunities to capitalize on the provision of new park sites as private sector re-development projects come forward.

The development of new parks in urban intensification areas is not without its challenges however, as parkland assembly may be fragmented and there are competing interests for the available land base, including roads and servicing, other community facilities and infrastructure, and underground parking garages. These uses additionally challenge the design of parks and streetscapes limiting traditional tree planting and facility development opportunities and requiring more innovative and often expensive design and maintenance approaches.

Through an incremental development process it will be a challenge to arrive at an optimal, coordinated, and connected parks/trail system particularly if the land redevelopment opportunities that arise are not

suited to creating a complete open space system. It is expected that many individual redevelopment/intensification projects will typically provide only limited land for public parks and open spaces. For this reason it is recommended that the City continue to plan its intensification on a precinct basis wherever possible, as has been undertaken in the City Centre through *Downtown 21* and the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*.

Planning is underway for several key nodes including Inspiration Port Credit, Inspiration Lakeview and soon to be, Vision Cooksville. To realize the full potential of the parks and open space system for these communities, the Parks and Forestry Division will need to have a key role in monitoring the population forecasts, timing, and planning of these new communities. As part of these planning studies to implement growth management recommendations, a community-based assessment should be used to establish where and how much parkland should be included in redevelopment areas, in consideration of desired urban form, and proximity to existing parkland and facilities, together with demographics, socio-economic factors, and projected growth.

Research is showing that the populations in the central places of North America's cities are changing with more residents and more families with new and different needs for urban public spaces choosing to reside in them. This is evidenced by the diverse demographics of residents in Mississauga's City Centre area, including young families. Meeting the needs of different urban dwellers will be an important consideration if the true goals of urban placemaking are to be realized.

### Official Plan Revisions to Parkland Classifications

To address the needs of a diverse range of users planning for parks in redevelopment areas should not lose sight of the potential need for larger multi-purpose parks to accommodate active recreation where the land base permits. However, many new parks that are acquired in association with new urban infill development are not likely to be of a size that support multiple sports fields, and more creative ways of developing sports fields may be needed outside of traditional parks. Urban parks do not necessarily have to be passive use or decorative only, and in the drive for 'design excellence' consideration of functionality should not be lost. Smaller sites can be designed to be purpose specific, supporting a single sports field, or facilities such as tennis courts, multi-purpose courts, play sites, or outdoor table tennis. These types of facilities might be suited to being developed on sites that are over parking garage roof decks if no other space permits.

The likely success of this approach can be seen in the popularity and usage of the artificial turf green space in Mississauga Celebration Square which is programmed by the Culture Division for events, but also used for informal soccer games. As well requests have been made for consideration of a basketball court in phase two of Scholar's Green development.

Parks and open spaces are a large part of the public realm which additionally includes the connecting street system comprised of green boulevards, sidewalks, multi-use trails and bicycle lanes. The design of streets is important to the success and quality of life in the downtown, connecting to and extending the function of the open space system, providing safe and attractive connections for pedestrians and cyclists, and contributing to greening of the city and the expansion of the urban forest canopy.

Since parks in infill development and intensification areas will tend to focus more on parks as contributors to 'quality of life' than on addressing City-wide recreation facility needs, there will also need to be a corresponding emphasis on the development of pathways, multi-use trails, cycling routes and transit to link new development areas to existing active recreation parks and community facilities within the larger City-wide network.

Planning is underway for several key precincts including Inspiration Port Credit, Inspiration Lakeview and Vision Cooksville. To realize the full potential of the parks and open space system and its interrelationship with other aspects of the public realm in these communities, the Parks and Forestry department will need to have a key role in the development of these plans. The recommendations of these studies will need to be closely monitored for their consistency with the recommendations of Future Directions.

### Recommendation #5

- ⇒ The existing parkland and open space classifications comprising Destination Park and Community Park are appropriate categories and should continue to be used to describe the hierarchy of City-owned public parks, providing that parks are understood to include all types of public open spaces that support urban 'downtown' living. These would include smaller urban parks, public squares and connecting links as well as active recreation sites. Further articulation of these park classifications may occur on an area-specific basis to direct planning and development in areas of intensification and redevelopment (e.g. as outlined in the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*).

### Recommendation #6

- ⇒ The City should continue to develop integrated open space and urban design plans for all new areas of redevelopment and intensification on a 'precinct' basis (Inspiration Port Credit, Inspiration Lakeview, and Vision Cooksville are examples). The recommendations of these studies will need to be closely monitored for their consistency with the recommendations of Future Directions.
- ⇒ For parks, and public and private spaces, these precinct plans should address the location, form, connectivity and characteristics of parkland relative to the existing parks and open space system and consider demographics, socio-economic factors, and projected population forecasts.



Scholar's Green



### Park Provision in the Downtown Growth Area

The Mississauga Growth area includes the intensification areas of the Downtown Core and portions of the Fairview, Cooksville and the Hospital Districts. A *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy* has been undertaken to identify how much new parkland is required by the year 2041, how the parkland will be acquired, what types of park spaces can be realistically anticipated and where the City should focus their attention for acquisition of parkland within the Growth Area.

Today, the Mississauga Growth Area is currently deficient in park space, which hampers the long-term achievement of a diverse and robust public realm network that is characteristic of successful urban centres. Urban Park spaces are fundamental components of the broader public realm. Investment in parks and the public realm contribute to both the health of a community and have measurable economic benefits that typically exceeds the initial investments. This deficiency in park space will be exacerbated if no new park spaces are acquired, in the face of substantial new growth projected for the Growth Area.

To guide the planning and implementation of parkland and the public realm in the Downtown Growth Area (Downtown Core, Downtown Fairview, Downtown Cooksville and Downtown Hospital Districts), the City should implement the following recommendations of the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy (DGAPPS)*. The rationale and background analysis and additional discussion on the recommendations is included within the DGAPPS.

#### Recommendation #7

- ⇒ That the City continue to apply its current residential parkland dedication rate of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 people on all new residential developments within the Growth Area.

#### Recommendation #8

- ⇒ That the City identify a goal of achieving a minimum of 13.7 hectares up to 51.5 hectares of new park space by the year 2041 (a minimum of 9.4 hectares by the year 2031). This translates into the Growth Area accommodating between 5.5 and 12.3 percent of the total growth area in parkland. The City should also update this objective, as population projections are adjusted over time.

#### Recommendation #9

- ⇒ That every resident be located within a 5 minute walk (400 metres) from a public park outside of the Growth Area, or an Urban Park or Urban Square within the Growth Area.

#### Recommendation #10

- ⇒ That the City adopt a new hierarchy of urban park spaces that includes Urban Parks, Urban Squares and Pocket Parks.

#### Recommendation #11

- ⇒ That the City incorporate into its Official Plan, policies to protect the function and inventory, both existing and planned of park spaces/public realm and a planned approach to parkland acquisition.

#### Recommendation #12

- ⇒ That all significant development proposals on a site greater than 1,000 sq. m. shall include an at-grade land contribution to the public realm network.

#### Recommendation #13

- ⇒ That for a primarily residential development, not less than 7.0 percent and not more than 25.0 percent, of the net site area shall be set aside for an appropriate park component.



### Recommendation #14

- ⇒ That the City commit to a successful tree planting program within urban parks and the public realm network which outlines what tree species to plant, in what locations and how the trees should be planted.

### Optimizing Planning Tools

As noted in foregoing sections the provision of parkland and open space enhances the quality of life and offers economic, community and environmental benefits which accrue to the individual, the community, the City and the land development industry. Access to parkland and its inherent value becomes even more important in areas of high density population where outdoor private space is limited or non-existent, and the impacts from traffic, noise and density of people are increased. Research has indicated that in dense urban areas proximity to parks becomes more, rather than less, important.

Although the City has achieved an admirable, innovatively designed grouping of parks in the City Centre area, analysis of the parks provision levels completed for the Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy reveals that there is a significant undersupply, both in the City Centre and in the broader Downtown Growth area. This is anticipated to continue as populations in the area increase unless substantial additional parkland is acquired. While it may not be possible to offset the current parkland shortfall it will be important moving forward to continue efforts to acquire parkland wherever feasible. This will require a concerted effort in employing all available planning tools as well as enlisting the support of the development community.

The Environmental Scan of best practices undertaken for the Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan has revealed that the mature municipalities of Toronto and Ottawa are utilizing a number of

tools to acquire and develop parkland to meet growth needs, often simultaneously in major area of redevelopment such as Toronto's railway lands. Identified measures include use of Section 37 Height and Density Bonusing provisions under the Planning Act, which affords additional development rights in exchange for the construction or new community facilities such as parks and community centres, and public realm improvements such as streetscape improvements, transit shelters and public art. It should be noted that the City of Mississauga is unable to apply Section 37 policies in the City Centre area as there are currently no height restrictions, although this limitation does not exist in other areas of the City where intensification or redevelopment is anticipated.

Both Toronto and Ottawa have also developed municipal policies to address area-specific use of a specified portion of the collected cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication (CIL) funds. Their CIL policies direct the use of CIL funds for both the development of new parks as well as the redevelopment of existing parks in the vicinity of the development to meet growth needs. (Refer to Examples in Park Planning and Development from Other Municipalities in Appendix C).

Ottawa's policy calls for CIL funds collected through development review to be allocated to eligible projects as follows:

- 60% of the funds paid to be allocated for use in the Ward in which the development is located;
- 40% of the funds paid to be allocated for city-wide purposes.

An eligible project as defined in Ottawa's CIL policy includes:

- Acquisition of land for public park purposes
- Capital projects for the development of new public parks which may include any associated site preparation and drainage; the provision of park facilities, such as, play equipment, sports fields and pathways; or the provision of recreation facilities, such as community centres, indoor pools and arenas.

- Capital projects to increase the capacity of existing public parks and/or recreation facilities to accommodate more intensive public use; the provision of additional park facilities (e.g. play equipment, spray pads and site furniture); and /or the provisions of additional recreation facilities (e.g. the expansion or upgrading of program spaces in community centres, indoor pools and arenas.
- The non-growth component of growth-related capital projects, for Parks Development and Recreation Facilities, identified in the City's Development Charges Background Study.

As far back as 1999, the City of Toronto has applied a policy for the allocation of cash-in-lieu payments that split funds equally between parkland acquisition and parkland development and further between district and city-wide basis, with a resulting 25/25/25/25 split. In addition, the City of Toronto policy states that any payment of cash-in-lieu of parkland to be conveyed through the alternative rate provision (1 ha per 300 units, as provided for under the Planning Act) that is in excess of 5 percent of the site area will be used to either.

- acquire parkland that is accessible to the area in which the development is located or to,
- improve parks in the vicinity of the development.

Cash-in-lieu of parkland funds deposited into the City of Toronto Alternative Parkland Dedication Reserve Fund are tracked according to the ward where the funds were generated.

The City of Mississauga has a Corporate Policy and Procedure to direct the dedication of land, cash-in-lieu of parkland, or a combination of land and cash. The policy identifies how land dedications and cash-in-lieu payments for parks purposes are made, and the nature and type of acceptable land dedications. The policy reiterates the standards of the Official Plan, and is consistent with the provisions of the Planning Act in the application of a parkland yield, or

cash payment, calculated on the basis of, the greater of either 5% of the land area or 1 ha. for every 300 dwelling units, or 2% of the developable land area for office / commercial / industrial land.

The current use of cash-in-lieu (CIL) funds in Mississauga is guided by a corporate decision that directs 60% toward land acquisition and 40% toward facilities and equipment, in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act. The funds are accrued in a reserve fund, and in the case of the land acquisition reserves, are used for strategic acquisitions that build the parks and natural areas on a City-wide basis.

There is no provision made at present for a specified portion of the CIL funds to remain within the area where the funds are generated. Accrual of funds to a City-wide reserve is common practice for developing municipalities that derive adequate parkland yields from dedications. However this may not be the case in areas of infill and intensification which has driven mature municipalities like Toronto and Ottawa to develop new policy directions to provide for growth needs.

### Recommendation #15

- ⇒ The City should continue to apply all available tools such as use of cash-in-lieu, density bonusing and alternate provision standards allowed under the Planning Act and enabled by elements of the Official Plan and Zoning By-laws, to optimize parkland securement, development, and redevelopment. The City's policies in this regard should be re-examined to ensure that the best advantage is being achieved from these tools when other factors such as the encouragement of development are considered.

### Role of Publicly Accessible Open Space on Private Lands

In denser urban areas, publicly accessible open space on private lands in the form of pocket parks and urban squares plays a key role in the character of an area, typically integrated to create an attractive setting for the building, provide amenities for the occupants, and to augment the public realm. North American cities such as Philadelphia and New York are also engaging private development in the quest to create public spaces through other innovations which may include sponsorship of 'pop-up' or temporary parks in parking spaces or underutilized parking lots, on roof deck spaces, or through lobby 'parks' and indoor market spaces.

As redevelopment and infilling occurs in Mississauga open space areas provided by private development should constitute an important part of sustainability measures and the urban design character of new communities. They should be considered important elements toward 'placemaking', City greening and the provision of public or private amenity space and, as called for in Mississauga's Official Plan, the development industry should be encouraged to provide them as amenities to both residents and the City.

This type of amenity space may be required through Official Plan Policy or a zoning by-law, or in a competitive market situation may be voluntarily offered to enhance the marketability of the development. The provisions of Section 37 which allow for density bonusing can also be used as incentives.

Privately owned open space, however, should be considered supplementary to, and not a replacement for the required provision of public parks and open space unless it is acceptable to the City as a parkland dedication. As privately owned lands the long term future of these spaces as public space for future generations cannot be guaranteed. In addition, the responsibility for future maintenance of

these spaces should be determined and Developer Agreements established to direct long term public use and maintenance. Discussions need to take place during the design and approvals stage to ensure that City standards are met.



Outdoor chess game

### Recommendation #16

- ⇒ Publicly accessible privately owned open space should be encouraged in new urban infill and redevelopment areas but should be considered supplementary to, and not a replacement for, the required provision of public parks and open space. Open space on private lands including urban squares, roof gardens, and landscaped amenity areas, will constitute an important part of the urban design character of new communities. The approvals process for these spaces should include clear developer agreements to direct long-term use and maintenance of the space.

## 4.2 Park Development

### 4.2.1 Linkages to Relevant Documents related to Park Development

There are a number of studies that parallel the recommendations of the Parks and Forestry Master Plan including the *Waterfront Parks Strategy*, the *Credit River Parks Strategy*, and the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*. The *Waterfront Parks Strategy* is a comprehensive long term plan to manage the future development of Mississauga's Waterfront Parks. The Strategy sets park development priorities, guides park design, recommends programming for each park and identifies criteria for park extension. The *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy* aims to articulate the importance of the pedestrian realm network, assist the City in their understanding of the impacts of anticipated intensification levels on the pedestrian realm, define key planning terms from the Official Plan that influence decision making with respect to new development and the provision of an enhanced pedestrian realm network, and establish the hierarchy of spaces inherent to the creation of a fully functional pedestrian realm network. The goal of the *Credit River Parks Strategy* is to develop a sustainable, innovative and environmentally responsible master plan to guide the planning, development, conservation and management of a contiguous system of publicly owned and publicly accessible parkland and natural areas along the Credit River.

*Open spaces include both public and private space as well as on site amenities and are one of the most significant contributors to an area's character and quality of life. It is important that they not only be well designed and beautiful, but also that they be well connected and integrated with adjacent uses and other open spaces.*

*City of Mississauga Official Plan (9.3.5 Open Spaces and Amenity Areas)*



### 4.2.2 Addressing Leisure and Recreation Interests

#### Designing Parks for All Ages and Abilities

In addition to field sports that will be allocated based on a Service Area assessment, the Future Directions Recreation Master Plan evaluates the need for more local-serving recreation amenities which include tennis courts, basketball courts / multi-purpose courts which are typically evaluated on a geographic distribution basis of 1 km; and play sites which are typically evaluated on an 800 m service radius (coincidental with the 800 m target for park provision). The forecasted need for these facilities is summarized in the foregoing Section 4.1.2, of this report with further justification provided in the Recreation Master Plan.

These minor outdoor facilities are likely to be able to be accommodated in existing parks and the identified needs for these facilities in each of the Service Areas should be considered in the planned development and redevelopment of parks. The Recreation Master Plan also provides guidance on bike facilities, outdoor pools, and outdoor ice rinks.

To support Provincial and Region of Peel mandates for the encouragement of physical activity, and wellness the provision of opportunities that encourage informal use, as well as sports, in parks will also be an important consideration in the development and redevelopment of parks. Community consultation undertaken to date indicates a need for certain improvements to encourage and enhance use of parks and trails, particularly by youth and older adults. Suggested improvements include more benches and areas for seating, shade structures, more accessible and looped walking trails, outdoor fitness equipment and play equipment oriented to youth (e.g. climbing structures, larger swings), Wi-Fi® and other technologies in parks, and signage to enable place based learning.

There is an increasing trend in Mississauga toward the use of parks as outdoor social spaces which is evident through the well-attended City-run and community cultural events, increased bookings of picnic shelters, and casual use of large parks. Even smaller parks are being utilized for family and community gatherings. Consultation with representatives from youth, older adults, and newcomers suggest that parks are increasingly being used as places for meeting and socializing. In the future, the need for provision of social space at a neighbourhood or community level should be considered in the development or redevelopment of all parks and public spaces. This could be as simple as an open lawn or hard surface area that can serve as multi-purpose space. For destination parks and those that are regularly booked for community events it should consider the inclusion of a bandshell or pavilion that would support small-scale music events, such as the one at Port Credit Memorial Park.

#### Recommendation #17

- ⇒ In the design of all new parks, and the rejuvenation of older parks, consider use by all-ages and abilities, design for safety using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and the provision of facilities and amenities that support social interaction, and unstructured recreation and leisure activities. These may include, as appropriate: child and youth-oriented play facilities; play sites (including traditional play sites and potentially natural play sites); outdoor fitness equipment; informal playing fields; gardens; shaded seating areas (e.g. trees or shade structures); picnic / barbecue facilities; Wi-Fi® hot spots; checker / chess tables; outdoor table tennis; community gardens; leash-free areas; event or performance space (e.g. bandshells); pathways and walking trails; wildlife viewing areas; and interpretation / education areas.



### Washroom Facilities in Parks

Consultation with the community during Future Directions has continued to yield requests for the provision of washroom facilities and water bottle filling stations in parks and along trails. In 2004 the City undertook a Washroom Study to clarify the City's basic level of service with respect to permanent washrooms, and to determine suitable locations within the existing park system for the development of new washroom facilities. The latter was based on a series of criteria that were developed to evaluate park eligibility, including relative weighting that was reflective of the park's functions, availability of servicing, level of use, frequency and duration of attendance, and season of use. Different types of washroom facilities and their associated costs were also evaluated. The ranking and prioritization resulted in recommendations for the provision of new washroom facilities in 15 additional parks which received a high ranking based on their function as all-day destination parks (e.g. picnic parks or waterfront parks), or high-use for organized team sports, combined with destination facilities such as a spray pad or multi-use ramp (skateboard) facility. The study anticipated these facilities in, as yet, undeveloped parks such as Park 459. Moving forward, the 2004 Washroom Study contains valid criteria for evaluating the eligibility of parks to receive permanent washroom facilities. The evaluation should continue to be applied as new parks are developed, or older parks are re-purposed and their current role and function is altered (for example if recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan for consolidation of sports fields for tournament use are realized). Similar criteria could be developed to evaluate the provision of water bottle filling stations since they require water service as well.

The evaluation applies only to the establishment of permanent washrooms and portable facilities may continue to be provided, as permissible, for special events, and non-serviced sites with regularly scheduled activities.

#### Recommendation #18

- ⇒ The City's 2004 Washroom Study contains valid criteria for evaluating the eligibility of parks to receive permanent washroom facilities. The evaluation should continue to be applied as new parks are developed, or older parks are re-purposed and their current role and function is altered.
- ⇒ At the next iteration of Future Directions, the recommendations of the 2004 Washroom Study should be reviewed.

### Public Engagement

The City continues to engage its residents in consultation on its strategic planning studies as well as on the development or redevelopment of parks through its Placemaking activities. Although the City undertakes a range of activities to solicit opinions and is cognizant of the need to be inclusive and creative to encourage community participation, it is also recognized that there is a need to supplement traditional community meetings which often receive low attendance with other forms of public engagement.

Creative engagement activities that could be considered includes:

- use of web-based resident surveys or emailed surveys to target groups;
- use of QR codes on temporary signboards at the park location or nearby community facility, linking to on-line information about a project or a survey;
- 'walking discussions' held at the park site;

- delivering public meeting presentations via WebEx (or equivalent on-line presentations), which allow for off-site participation (including the potential for interaction rather than just viewing);
- use of social media (such as Twitter and Facebook) to solicit input from followers;
- translation of materials into different languages;
- a traveling 'roadshow' with information on the project presented at community centres, shopping centres, etc.;
- direct outreach to specific target groups such as older adults, youth and multi-cultural groups through community contacts, including taking the presentation/information to where the audience is (group meetings, events).

The City may already be using some or all of these techniques at various times and the potential increase in public engagement costs would need to be weighed against the type and value of the project involved.

### Recommendation #19

- ⇒ Continue to engage the public in all parks development and redevelopment projects to ensure that community preferences and interests are integrated together with recommended facilities, and to fulfill Placemaking objectives. Consideration should be given to different types of public engagement activities such as meetings and open houses, as well as information technology such as Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media to supplement traditional community approaches. Engaging the public through a range of engagement activities expands the City's reach to the maximum number of potential participants.



Port Credit Memorial Park

### 4.2.3 Design Guidelines and Standards for Parks

#### Park Redevelopment Criteria, Design Guidelines and Standards

In recognition of both aging park infrastructure in Mississauga and the role that existing parks will play in supporting both new population growth and changing recreation and leisure interests, the 2009 Future Directions Master Plan recommended that a prioritized list of parks for redevelopment be completed by staff to inform the capital budget process.

Dialogue with City staff has indicated that in order to move the 2009 recommendation for prioritization of park redevelopment forward there is a need to better articulate a set of criteria to direct the identification of priorities. In this discussion it is important to note that a park redevelopment project is different from routine park facility repair and replacement which may happen on a different timeline as a 'one-off' replacement to address safety concerns, or as part of life cycle replacement. A park redevelopment project typically addresses the park as a whole and may include changes to facility types as well as a reconfiguration of the design and layout of the park.

There may be alignment of the two processes in the event that a park requires a major overhaul of several facilities and/or operational costs have increased as a result of aging infrastructure. Other factors that may trigger redevelopment include a need for the park and facilities to be more relevant in the context of contemporary trends, or to address anticipated or known recreation and leisure needs, as discussed in the *2014 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan*, and *Recreation Master Plan*. These may result from a change in neighbourhood demographics as a result of the typical changeover in the life-cycle of a neighbourhood or as intensification or cultural shifts bring in new residents with new interests. As well, with a limited future land base to support new parks acquisition, the redeployment of older

parks to meet the needs of new residents in areas of intensification will need to be considered. Prioritizing park redevelopment therefore must respond to multiple factors which the City may wish to consider when establishing criteria.

The City has embarked on a park facility repair and replacement inventory which will be developed into a lifecycle model. This is anticipated to be completed by 2015. Following this assessment, the City should embark on a park redevelopment study to develop evaluation criteria and weighting for park redevelopment, followed by the preparation of a list to prioritize parks for redevelopment to inform capital budget requests.

Criteria for park redevelopment may include the following (not necessarily in order of priority) and should be further refined through internal staff research and discussions. The term 'park' is used in its broadest sense and may include parks, greenbelts, gardens and other public open space.

1. The park is identified through an approved master planning exercise as a target for redevelopment, e.g. the Waterfront Parks Strategy, the Credit River Parks Strategy, the Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy or a standalone park master plan.
2. There is available space in the park to accommodate new facilities or existing facilities are underutilized and could be redeveloped to meet identified recreation needs (refer to Section 4.1.2 of this report, and the more detailed analysis in the *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan*).
3. Population density and/or demographics in the service area have changed significantly as a result of land use changes or intensification.

4. Park utilization has significantly increased, and/or the nature of use has changed and is impacting the carrying capacity of the park or warrants rethinking of park facilities to support new activities, e.g. special events.
5. Redevelopment of the park is financially prudent considering its age, increases or reductions to operations and maintenance demands, or the planned timing of replacement of major park facilities. This is often needed at the 25-30 year mark but may also be precipitated by catastrophic damage from an event such as flooding or an ice storm.
6. There have been significant changes in neighbourhood socio-demographics as a result of intensification, demographic shifts, or in the age of the neighbourhood which for suburban areas are generally considered to 'turn-over' to the next generation in approximately 25-30 years. (Note: Age cohort mapping based on the 2011 Census is provided in the socio-demographic profile prepared as background to Future Directions. Updated age cohort data is anticipated in 2014).
7. Activities in the park are having a harmful or negative effect on the surrounding community.

### Recommendation #20

- ⇒ Establish a prioritized list of older parks for redevelopment and identify annual budgets for systematic parks redevelopment / upgrading within the 10-year capital plan, based on identified priorities and employing additional analytics and assessment. To inform priority setting evaluation criteria should be established and applied. This could include the following considerations (refer to body of the Master Plan for additional details).

- planned life cycle replacement of major outdoor recreation facilities;
- implementing the recommendations of *Future Directions Recreation Master Plan*, including the potential for redeployment of underutilized sports fields in existing parks to meet identified needs;
- implementing the recommendations of the *Credit River Parks Strategy*, the *Waterfront Parks Strategy* the *Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy* and the *Urban Forest Management Plan*, the *Downtown Growth Area Parkland Provision Strategy*, the *Older Adult Plan*, *The Youth Plan*, and the *Cycling Master Plan*;
- significant changes in community demographics as identified through growth plans or other studies;
- increase in park usage and/or the nature of use has changed and is impacting the carrying capacity of the park or warrants rethinking of park facilities to support new activities.

### Recommendation #21

- ⇒ Develop guidelines and standards for landscape, urban design elements, facilities and sustainability measures to be applied to routine facility repair and replacement within parks, and the development and redevelopment of parks. The plans and design guidelines will also be used for budgetary purposes.

### Tracking Park Utilization

As well, discussion with City staff has suggested that it can be helpful to track and monitor the frequency of use in key parks for a period of time where capacity issues have been noted or when evaluating community requests for park improvements. This type of assessment

could be achieved in its simplest form by establishing park pathway counters, and drawing on observations by front-line staff. A user survey could also be employed that collects information on how frequently parks are being used and for what purpose, administered by park volunteers or summer students. Collectively, this information could help to support the argument that parks are well used and valued, as well as identifying those that are potentially over-utilized beyond their carrying capacity, or those that are not well used as they are no longer serving residents needs. The latter two being potential indicators for redevelopment.

### Recommendation #22

- ⇒ Consideration should be given to developing and executing a means of tracking park utilization. This type of assessment could be achieved through information technology, by establishing park pathway counters, observations by front-line staff, or a survey of use conducted by volunteers or students. A park utilization assessment tool would be useful in supporting the argument that Mississauga's parks are well used and valued, as well as informing park redevelopment priorities by identifying those parks that are potentially over-utilized beyond their carrying capacity, or those that are not well used as they are no longer serving the needs of residents. Enhanced systems analysis of the City's parks provides confidence not only to residents related to the tax expenditure and services delivery, but also to current and prospective corporate sponsors enhancing stewardship

### Integrating Information Technology into Parks

Dialogue with youth representatives during the study process has indicated a strong interest in the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in Destination Parks. This has the most relevance for, and is increasingly found, in community facilities and urban parks in large cities, often provided in partnership with private sponsors. Similar to the process used in the 2004 Washroom Study, the City should consider undertaking an internal study to develop criteria for and conduct an evaluation of suitable locations for the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in selected destination parks where coverage is possible, and park usage warrants consideration. This should be accompanied by an investigation of opportunities for partnerships with corporate sponsors or technology service providers.

Other forms of information technology are also being employed in contemporary destination parks including video screens such as the one at Mississauga Celebration Square, digital information boards and videogame tables. These types of features are most appropriate in urban parks such as those in Mississauga's City Centre. These features, however, may significantly alter the character of a park, attract crowds and are vulnerable to vandalism. There may be opportunities for temporary installations in other destination parks as part of special events, although caution should be exercised in locations that may cause disturbance to wildlife or adjacent residences.

### Recommendation #23

- ⇒ Through an internal study, the City should develop criteria for and conduct an evaluation of suitable locations for the provision of Wi-Fi® hot spots in selected destination parks, and investigate opportunities for provision of the service in partnership with corporate sponsors or technology service providers.



### Trails and Pathways

Trails and pathways in parks continue to be highly used and sought after facilities in Mississauga's parks and open space areas. Comments received about potential improvements that would enhance the use and enjoyment of parks and enhance safety include: better connectivity and the development of trail loops in the valley parks systems; maintaining trail surfacing; all-season use; lighting of trails; wayfinding and signage; and the provision of additional amenities that support trail use (e.g. benches and rest areas, washrooms and water filling stations). The need to enhance neighbourhood serving parks with short pathway loops that improve access to, and through, parks and encourage walking, was also noted, particularly in regard to encouraging activity levels amongst older adults. Tied to this were suggestions to add fitness equipment to trails and pathways in parks. The popularity of the Lake Aquitaine exercise circuit was noted.

It was noted in discussions as well as in the *Credit River Parks Strategy* report that steps should be taken to establish a continuous trail system that will extend along the Credit River from Brampton to Port Credit at Lake Ontario. This continuous network of trails would allow opportunities for recreation, socialization and public education as well as provide continuous natural links for wildlife.

Relative to other facilities, trails and pathways represent one of the best values for dollars invested as they appeal to a range of users and offer high returns in personal enjoyment and health benefits at a relatively low cost per person. Although the City has completed its Cycling Master Plan, the last study that addressed multi-use recreational trails holistically was conducted in 2001. The last study that addressed multi-use recreational trails holistically was conducted in 2001 and the 2009 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan recommended an update to this study vis-a-vis a Park Pathway

Study. Since then there are additional recommendations related to trails and pathways contained across several studies including a comprehensive study for the Credit River Parks. The purpose of the park pathway study would be to confirm the City-wide trail inventory and validate and consolidate recommendations related to the recreational trail system as developed for the *Cycling Master Plan*, the *Credit River Parks Strategy*, the *Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy*, the *Urban Forest Management Plan*, the *Waterfront Parks Strategy* and other related parks studies within the context of a City-wide recreational trail system.

Considering the continued public interest in trails and pathways and the number of recent studies that are addressing trail development in different locations and the importance of pedestrian movement across open spaces and road right of ways the City should consider the need and value for a citywide pedestrian study.



Lakefront Promenade

The study would consolidate and integrate the recommendations of other studies as related to multi-use trails and pathways, and pedestrian movement considering user safety and CPTED principles, natural environment protection, and accessibility. It would additionally provide: a hierarchy of recreation trail and pathway types to direct development; provide consistent design standards that address trail and pathway construction; establish maintenance standards and protocols; and provide guidelines for a set of consistent wayfinding, interpretive and regulatory signs within an overall park signage system.

The 2009 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan recommended an update to this study vis-a-vis a Park Pathway Study. Since then there are additional recommendations related to trails and pathways contained across several studies including a comprehensive study for the Credit River Parks. A Trail Lighting Policy has also been developed.

### Recommendation #24

- ⇒ The City should plan to continue building towards a continuous and interconnected trail system which builds off of the existing network already established and new trail routes identified in other supporting studies such as the *Waterfront Parks Strategy* and the *Credit River Parks Strategy*.
- ⇒ Considering the continued public interest in trails and pathways and the number of recent studies that are addressing trail development in different locations and the importance of pedestrian movement across open spaces and road right of ways the City should consider the need and value for a City wide pedestrian study.

### Increasing Awareness of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Public input during both the 2009 and 2014 Master Plan development suggested that there is a need to increase the level of awareness of parks and recreation resources in the City, together with increased publicity of events and activities that take place in parks. The ongoing need for improvements in this regard was again raised through the current Future Directions dialogue with representatives from community organizations involving youth, older adults and newcomers.

The City of Mississauga currently has a substantial amount of information about parks, recreation, and culture facilities and events on its web site, however there may be opportunities to improve the ease of access to this information. As an example the City of Beverly Hills has an excellent integrated information technology system for promoting City services which for parks and recreation includes interactive GIS mapping of City resources, mapping of Wi-Fi hot spots, a mobile app linking to parks, recreation and culture information, SMS texting service and eNotices that notify of events, press releases and other City business.  
<http://www.beverlyhills.org/citygovernment/departments/informationtechnology/>

Other innovations in use by municipalities include the use of QR (quick response) codes on information signboards in parks that link to a park or trail map or additional interpretive information. Additional uses for QR codes include the potential for translation of signage or interpretive information in multiple languages which is an important consideration in a culturally diverse City such as Mississauga. Discussion with the City's IT staff revealed concerns over the potential hijacking or hacking of the QR codes on permanent signs in parks, with preferred locations being inside community buildings where there is better surveillance to prevent vandalism. Other

technologies that can serve the same purpose include proprietary mobile 'apps' or a Wi-Fi® link to web-based information created and supported by the City.

The idea of a special parks event to celebrate Mississauga's upcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary was also raised including the potential for a 'caravan' style event hosted across multiple locations with a stamped park 'passport'.

### Recommendation #25

- ⇒ The City should investigate and implement opportunities for improved marketing and publicizing of parks resources, together with programs, events and activities that take place in parks, woodlands and natural areas. The value of parks (health, economic, environmental) should be a key component of marketing. This should include consideration of improvements to portals on the City's web site and integration of information technology. These efforts should be coordinated across parks, forestry, recreation, library, fire, and culture services.

### Increasing Access to Parks

When asked what would increase park usage for all ages and abilities, a clear message received through the recent Future Directions dialogue with representatives from community organizations was a need for better access to the City's major parks and facilities, including improving transit services from existing residential areas. This was a consistent message from youth, older adults and newcomers. The lack of direct bus access to Riverwood, which is identified in the Mississauga Strategic Plan as the City's 'Central Park', was frequently noted, along with other potential opportunities such as a "hop-on-the-bus, hop-off-the-bus" transit ticket during special events or a permanent (peak season) shuttle between the waterfront parks. Improving regular transit to and between the waterfront parks was also a recommendation of the Waterfront Parks Strategy.

As a built-out City there will be limited opportunities to develop new large, multi-purpose parks and with the anticipated population growth there will be a greater reliance on and use of the City's existing parks which may be located some distance away from residential populations. 'Developing a Transit-oriented City' is a fundamental pillar of the City's Strategic Plan and in realizing this goal attention should be paid to establishing strategic route connections to the City's key parks and recreation facilities, in particular those that offer one of a kind or specialized facilities. Regularly scheduled, affordable and well-promoted transit service to key park destinations would open up access to a range of users who might currently be precluded or deterred from using parks as a result of physical or financial limitations, and could further help to reduce car dependency amongst the general populace.

Analyses of park utilization mentioned in the foregoing sections could assist in identifying potential park and community facility destinations which would benefit from improved transit access. (Refer to Recommendation #13)

### Recommendation #26

- ⇒ In advancing the implementation of a comprehensive, City-wide transit system that supports the Strategic Plan, the City through inter-departmental dialogue, should work together to provide regularly scheduled, affordable and well-promoted transit service to key parks and recreation facilities as a means of increasing public access and as part of reducing car dependency.



Lake Ontario waterfront

## 4.3 Parks Operations

### 4.3.1 Parks Operation Service Levels and Special Management Areas

Since the 2009 Master Plan was completed Parks Operations has continued to streamline its practices. Park service levels are defined and allocated on the basis of priorities which acknowledge the profile of the park with specialized parks receiving a higher profile and service level than typical neighbourhood parks. Operations staff currently utilize the Infor Maintenance Management System (formerly Hansen) to enter work completion tasks on-site and facilitate information sharing. Data collected is used to examine service level adherence, maintenance costs and hours performed for various functions of work. Forestry staff use Hansen to receive and resolve service requests which may result in work order generation for the planting and maintenance of City owned trees.

The Parks and Forestry Business Plan notes that moving forward, staff seek to maximize the capabilities of the Infor system through the establishment of decision support systems (DSS) and other analytics to identify and rectify service level gaps and re-allocate existing resources to improve the consistency of operations City-wide.

Dialogue with staff noted that there could also be further refinement of defined service levels for parks maintenance which acknowledge the variations in park types and usage within each priority level. For example parks with highly utilized sports fields require a different level of service than a park without sports fields. Similarly, the newer highly designed urban parks and those with garden areas or other specialized features require a maintenance level that substantially exceeds that of a typical park. The department has made some in-



roads in addressing this with support for increased maintenance budget allocations for the City Centre parks.

As an example, a key issue raised through the consultation discussions and in communications to the City from the Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens (BRG) Park Stewardship Committee is the need to add a classification of 'garden'. The purpose behind the request is to provide a differentiation between the role and function of a garden as an area for viewing and passive use vs. those of traditional parks (which tend toward recreation). Discussion with staff concluded that introducing a garden classification into the park planning classifications would be an anomaly as other park types are not defined, Community Park and Destination Park being the only park classifications in use in the Official Plan.

It was concluded with staff that there is potentially a better alignment of this concept with refined park service levels, as described in the foregoing paragraphs. It was also discussed that the specific concerns raised at Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens could also be potentially alleviated with more definition within the Parks By-law to permit/prohibit certain uses.

The discussion raises the question of whether maintenance service levels need increasing for gardens, whether they are standalone sites or areas within a park. If so increases in staffing and budget may need to be considered. At present maintenance at BRG is heavily supported by a volunteer group. Concerns over long-term sustainability of the volunteer efforts may be an underlying issue to the request.

It was also suggested that the concept of management zones in parks that define allowable uses as well as management activities would be a useful exercise for the BRG as well as in other strategic parks. This suggests the potential need for management plans or master plans

for sites with complex, multiple roles or sensitive settings, as was completed for Riverwood.

### Recommendation #27

- ⇒ The City should continue to review and refine its service levels for parks operations and maintenance, and consider the development of internal categories within existing defined service levels to be more reflective of the specific maintenance needs of different types of parks, or spaces within parks, based on facilities, function and / or level of usage. These categories may include gardens, waterfront parks, sports fields, urban parks and special event sites, and could result in different maintenance levels within individual sites.

### Recommendation #28

- ⇒ The City should consider amendments to the Parks By-law to restrict active recreational uses within parks or areas of parks with substantial horticultural displays such as Kariya Park, Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, Riverwood and potentially at Park 508 (to be developed on the former Woodlands Nursery property).

### 4.3.2 Special Events Support

Events and other community activities are opportunities to promote social interaction, enliven parks and public spaces and celebrate Mississauga's cultural diversity. Mississauga's parks are increasingly being used for more community events which are taking place in local parks as well as planned venues such as Celebration Square.

The *Event Standards Analysis* and subsequent work being completed by the Culture division provides direction on defining outdoor festivals and events and matching appropriate park venues to particular types



of events. Factors or descriptors that delineate types of events are identified together with the facilities and servicing needed to support them. Dialogue with City staff suggests that additional work is still needed in defining and delivering operational support for these events in a manner that is cost effective and beneficial both to event organizers and to Parks operations staff. Presently some community events result in unexpected or unplanned increases in park maintenance activities which draw personnel away from regularly scheduled responsibilities.

To provide an appropriate level of operational support Parks and Forestry in collaboration with the Culture and Recreation Divisions should study how best to support special events in parks including the feasibility of providing dedicated operational resources team that would undertake activities prior to and following an event, e.g. deliveries, set up, take downs and rehabilitation of the park. The need for deployment of the operational resources should be coordinated in advance at the time of event planning and permitting process so that all relevant costs and charge-backs can be assessed and implemented.

### Recommendation #29

- ⇒ To provide an appropriate level of operational support the Parks and Forestry Division in collaboration with the Recreation and Culture Divisions should study how best to support special events in parks including the feasibility of providing a dedicated operational resources team that would undertake activities prior to and following an event, e.g. deliveries, set up, take downs and rehabilitation of the park.



Picnicking at Jack Darling Park

### 4.3.3 Informal Use of Playing Fields

It was conveyed during consultation that it is sometimes unclear to the public, and to youth in particular, which sports fields are off-limits (e.g. premium, fenced fields) vs. those that are available for use when they are not booked for permitted play.

This uncertainty could be resolved by reviewing the inventory of playing fields, determining which are off-limits for casual use, and posting of signs at the facility. The approach may also need to include the need for posting of temporary signs when fields are unavailable for both casual and permitted use when fields are 'resting' or as a result of wet conditions. Allowable casual use of other fields should be confirmed in the City's Parks By-law and the message conveyed to the public. Messaging of information should be conducted in a manner that reaches the most park users and should consider the

provision of a park conduct sign at parks that welcomes the use of playing fields as well as the posting of regulatory signs at facilities that are off-limits.

### Recommendation #30

- ⇒ The City should clarify internally which playing fields are available for informal, pick-up use when not booked vs. those that are restricted off-limits and develop and implement a means of communicating this information to the public in a manner that reaches the most residents and sports groups. This can be achieved through park signage as well as information technology that includes social media and place based communications using Wi-Fi®.

### 4.3.4 Marinas

The City owns and operates two public marinas on the Lake Ontario waterfront: Lakefront Promenade Marina and Credit Village Marina. Both marinas offer docking and boating facilities along with public amenities, the Credit Village Marina also being located within the vibrant setting of Port Credit Village.

Boating activity provides a dynamic focal point for Mississauga's waterfront. The marinas and harbor areas are popular as local and regional destinations for recreational boating, charter tours, fishing, and visitation. They provide economic benefits to the City and surrounding community derived from: docking and launching fees as well as tourist and visitor revenues to local businesses from transient use, general visitation, and events such as the Salmon Derby. Public support for the continuation of boating on Mississauga's waterfront has been noted in past and ongoing waterfront planning studies such as the *2008 Waterfront Strategy* and *Inspiration Port Credit*.

Long-term sustainability of recreational boating and charter boats on Mississauga's waterfront will require an ongoing commitment to marina and harbor functions and operations. The City's long-standing commitment to this is evidenced by major capital projects such as Lakefront Promenade Park and the redevelopment of the Port Credit harbor, and the recent funding of the 2014 dredging operations to reduce sediment levels in the Credit River harbor.

### Recommendation #31

- ⇒ Recreational boating and charter boat activities provide a dynamic focal point for Mississauga's waterfront and recreational, economic, and tourism benefits. In support of boating activities, the City should continue its commitment to the management and operations of marinas and the associated public amenity space as well as consider long-term marina and harbor service provision.

### 4.3.5 Winter Use of Parks

Consultation during Future Directions noted continued interest by the community in year round use of parks. There continues to be a demand for winter clearing of trails and pathways, which has been addressed by the City through prioritization of locations for snow removal within the system that serve as key linkages between destinations. In addition to its formal outdoor ice skating facilities, the City operates several outdoor ice rinks in partnership with community partners in locations where there is adequate infrastructure. Community interest expressed during consultation extends to increasing the number of natural ice rinks in parks, toboggan hills, and providing amenities that support winter activities such as fire pits and warm-up shelters. However, an increase in facilities and amenities to support winter activities, notably natural ice rinks and fire pits requires more staffing and/or volunteer time.

Providing for all-season use of selected parks is a means of encouraging outdoor physical activity year-round, and was identified by community representatives as a way of increasing social interaction particularly amongst newcomers to Canada who may feel even more isolated during the winter months. However, the unpredictable nature of winter weather, the cost of specialized facilities and increased operational costs can be significant drawbacks to accommodating this interest in more than a few selected park locations.

### Recommendation #32

- ⇒ In developing new parks and redeveloping older parks the City should consider how to best optimize winter use of parks and the trail/pathway system in selected locations where there is sufficient community interest, appropriate infrastructure, and where it is financially viable.

### 4.3.6 Extended Hours for Parks

The current Mississauga Parks By-law permits general use of parks between 7AM and 11PM, which is consistent with its neighbour City of Brampton. Discussion with City staff revealed that there is interest by residents in extending park hours to accommodate different lifestyles, and to further consider 24 hour use of parks. Residents are already using parks and trails after hours and the question was raised whether park hours should be extended. Night-time use of parks would require additional lighting and surveillance and raises concerns over user safety, and noise and disruption for adjacent residents. As well for trail areas through natural areas night lighting could negatively impact wildlife.

Notwithstanding these issues, Mississauga may wish to selectively consider an extension of park hours to align with contemporary urban lifestyles, either across the park system, in selective parks, or seasonally. The City of Toronto park hours are 5.30AM to 12.01AM which accommodates a modest extension of use. In New York City, closing hours differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and range from dusk to 1AM.

24 hour use of municipal parks is not commonly permitted for reasons noted above, although in New York City there are some public squares on private property which are open 24 hours. The applicability of this scenario is most likely to be small public spaces in urban areas with an active street life as opposed to traditional parks, and should only be considered where there is demand and good purpose, surveillance from neighbouring streets, and no impact to residential areas. It should be accompanied by stringent enforcement of the Parks Bylaw as it relates to allowable uses and conduct.

Even without an extension of park hours there is a need to find a balance between park user needs, safety, and conflicts with adjacent uses when considering park lighting. The City through its Pathway Lighting Policy recommends focusing on the lighting of well-used connections between destinations while balancing these issues.

### Recommendation #33

- ⇒ The City should selectively consider an extension of park hours to align with contemporary urban lifestyles, either across the park system, in selective parks, or seasonally. If implemented it should be accompanied by stringent enforcement of the Parks Bylaw as it relates to allowable uses and conduct.
- ⇒ The City may wish to review its lighting policy to consider lighting beyond pathway lighting and to review lighting of areas within parks particularly within intensified urban areas

where there may be a desire to use parks or public spaces in the evening hours. When determining areas to provide lighting the balancing of user safety, CPTED principles, impacts to wildlife and adjacent land uses, and operational costs should be considered.



Evening at the Port Credit waterfront

#### 4.4 Cemeteries

The City of Mississauga currently maintains ten cemeteries. Four cemeteries are in active use however burials are only performed in previously purchased plots. The City has introduced additional columbaria in recent years to meet an increased demand for cremations, which is driven by both a scarcity of land as well as cultural preferences, and continues to evolve its services to meet the needs of a diverse population. The balance of the City's cemeteries are closed or historic sites.

The City's cemeteries are essentially at capacity for burials and continuing land constraints will limit the number of traditional in-ground burial options available in the coming years in cemeteries across the Greater Toronto Area. The City's response to increased demand includes maximizing the number of saleable plots at existing cemeteries, capitalizing on increased demand for Columbaria niches and exploring the feasibility of additional cemetery lands within the City.

To continue to provide a full range of interment options to Mississauga residents, a new cemetery site is needed. This is an, as yet, unrealized recommendation from the 2009 Master Plan which warrants continued consideration in this term of the plan.

##### Recommendation #34

- ⇒ The City should, through its Cemetery Operations business analysis, continue to consider its options for a new cemetery location to meet projected needs, as well as other initiatives that address current trends in the bereavement industry as well as resident preferences.



### 4.5 Partnerships

Partnerships are an effective way to facilitate community infrastructure development or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering services and programs, allowing funding organizations to achieve greater results with limited funds. For the municipal sector, partners can exist at a number of levels including, inter-governmental, inter-departmental, community and private sector. Partnerships can help build constituency, support and funding for City projects, foster understanding and shared responsibility between interested parties, build social ties within the community, provide a sense of fulfillment and purpose through volunteerism, and help influence social norms.

The City of Mississauga has for many years been supported by its government agency partners as well as local community organizations in the delivery of specialized programs, facilities and services related to parks and forestry. The benefits that accrue to both the City and the community are well recognized in Mississauga, and there are a number of partnerships that have developed around common goals and interests, including arts and culture, recreation facilities and programs, and environmental protection and stewardship.

A key issue identified by the City for the 2014 Future Directions Parks and Forestry Master Plan is the investigation of, and recommendations for, specific types of partnerships in parks and forestry stewardship, including different approaches and models to partnering. The City recognizes a need to move forward with a multi-layered partnership approach to the management of parks and natural areas. Current partnerships and opportunities for enhancement and the potential for migration to new types of partners are discussed in the following sections.

#### 4.5.1 Supporting Existing Partnerships

##### Strengthening Community Partnerships

The City currently implements a Community Grants program which allows the City of Mississauga to better leverage its financial resources. The City of Mississauga accepts applications annually from community-based arts, culture and recreation organizations for financial support. The available grant funds are distributed annually based on review of applications against defined criteria by an impartial four-member panel.

The delivery of programs and other services through reliable, sustained volunteer efforts is dependent on the long-term viability of the organizations providing them. Although there are now three community grant programs in Mississauga (Community Grants, Arts and Culture, Cultural Festivals and Celebrations) as well as corporate grants, there is no grant stream specifically targeted to organizations that support parks, natural areas and forestry stewardship. Although grant funding has been approved to several organizations on an annual basis, including in 2014, even the City's most valued partners in parks and environmental services have not received committed multi-year funding in the past.

The City's Living Green Master Plan (LGMP) recommends that the City **"Create an Environmental Community Grants Program" (Action 28)** with a funding structure to support and showcase community-based environmental initiatives. A budget request was made through Parks and Forestry to realize this recommendation. This recommendation should be acted upon.

Community interests in Mississauga in addition to environmental initiatives include community gardens, leash-free areas, urban agriculture, and public gardens. To ensure the inclusion of



organizations that partner in the delivery of these services the City should consider focusing a portion of the Grant Program toward parks related initiatives. This could be combined with the proposed Environmental Community Grants Program to be a Parks and Environment Community Grants Program.

### Recommendation #35

- ⇒ In looking at effective partnership models the City should first consider how to best support its strongest, most successful community partners who deliver key parks and forestry services that meet the City's strategic goals and who complement the City's own resources. In particular those that provide in-kind services that have a real financial value to the City such as reducing operating costs. This may mean a commitment to sustained annual funding by the City to serve as seed money to organizations that can demonstrate a sound business model and plans.

### Recommendation #36

- ⇒ The City should act on and implement the Living Green Master Plan (LGMP) recommendation to **“Create an Environmental Community Grants Program”** as part of the overall Community Grants Program with a funding structure to support and showcase community-based environmental initiatives. The program aims to promote a green culture within the resident community and creates an opportunity to build lifetime interest in the environment with Mississauga's youth. To include and encourage organizations that partner in the delivery of other parks related services the City should consider focusing a portion of the Grant Program toward parks related initiatives. This could be combined with the Environmental Community Grants Program to be a Parks and Environment Community Grants Program.

### Strengthening Agency / Stakeholder Partnerships

The City of Mississauga currently partners with its government agency partners including Toronto Region Conservation, Credit Valley Conservation, Halton Region Conservation, the Region of Peel, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board and the Peel District School Board on a wide range of initiatives and projects of mutual benefit and interest. These are well established relationships with roles and responsibilities varying across the agencies depending on the initiative, and ranging from providing input as a stakeholder to being a financial partner in project delivery. These City and agency partnerships are highly successful and valued and have served residents well at both a local and a regional level for many years.

Initiatives with the Region of Peel and the conservation authorities include both strategic planning exercises, such as the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy and Urban Forest Management Plan as well as major capital projects. A notable ongoing example of the latter is the Lakeview Waterfront Connection which will create a new natural waterfront park and trail connection from lakefill on the eastern Mississauga waterfront. The project is being undertaken by the Region of Peel and Credit Valley Conservation, with support from Toronto and Region Conservation and the City of Mississauga. The City also partners with both the Region and the Conservation Authorities on environmental restoration and planting initiatives.

With respect to extended opportunities with the Region of Peel, the Region is spearheading a range of policy development efforts and programs to support active living. The City should partner with the Peel Region Public Health in its effort to promote “Active Living” and leverage the Region as an advocate in providing evidence-based data to inform parks and recreation related decision making at the City (such as the San Francisco model noted in Examples from Other Municipalities – Appendix C). As well the Region is working with the

United Way to coordinate events that bring the neighbourhood together, including recreational projects. There is an opportunity for the City to leverage the Region's partnership with the United Way to support play site improvements.

### Recommendation #37

- ⇒ The City should partner with the Peel Region Public Health in its effort to promote "Active Living" and leverage the Region as an advocate in providing evidence-based data to inform parks and recreation related decision making at the City. The Region is working with the United Way to coordinate events that bring the neighbourhood together, including recreational projects. There is an opportunity for the City to leverage the Region's partnership with the United Way to support play site improvements.

The City has a longstanding relationship with both the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board and the Peel District School Board on joint-development and co-location of facilities and joint-use agreements that improve community accessibility to school spaces and facilities. Moving forward, the City should continue working with the school boards and consider expanding upon joint-use agreements to include facility maintenance and joint programming.

From discussions there would also appear to be the potential to increase or enhance partnerships with the school boards around programs that allow student participation in maintaining parks and natural areas, in particular at sites where schools are co-located with parks or adjacent to natural areas. Although these activities are part of current stewardship initiatives, efforts are frequently informal in nature and coordinated school by school. These types of programs are important to fostering a sense of ownership and environmental stewardship among students and could benefit from a more formalized agreement and process at the Board level to allow for a

consistent and sustained commitment. It is important to foster outdoor education and event connecting with Conservation Authorities and stewardship groups about providing it within the City of Mississauga's parkland system to benefit the school boards.

### Recommendation #38

- ⇒ The City should continue to work with the school boards on joint facility development and joint-use agreements where mutually beneficial, and consider expanding its joint-use agreements to include facility maintenance and joint programming.
- ⇒ Where mutually beneficial, partnerships with the school board could be enhanced to allow for long-term student participation in maintaining parks and natural areas, in particular on sites where schools are co-located with parks or adjacent to natural areas.
- ⇒ The school boards should be encouraged to develop work plans within the curriculum that incorporate outdoor education components and build awareness of ecology, stewardship and the natural and cultural heritage of Mississauga.

## 4.5.2 Support for Volunteerism and Community Involvement

Engaging in community partnerships includes tapping into the support of volunteers who can assist the City in reducing operational requirements. There is a growing interest in Mississauga for residents and the corporate community to want to participate. Through discussion with staff and community stakeholders it was identified that the City could enhance its processes and procedures to increase efficiency and make it easier for volunteer involvement. It was also

noted that to be of the most value volunteer efforts should be coordinated and focused on areas of need, and partnerships should be 'true' in the sense that volunteers are available when the City needs them and targeted to areas of need. Public education and awareness are essential to getting residents and community organizations on board particularly on environmental issues and partnerships in parks management.

There is untapped potential within the community, schools, and among neighbourhood associations who have interest and/or capacity and a need for the City to be proactive in communicating partnership development and service delivery opportunities to community organizations and services delivery agencies. Efforts need to be undertaken to provide an effective alignment between the pool of volunteers and 'hot spots' or areas in need of assistance.

A standardized volunteer program with volunteer recruitment processes and a recognition system would assist in establishing a strong and sustainable volunteer base in Mississauga. This should be augmented by a recognition program that consistently and appropriately acknowledges the efforts of volunteers and donors.

### Recommendation #39

- ⇒ The City should develop a Community Services Integrated Volunteer Program to increase efficiency, attract a strong and sustainable volunteer base in Mississauga, realize untapped potential volunteers within the community and make it easier for volunteer involvement. This should be augmented by a recognition program to acknowledge the efforts of volunteers and donors.

The Sponsorship and Corporate Development group has a mandate to find and support strong community partners on behalf of the entire Community Services Department, administers the Corporate and

Community Grants program, and provides support to community organizations.

Discussion with several of Parks and Forestry's affiliates in stewardship program delivery indicated that they feel well supported in their activities by the City and by Parks and Forestry staff in particular. However, most NGOs don't have capacity or funds to cover operating costs and need sustained sources of funding to be successful over the long-term.

It was identified that it would be of benefit to community organizations if the City could provide consistent support and assistance to them in 1) grant applications, 2) support volunteer fundraising activities, 3) help seek out external funding partners.

The City of Toronto through its Partnership Development Unit seeks out new community partners and assists community groups with their fundraising projects. More than just a grants program administrator the unit seeks out and channels support and funding from corporations, foundations and philanthropists. Working together with community organizations they have successfully raised millions of dollars for parks, recreation and urban forestry projects for the benefit of Toronto's residents and visitors. The Partnership Development Unit website notes that it is currently working with dozens of community groups and other organizations on a range of projects including:

- play sites
- park improvements
- tree and garden planting
- recreation facility improvements
- special projects

### Recommendation #40

- ⇒ The City should investigate the feasibility of an expanded or more clearly identified role for the Sponsorship and Corporate Development Division in assisting the City's affiliate organizations in the following activities 1) grant applications, 2) support for fundraising activities, and 3) seeking out external funding partners and channeling donations.

### 4.5.3 Growing New Partnerships

#### Evaluating New Partnership Opportunities

The City recognizes the importance of engaging in meaningful partnerships, whether it is with the community, agencies, stakeholders, or other levels of government. For partnerships to be successful, investments are required in time and resources, enabling relationships to be nurtured, and resulting in partners with strong a sense of ownership. Discussions with Community Services have indicated a desire to be more pro-active in the seeking of partnerships and the channeling of efforts.

The development of a partnership selection process would support alignment among all partners of the partnership's mission, mandate, goals, responsibilities, and expectations. A partnership selection process should include partnership development supports for external funding or other resources that would benefit community groups and potential partners.

As well from time to time the City receives unsolicited proposals for the development of specialized outdoor recreation facilities. A consistent mechanism and process for evaluating these opportunities is needed. The City should develop formal processes for evaluating partnership opportunities and invitations from external parties,

whether they include community groups, agencies, schools, or the Region. This may require formalization of a program and a process requiring organizations to submit a business plan for the City to consideration (e.g. the Ottawa Community Partnership Major/Minor Capital Programs).

### Recommendation #41

- ⇒ The City should develop formal processes for evaluating partnership opportunities and invitations from external parties, whether they include community groups, agencies, or private sector. This would require formalization of a program and a process requiring organizations to submit a business plan to the City for initiatives of a scale that exceeds that of the Grant Program, or requires a substantial long-term operational commitment.

#### Public/Non-Profit Partnerships

As demonstrated in the Environmental Scan (Section 3.0), there is a growing trend in North American cities toward the use of partnerships in parks and recreation, including comprehensive service delivery by increasingly sophisticated not-for-profit organizations such as park foundations with a mandate to oversee complex capital projects as well as programming elements (refer to Toronto, Calgary, Ottawa case studies in Appendix C). It may be premature for the City to consider a partnership model that broadly supports parks services at this time, however such organizations do not develop overnight and a supportive municipal culture is needed to allow the potential for them to evolve. Some of the foregoing recommendations will help in the migration to this model if the City wishes, and if there is interest by the not-for-profit sector. Further investigation is needed to determine the potential factors for success in these models and to evaluate if this is the right direction for the City.

### Recommendation #42

- ⇒ The City should investigate the opportunities for, and merits of, cultivating an advanced public/non-profit partnership models in the delivery of parks services such as the City of Calgary Parks Foundation, the City of Toronto Parks People, and the City of Ottawa Community Partnership Major/Minor Capital Programs.

### Corporate Sponsors

There are a number of effective community and corporate partners and sponsors in the stewardship of parks and natural areas (volunteer programs for tree planting, naturalization, and clean ups) run by the City and affiliated environmental groups. Many corporations now have responsibility pillars to the environment and to the local community and have established funding to support community initiatives. Currently, corporations seek out the City for funding opportunities. However, the City should be proactive in seeking opportunities to leverage corporate sponsorship and business partner relationships to expand reach activities, community engagement and reduce maintenance and operating costs over time.

### Recommendation #43

- ⇒ Through its Sponsorship and Corporate Development Unit the City should be proactive in seeking opportunities to leverage corporate sponsorship and business partner relationships that support stewardship of parks and natural areas.

### Public-Private Partnerships

Many community parks Mississauga were initially developed through funding provided by developers to a basic standard defined by the City. Beyond the parks' initial development the City assumed

responsibility for parks maintenance and future replacement of facilities. Recently in the City Centre area, the City has developed several urban parks at a higher cost per acre, and with increased longer term maintenance and operational costs. There is a growing trend in the US toward public private partnerships in the delivery and maintenance of parks and other city improvements through Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). BIDs which are similar to Business Improvement Areas commonly seen in Canada may be overseen by a nonprofit entity, and are typically associated with downtown and streetscape improvements. In the case of the Brooklyn Bridge Park in New York the BID concept extended to development and maintenance of a high profile park that developers can capitalize on to increase their market share.

A similar initiative was undertaken by the Hudson River Park Trust with small annual tax levies assigned to both residential and commercial properties expected to generate \$10 million in annual funding to offset the popular waterfront park's operating deficit and fund its rejuvenation. The proposal for the Neighbourhood Improvement District (NID) was preceded by a study that determined the escalated value of real estate in proximity to the park. This trend should be watched and some investigation undertaken of its potential in Mississauga.

### Recommendation #44

- ⇒ There is a growing trend toward public private partnerships in the development and maintenance of parks and other City improvements through business or neighbourhood improvement districts which develop and apply special tax levies in areas which will receive significant benefit, particularly as a result of increases in real estate value, from major public infrastructure investment. The applicability and trend toward this in Canada should be followed and some investigation undertaken of its potential in Mississauga.



### 4.5.4 Park Stewardship Models

The City has a number of park sites which have specialized maintenance needs, several of which are supported by volunteer efforts. The Riverwood site, located on the Credit River valley, has extensive natural valleyland components as well as horticultural gardens on the tablelands. The Riverwood Conservancy, a registered not-for-profit organization, works within an operational agreement with the City to offer a range of programming at the site and to undertake volunteer stewardship work.

Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens (BRG) located on Mississauga's waterfront has an extensive collection of rhododendrons that are a substantial asset to the City. The Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens Stewardship Committee (BRGSC) was subsequently established and maintenance of the gardens is now supported by the BRGSC and its volunteers. The BRGSC works with the City to promote, protect, and preserve this unique public garden by assisting with the planning and maintenance of the Garden, and raising community awareness, involvement and interest.

Park 508 is a recently acquired park site on the waterfront, which has its origins as a horticultural nursery and also has natural environment areas. The Queen Elizabeth II Rose Garden and Kariya Park in the City Centre are garden sites that are maintained by the City.

The City is considering whether a different and integrated approach is warranted for the stewardship of these specialized garden sites, as well as for the Credit River Parks which are closely associated with Riverwood. Potential models include: 1) Separate Affiliates (current state); 2) One or more organizations with sub-committees; 3) An overarching parks trust or parks council with consolidated or separate volunteer bases for each site.



Kariya Park

Determination of an appropriate stewardship model is subject to more in-depth discussions between the City and the various park stewardship organizations. However it can be noted at this time that if there is to be an increased reliance on volunteer organizations for the maintenance of these valued resources, the City should be prepared to identify and commit to a level of support that will cultivate and sustain long-term partnerships. This is necessary to avoid the challenges which are currently facing many not-for-profit and

charitable organizations. During times of economic uncertainty and restraint the same financial limitations that cause municipalities to seek out partnerships affect members, participants, sponsors, and grant programs that support organizations. This results in an uncertain revenue stream potentially affecting the viability of the organization and, as a consequence, jeopardizing both the partnership and the asset. An example of this is the Toronto Botanical Garden (TBG), which has been a valued fixture in Toronto since the 1950s. Under the care of the TBG significant improvements have been made to the former Civic Garden Centre building and property, the capital asset value of which accrues to the City as owner. In spite of the success and reputation of this renowned facility, a recent decrease in membership and donations combined with minimal City funding has left TBG with an operating deficit and the future of the garden facility and programs is uncertain.

These measures are particularly important if the City is interested in moving toward increased responsibilities for existing organizations such as The Riverwood Conservancy or the cultivation of an over-arching parks foundation such as in Toronto or Calgary. It would also be advisable for the City to complete a management plan for the Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, and potentially Park 508 so that long-term goals, objectives, public uses and management needs can be determined in consultation with the public, stewardship organizations, interest groups and other stakeholders.

### Recommendation #45

- ⇒ The City should study options for an integrated approach for the long-term management and stewardship of the garden sites and the Credit River Parks in discussion with its community partners which include the BRG Stewardship Committee and The Riverwood Conservancy, and other stakeholders and interest groups.

### Recommendation #46

- ⇒ The City should complete a management plan for the Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens, and potentially Park 508 so that long-term goals, objectives, public uses and management needs can be determined in consultation with the public, potential stewardship organizations, and other stakeholders and interest groups.



Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens

### 4.6 Forestry

#### 4.6.1 Ongoing Challenges and Strategies

The Forestry unit is responsible for the planting, inspection and maintenance of over one million City owned trees, vegetation management of boulevard areas, and the protection and preservation of natural assets through invasive species management, woodland restoration and enforcement of applicable By-laws. Forestry staff is also responsible for community engagement, education and awareness related to forestry and natural area management.

Natural area management was a key issue at the time of the 2009 Master Plan and the outcome was a series of recommendations that addressed a range of issues related to forestry services, including recommendation for the preparation of a comprehensive Natural Heritage System Strategy. The City has since completed the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy, NH&UFS), concurrent with an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP).

Other ongoing initiatives identified by the Forestry unit include amendments to the Tree Permit By-law and Public Tree By-law, new street tree planting and tree replacements, implementation of the Million Tree Program, woodland management programs to preserve natural areas, invasive species and pest management. Forestry also undertakes tree plantings and restoration in partnership with the conservation authorities, school groups, not-for profit organizations, and local businesses. Much of the urban forest is contained on private property. A Private Tree By-law was approved in 2013 following an extensive public process.

Challenges facing Forestry services over the term of the Master Plan, and beyond, include management of Emerald Ash Borer, the Asian long-horned beetle, and other pests and diseases which are a significant threat to the health of Mississauga's tree canopy and that of other area municipalities. The City has identified and embarked on a City-wide program which includes treatment of a percentage of the City's Ash trees, while removing and replacing others over a ten-year period. The Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan is funded through a special tax levy. Other threats to the urban forest include the Asian long-horned beetle, and Gypsy moth as well as other pathogens that are having an impact on the urban canopy. Future invasive species risk response requires continuous monitoring and the development of proactive approaches to minimize costs and preserve tree assets where possible. Management of invasive plant species is also an increasing challenge. Giant Hogweed has attracted considerable public attention; however management of buckthorn, garlic mustard, wild parsnip is equally important. Efforts are currently focused on parks, publicly accessed spaces but limited in natural areas. A City-wide invasive species management program is recommended in the NHHS.

With the completion and approval of the NH&UFS and the UFMP the City has a comprehensive set of strategies and actions to direct Forestry services over the foreseeable future. The recommendations of these plans should be funded and implemented based on identified priorities and in collaboration with the City's partners in environmental protection and management.

Streetscapes and dense urban areas are challenging environments for trees which are often being outcompeted by other infrastructure and land uses. The use of new technologies in tree planting (e.g. Silva Cell, structural soil) is needed to support tree growth and ensure their sustainability, particularly in streetscape conditions. As well there are opportunities for better interdepartmental co-operation with



respect to street tree planting & the impacts of road widenings. Additional measures that are needed include education and dialogue with other departmental staff, developer education, and the development of consistent and supportive guidelines and standards for tree planting. It was also noted through site observations that better practices for tree planting in parks could be employed. Good maintenance practices and planting techniques can reduce vulnerability to pests. The recommendations of the Urban Forest Management Plan provide some guidance on best practices.

Discussion with Forestry staff over potential impacts from intensification projects indicated that large in-fill homes with increased lot coverage are resulting in a loss of trees and vegetation and increased hard surfaces. These have an impact on overall urban forest cover, loss of habitat, increasing the urban heat island effect, reducing permeability and impacting stormwater drainage. There are examples of policies in other municipalities (e.g. City of Toronto) to curb these impacts which the City should review and consider integrating into its zoning by-laws.

With the completion and approval of the NH&UFS and the UFS the City has a comprehensive set of strategies and actions to direct Forestry services over the foreseeable future. The recommendations of these plans should be funded and implemented based on identified priorities, and in collaboration with the City's partners in environmental protection and management.

It is expected that damage from the 2013 winter ice storm will present unanticipated effort and costs in tree pruning and removal which may require the redeployment of resources and impact the advancement of planned Forestry initiatives.

### Recommendation #47

- ⇒ With the completion and approval of the Natural Heritage and Urban Forest Strategy (NH&UFS) and the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), the City has a comprehensive set of strategies and actions to direct Forestry services over the foreseeable future. The recommendations of these plans should be funded and implemented based on identified priorities, and in collaboration with the City's partners in environmental protection and management.



Credit River





## Glossary

### Accessibility

Accessibility allows people with disabilities to experience what those without disabilities can. Accessibility in Ontario is directed by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the accompanying Integrated Accessibility Standard which addresses both information communication and the built environment.

### Active Transportation (AT)

Refers to any form of human-powered transportation – walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, in-line skating or skateboarding.

### Amenities

A desirable or useful facility of a building or place.

### Beautification

The act of making something more attractive or pleasing.

### Best Practices

Procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective.

### Canopy Cover

The proportion of land area that lies directly beneath the crown or canopy of trees and tall shrubs. The extent of urban forest canopy cover is typically expressed as a percentage of land area. It is generally recognized that increasing canopy cover is an objective of urban forest management.

### Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland Dedication

In new developments or redevelopments, developers and builders will be required to either set aside a certain amount of land for parkland (parkland dedication) or alternatively they pay cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication.

### Character Areas

The term 'Character Areas' has replaced the term 'Planning Districts' in the City of Mississauga.

### City Planning

The planning and control of the construction, growth, and development of a City or town.

### City Structure

City structure is based on a growth management strategy that identifies functional areas for density, height and appropriate growth.

### Community Parks

Community Parks are intended to accommodate recreation interests for the local residential area through provision of sports fields for organized use, space/ equipment for unorganized activities and passive use, preservation of woodlands, multi-purpose year round activities (where feasible), visual relief and aesthetic qualities.

### Destination (City) Parks

Accommodate recreation interests of City residents through the provision of major facilities (e.g. golf courses), the preservation of unique historical, cultural, or significant natural areas. They may also meet the need for community-level parkland or serve an area greater than the City. Destination Parks may serve a unique function such as a waterfront park, major tournament sports park, or special use park.

### **Ecosystem Services**

Ecosystem Services is a term used to describe the processes of nature needed to support the health and survival of humans.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan**

The City of Mississauga has been inspecting parks, street trees, and woodlots and identifying trees for treatment and removal/replacement that were affected by Emerald Ash Borer which is a non-native insect that is damaging ash trees.

### **Encroachment Management Program**

The City of Mississauga has been monitoring the intrusion of property owners on, under or over the ground space of an adjacent City-owned property such as parklands, greenbelts, road allowances and easements.

### **Forestry**

Forestry is the practice of creating, managing, using, and conserving trees and forests and their associated resources to meet desired goals, needs, and values. In the City of Mississauga the Forestry unit is responsible for the for the planting, inspection and maintenance of over one million City owned trees, vegetation management of boulevard areas, the protection and preservation of natural assets through invasive species management, woodland restoration and enforcement of applicable By-laws, and community engagement and education related to forestry.

### **Greenbelt**

The area within the Province of Ontario Greenbelt Plan includes lands within, and builds upon the ecological protections provided by, the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP). It also complements and supports other Provincial level initiatives such as the Parkway Belt West Plan and the Rouge North Management Plan.

### **Greenfield Development**

Greenfield Development occurs on clean and undeveloped land on the urban periphery. Undeveloped land could include rural, agricultural or unused areas outside of the urban boundary.

### **Hedonic Value Analysis**

A model identifying price factors according to the premise that price is determined both by internal characteristics of the goods being sold and external factors affecting it. In this report it refers to the escalation in housing prices that reflect the value of local environmental attributes such as parks and natural areas.

### **Infill Development**

Development that is sited on vacant or undeveloped land within an existing community, and that is enclosed by other types of development.

### **Intensification**

Development or redevelopment of an existing building, site or area within an existing urban area at a density higher than what currently exists.

### **Invasive Species**

Non-native or exotic species that originate from other countries or regions (commonly plants and insects). Those that threaten our environment, economy or society by disrupting local ecosystems are known as "invasive species."

### **Master Plan**

A Master Plan is an evolving long-term planning document. It establishes the framework and key elements of a City reflecting a vision created and adopted in an open process.

**Multiuse Recreational Trail**

A multi-purpose path whether paved or unpaved, designed to permit the use of pedestrians and non-motorized conveyances, except motorized wheelchairs, unless otherwise posted.

**Natural Capital**

Natural Capital is the extension of the economic notion of market-based capital to goods and services relating to the natural environment.

**Natural Heritage System**

A system made up of natural heritage features and areas, linked by natural corridors which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species and ecosystems. (PPS)

**Official Plan**

A statutory document widely used in Ontario which sets out the land use policy directions for long-term growth and development in a municipality.

**Open Space Classification System**

The Open Space Classification System helps to delineate the different types of public lands within the City of Mississauga.

**Pathways**

A route of travel for pedestrians that serves a functional purpose.

**Parks Community Development Coordinator**

The Coordinator is responsible for Community Engagement and liaising with community groups.

**Parks Development**

In the City of Mississauga the Parks Development unit is responsible for the ongoing development of parks as well as upgrades and redevelopment of older parks with aging facilities.

**Parks Operations**

In the City of Mississauga the Parks Operations unit maintains parks, open spaces, play sites, trail systems, sports fields etc.

**Parks Planning**

In the City of Mississauga the Parks Planning unit is responsible for the strategic planning of parks in the municipality.

**Public Engagement**

The collaboration between people and groups who draw on knowledge and resources brought by all involved.

**QR Code**

QR code (abbreviated from Quick Response Code) is the trademark for a type of matrix or two-dimensional barcode. A barcode is an optically machine-readable label that is attached to an item that records and stores information related to that item. Scanning of the QR code with a computer or handheld communication device establishes a link to the information on an internet web-site.

**Recreation**

Activity done for enjoyment when one is not working.

**Recreation Sports Unit**

The Recreation Sports Unit is responsible for allocation and programming of the City's athletic fields.

### **Right-of-Way**

A portion of land granted through an easement or other legal mechanism for transportation purposes, such as for a rail line, highway or roadway. A right-of-way is reserved for the purposes of maintenance or expansion of existing services. Rights-of-way may also be granted to utility companies to permit the laying of utilities such as electric power transmission lines (hydro wires) or natural gas pipelines.

### **Silva Cell**

The Silva Cell is a proprietary, modular suspended pavement system that holds unlimited amounts of lightly compacted soil while supporting traffic loads beneath paving. The healthy soil housed within the Silva Cell serves two important functions: growing large trees and treating stormwater onsite.

### **Street Trees**

Municipally owned trees, typically found within the road right-of-way along roadsides and in boulevards, tree planters (pits) and front yards.

### **Structural Soil**

A growing medium that can be compacted to pavement design and installation requirements while permitting root growth of trees.

### **Stewardship**

In this report, the practice of working to conserve, manage, monitor, advocate for, and/or educate the public about their local environments. This also involves volunteering and partnerships for parks and natural areas.

### **Strategic Plan**

Strategic plans allow municipalities to set out actions to help achieve their vision for the future.

### **Sustainable Planning**

Sustainable planning and development is about meeting the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations.

### **Trail**

A route of travel that provides a recreational experience and may include other modes of transport including bicycles, etc.

### **Transit-oriented City**

The transit oriented City is a mixed-use residential and commercial area designed to maximize access to public transport, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership.

### **Urban**

According to Statistics Canada an urban area in Canada is an area with a population of at least 1,000 people and with no fewer than 400 persons per square km.

### **Urban Forest**

All trees, shrubs, and understory plants, as well as the soil to sustain them, located on public and private property within a given jurisdiction. This includes trees in natural areas as well as trees in more manicured areas such as parks, yards and boulevards.

### **Urban Heat Island Effect**

A developed area having consistently higher temperatures than surrounding areas because of a greater retention of heat from buildings, concrete, and asphalt. Trees, grass and vegetation provide shading and cooling and help to reduce the urban heat island effect.

### **Urban System**

The City of Mississauga's Urban System is comprised of three distinct yet interconnected components – the Green System, City Structure and Corridors.

**Volunteerism**

The use or involvement of volunteer labour especially in community services.

**Wi-Fi®**

A technology that allows an electronic device to exchange data or connect to the internet wirelessly using radio waves.





## Appendix A – Parkland Acquisition and Evaluation Criteria

Rationale		Ranking		Maximum Score Possible	Score
Protects and Enhances Natural Area System					
1	Natural Area (as identified in the Natural Areas Survey) See Note #2	15	Significant Natural Site	15	
		10	Special Management Area / Natural Area		
		5	Linkage		
		0	Not Applicable		
2	Other lands not in NAS, but contributing or having potential to contribute to ecosystem functions. See Note #2.	10	Location contiguous with / proximal to other natural areas with potential for restoration	10	
		5	Location not contiguous with / proximal to other natural areas but with potential for restoration		
		0	Not Applicable		
Contributes to a Connected Open Space System / Trails System					
3	Supports the Waterfront Parks Strategy	15	Waterfront property	15	
		5	Is tangent to a waterfront property		
		0	Not Applicable		
4	Supports trail development	15	Provides a continuous linkage within an existing system	15	
		10	Provides multiple trail opportunities (e.g. a looped trail system)		
		5	Provides for a single trail		
		0	Not applicable		
Provides for Population Growth and/or Sustainable Community Design					
5	Provides park or facility needs for existing / anticipated underserved area	15	Supports population growth, sustainable community design where no / limited dedications exist (based on geographic distance or population provision standard)	15	
		10	Provides parkland / facility / public amenity space in an underserved area (based on geographic distance or population provision standard)		
		0	Not applicable		
6	Protects or Expands function of existing park / enhances existing residential or employment area	10	Protects / expands function of existing parkland (e.g. increases street frontage by more than 50%; significantly increases size of park; significantly enhances existing residential / employment area	10	
		5	Protects / expands function of existing parkland (e.g. increases street frontage by less than 50%; increases size of park; enhances existing residential / employment area		
		0	Not Applicable		

Rationale			Ranking	Maximum Score Possible	Score
Provides for Population Growth and/or Sustainable Community Design (cont'd)					
7	Provides recreational opportunities on a Community / city-wide basis	10	Major recreation (1 lit sports facility, 2 or more unlit sports facilities; or major event / festival / picnic sites)		
		5	Minor outdoor recreation (1 unlit sports field, minor community event / picnic site)		
		0	Not applicable		
			EVALUATION SCORE		

Additional Acquisition Considerations					
8	Commitments made	15	Existing parkland lease	15	
		10	Council approved		
		0	Not applicable		
9	Cost of land / capital investment	0	Low (e.g. non-developable land; agricultural land)	(-15)	
		(-5)	Moderate (e.g. constrained or vacant land, greenbelt within residential properties)		
		(-10)	Moderately high (e.g. active commercial / residential uses, contaminated lands with high remediation costs)		
		(-15)	High (e.g. active commercial / residential uses, contaminated lands with high remediation costs)		
			EVALUATION SCORE		

## Notes:

1. Acquisition Evaluation Criteria and Ranking is to be used for properties to be acquired by purchase only, and evaluation is only applicable to properties that the City has interest in acquiring.
2. If a property scores in Category 1 it cannot score in Category 2.
3. In addition to the scoring, consideration will also be given to opportunities for acquisition of the land, i.e. land that is immediately availability or anticipated to be available in the short to medium term may be ranked higher than lands for which acquisition is desirable but not foreseeable.
4. Land costs will need to be adjusted periodically to reflect market conditions.

## Appendix B: Public Engagement Comments

The following are comments received from the four public engagement sessions held to present the draft Future Directions for Parks and Forestry

Public Comments	Future Directions Parks and Forestry Plan Response
<b>Population Growth / Intensification</b>	
The challenges of intensification were noted. How will new parks be achieved in development/redevelopment areas?	The Plan recommends that the City maintains its current parkland provision standards ( <b>Recommendation #1</b> ) and continue to use all available planning tools to acquire new parkland ( <b>Recommendation #15</b> ). Specific parkland needs in areas of intensification will be determined on an area-specific basis as part of the planning process ( <b>Recommendation #6</b> ).
The parkland acquisition strategy needs to consider lands within the Sixteen Mile Creek (HRCA) sub-watershed.	The City's Parkland Acquisition Strategy ( <b>Recommendation #2</b> ) is a city-wide strategy that addresses the acquisition of open space for a range of purposes including parkland acquisition, trail development and protection and enhancement of the natural heritage system.
<b>Changing Demographics</b>	
Would like to see more water fountains, increased access to washrooms, benches, shade areas, and exercise stations in parks and along trails, to support older adults in particular.	<b>Recommendation #17</b> addresses the provision of these types of amenities. The City completed a Washroom Study in 2004 which contains criteria for locating washrooms in parks and which will continue to be applied to new parks and the updating of older ones ( <b>Recommendation #18</b> ).
There is increasing interest in community gardens. Does the City support them? If so, perhaps there could be a tool lending program.	The City has several community garden locations which are supported through its community affiliate, Ecosource. The City's <i>Living Green Master Plan</i> (2012) supports the development of a community garden in each neighbourhood. Information on community gardens is available on the City's website at: <a href="http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/preserveourparks">http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/preserveourparks</a>
Support for the idea of parks being more inclusive and having open space for walking trails, community gardens, and unprogrammed activities that support social interaction.	<b>Recommendation #17</b> addresses the provision of self-directed activities and amenities that appeal to all ages and abilities and to increase the use of parks as social spaces.

Public Comments	Future Directions Parks and Forestry Plan Response
<b>Park and Trails Development</b>	
Trails are liked and well-used. Would like to see more connections made to and between existing parks, in particular in neighbourhoods with fewer facilities and amenities.	<b>Recommendation #24</b> supports working towards the development of a continuous and interconnected trail system.
Need to consider the increasing interests in cricket, pickleball (outdoor as well as indoor), outdoor volleyball, tennis, disc golf. Facilities should be multi-purpose wherever possible.	The development of new parks and updating of older parks will be aligned with the recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan ( <b>Recommendation #3</b> ). The City will continue to use Placemaking consultation activities to engage the public in park development and redevelopment projects ( <b>Recommendation #19</b> ).
Are there opportunities for the integration of mobile technologies into parks and facilities?	<b>Recommendation #23</b> proposes that the City develop criteria for evaluating suitable locations for the provision of Wi-Fi hot spots in selected destination parks.
Youth would like to see more playground equipment and non-sport activities in parks that are oriented to their age group.	<b>Recommendation #17</b> addresses the provision of these types of amenities in parks. Refer also to the recommendations of the <i>Future Directions Recreation Master Plan</i> .
There is increasing interest in using parks year-round for activities such as snowshoeing, tobogganing, ice skating and cross-country skiing.	<b>Recommendation #32</b> proposes that the City consider how best to optimize winter use of parks and the trail/pathway system in selected locations where there is sufficient community interest, appropriate infrastructure and it is financially viable.
<b>Marketing / Awareness</b>	
The City web site contains excellent information about parks and facilities and many parks are 'gems'. There could be additional information and awareness about the parks system provided in the parks themselves, utilizing technology (e.g. enabled by smartphones).	<b>Recommendation #25</b> speaks to the enhancement of the marketing and publicizing of parks and their associated programs, events and activities, including the potential use of integrated information technology.
<b>Parks Operations and Maintenance</b>	
Consider the addition of covered, animal proof bins such as the ones at Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens in other heavily used parks.	<b>Recommendation #21</b> recommends that the City develop guidelines and standards for landscape and facility design standards to address operational efficiencies and sustainability measures. This could be a consideration.



Public Comments	Future Directions Parks and Forestry Plan Response
Consider adding or increasing lighting in parks and along trails.	The City has an existing Pathway Lighting Policy which determines which parks and trails are lit, considering the balancing of park user needs, safety, CPTED principles, wildlife protection and conflicts with adjacent uses. <b>Recommendation #33</b> recommends reviewing the lighting policy in consideration of potentially extending hours of use in selected parks.
Partnerships / Stewardship	
Would like to strengthen existing partnerships, with school boards in particular, to better utilize existing lands and facilities.	The Plan contains several recommendations around strengthening of existing partnerships with other service providers, including Region of Peel ( <b>Recommendation #37</b> ), and the School Boards ( <b>Recommendation #38</b> ).
Are there opportunities for individual/community sponsorship of park benches?	The City has an existing Bench and Tree Donation program. Information is provided at: <a href="http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/greengifts">http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/greengifts</a>
Stewardship and community partnerships are important. Consider creating volunteer networks that are facility or neighbourhood based to create a strong local base.	The Plan recommends developing a Community Services Integrated Volunteer Program to increase efficiency, and attract a strong and sustainable volunteer base ( <b>Recommendation #39</b> ). This suggestion could be a consideration.
Opportunities for volunteer activities could be advertised and promoted more on the City's website.	The Plan recommends developing a Community Services Integrated Volunteer Program to increase efficiency, and attract a strong and sustainable volunteer base ( <b>Recommendation #39</b> ), and this suggestion could be a consideration.
Consider the potential for corporate sponsorship as a means of improving parks and trails, e.g. pavilions, bridges, shade structures, tree planting, etc.	The City has some existing corporate sponsors and donors. The Plan recommends that the City be proactive in seeking out corporate sponsors ( <b>Recommendation #43</b> ) to assist in park stewardship, and also to investigate the potential for more formalized public-private partnerships in parks development ( <b>Recommendation #44</b> ).
Forestry	
Consider how to increase participation in the One Million Trees program, e.g. through better promotion and targeted participation (schools).	The Plan supports the recommendations of the Natural Heritage System and Urban Forest Strategy which address how to enhance the urban canopy ( <b>Recommendation #47</b> ). <b>Recommendation #25</b> speaks to the enhancement of the marketing and publicizing of parks and their associated programs, events and activities.

Public Comments	Future Directions Parks and Forestry Plan Response
Expansion of the urban canopy needs to be considered.	The Plan supports the recommendations of the Natural Heritage System and Urban Forest Strategy which address how to enhance the urban canopy ( <b>Recommendation #47</b> ).
Plan Implementation	
How will the plan recommendations be implemented and prioritized?	The Future Directions plans are reviewed, prioritized and implemented as part of the Capital Budget process.
Were outstanding recommendations carried forward from the 2009 Plans and are the results being monitored?	Outstanding recommendations from the 2009 Future Directions Master Plans were reviewed and assessed and if still relevant, were modified or carried forward into the 2014 Plans. Implementation is monitored annually and the Plans are reviewed every 5 years.

## Appendix C: Best Practice Examples from Other Municipalities

### Examples in Park Planning and Development from Other Municipalities

City	Case Study and Factors of Success	Best Practices to Consider
<b>Parks Acquisition and Development - Use of Cash-in-Lieu</b>		
City of Toronto, ON	<p>In areas of development / redevelopment the Alternate Requirement clause under Section 42 of the Planning Act provides municipalities with authority to require either land or cash-in-lieu payment up to 1 ha per 300 residential units. In 1999, the City of Toronto adopted an interim policy on the allocation of cash-in-lieu payments that split funds equally between parkland acquisition and parkland development and further between district and City-wide basis (25/25/25/25). This policy remains in place.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the City has introduced a policy for cash-in-lieu payments which states that any payment of cash-in-lieu of land to be conveyed through the alternative rate provision in excess of 5 percent of the site area will be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>acquire</u> parkland that is accessible to the area in which the development is located or to</li> <li>- <u>improve</u> parks in the vicinity of the development.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <p>The City is using cash-in-lieu to target park improvements in specific areas of need, and leveraging City expenditures to obtain private investment. Example: Greenwood Park - The City of Toronto recently installed its first covered artificial ice outdoor hockey rink as part of a \$4 M park renovation that also included a new leisure skating path and improvements to the existing outdoor pool facilities, community garden, playground and baseball diamond. A private sponsor donated \$300,000 towards the rink, with the balance of the funding coming from the City's state of good repair budget and cash-in-lieu fund.<sup>3</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This model for use of cash-in-lieu as derived from application of Section 42 Alternate Requirement clause balances use of funds between parkland acquisition and park development and further between City-wide uses and district level.</li> <li>• It interprets the Planning Act in this regard as allowing use of cash-in-lieu for park improvements and focuses the district portion of the allocation on either parkland acquisition or parks improvement in the vicinity of the development.</li> <li>• The advantage of this approach is that parkland acquisition and improvements are directly tied to areas of population increase.</li> </ul>

City	Case Study and Factors of Success	Best Practices to Consider
<b>Parks Acquisition and Development - Use of Cash-in-Lieu (cont'd)</b>		
City of Ottawa, ON	<p>The City of Ottawa has established the following policies for use of cash-in-lieu funds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cash-in-lieu shall only be used for 'eligible projects' permitted by the Planning Act as further defined by City Policy (see below).</li> <li>2. Cash-in-lieu funds collected through the development review will be allocated as follows: sixty percent (60%) of the funds paid will be allocated to use in the Ward in which the development is located and forty percent (40%) of the funds paid will be allocated for City-wide purposes.</li> </ol> <p><u>Eligible project means</u> (note third bullet allows for park improvements):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acquisition of land for public park purposes</li> <li>- Capital projects for the development of new public parks which may include any associated site preparation and drainage; the provision of park facilities, such as, play equipment, sports fields and pathways; or the provision of recreation facilities, such as community centres, indoor pools and arenas.</li> <li>- Capital projects to increase the capacity of existing public parks and/or recreation facilities to accommodate more intensive public use; the provision of additional park facilities (e.g. play equipment, spray pads and site furniture); and /or the provisions of additional recreation facilities (e.g. the expansion or upgrading of program spaces in community centres, indoor pools and arenas.</li> <li>- The non-growth component of growth-related capital projects, for Parks Development and Recreation Facilities, identified in the City's Development Charges Background Study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This model for use of cash-in-lieu derived from application of Section 42, balances use of funds between parkland acquisition and park development, and further between City-wide uses and district level.</li> <li>• It interprets the Planning Act in this regard as allowing use of cash-in-lieu for park improvements such as play equipment, spray pads and site furnishings, as well as recreation facility improvements.</li> </ul>

City	Case Study and Factors of Success	Best Practice to Adapt
<b>Parks Acquisition and Development - Use of Planning Tools</b>		
City of Toronto, ON	<p><b>Canoe Landing Park</b>, an 8 ha park in the Concord Adex master planned development City-Place (total area of 18 ha), on the Toronto Railway Lands. As a brownfield restoration (railway lands) the land-base for the park was able to be secured through parkland dedication. The park features two multi-purpose sports fields, a water play feature, pathways, seating areas, and public art. As part of the Subdivision Agreement the developer was responsible for the design and construction of the basic park. Park upgrades which included a water play, artificial turf and sports field lighting, seat walls and public art components developed by the City using Section 37 funds (\$930,000 of \$4M collected). The approach of combining all available planning tools in the development of Canoe Landing Park has resulted in an outstanding public space. It exceeds typical community park standards in providing both recreation facilities and innovations and is an amenity for both residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The example demonstrates use of multiple planning tools including Parkland Dedication, Subdivision Agreement, and Use of Section 37 Funds.</li> <li>Section 37 of the Planning Act which pertains to Height and Density Bonusing affords additional development rights in exchange for the construction or installation of public realm improvements (e.g. transit shelters, public art) and/or new community facilities (parks, day-cares, community centres). <i>Note:</i> The City of Mississauga is unable to apply Section 37 policies in the City Centre area as there are currently no height restrictions in the zoning by-law.</li> </ul>
<b>Prioritizing Park Development / Redevelopment</b>		
City of Toronto, ON	<p>The <b>City of Toronto Parks Plan</b> (2013-2018) includes comprehensive actions that will assist in prioritizing park improvements. The following are key noteworthy actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment to undertaking an <b>inventory of park improvement needs and a 20 year plan for implementation</b>. The implementation plan will consider population data and principles of equity to assist in prioritization.</li> <li>Commitment to increasing shade in parks, using <b>'heat vulnerability' mapping to identify and prioritize locations for tree planting and shade structures</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These approaches use analytics and quantifiable data to inform the prioritization of park improvements, allowing better informed and defensible decisions.</li> </ul>



City	Case Study and Factors of Success	Best Practice to Consider
<b>Prioritizing Park Development / Redevelopment (cont'd)</b>		
City of Minneapolis, MN, USA	<p>The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) prioritizes the replacement and repair of its facilities or amenities through its <b>Capital Improvement Program (CIP)</b> that guides long-term investment and rehabilitation in the park system. The Parks and Recreation Board of Minneapolis, is currently preparing building on trends and recommendations identified in its Comprehensive Plan for parks and recreation facilities to develop a series of detailed parks and recreation <b>Activity Plans</b> that examine each facility type, and identify new facilities and upgrades to existing facilities.</p> <p>An Activity Team, reviews a group of similar activities such as court sports, and evaluates programs and facilities in the park system that support those activities. This evaluation then informs the development of a plan to provide a sustainable level of service for the activity.</p> <p>The plans are used to prioritize decisions and to inform the Capital Improvement Program (capital budget). Current/past plans are a Field Sports Plan, Court Sports Plan, Skate Park Plan and Urban Agriculture Plan. Future areas of focus include a winter recreation plan, and an environmental program plan. The plans are prepared with extensive community and sports group input, together with analysis of trends, community demographics, and programs and infrastructure assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This approach moves away from per capita standards to identify sustainable service levels based on other criteria including community interest, socio- demographics, and infrastructure assessment.</li> <li>• The detailed evaluation which builds on the recommendation of a parks and recreation master plan level study allows an informed decision about what a sustainable level of service is for the activity. It replaces per capita standards with an approach that acknowledges that the City is not homogeneous and interests and participation levels in activities differ by community.</li> <li>• The outcomes and decisions are directly tied to the City's capital improvement program to guide long-term development and rehabilitation.</li> </ul>

## Partnership Models in Other Municipalities

City	Partnership Model and Factors of Success	Best Practice to Consider
City of Ottawa, ON	<p>The Ottawa <b>Community Partnership Major/Minor Capital Programs</b> supports major capital improvements and additions to facilities related to parks and recreation on a cost-sharing basis between the City and community groups, as well as minor capital improvements to parks, recreation, and cultural facilities. For Capital Program, the project may relate to an asset that is owned by the City, or operated by a community partner who delivers service on behalf of the City. The program applies to capital programs for new facilities, renovations and expansions. The program requires that proposals be supported by a business plan that can guarantee the long-term sustainability and operation of the facility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This funding and partnership model enables community groups to support the development of, or improvements to capital assets, including either existing or new specialized facilities.</li> <li>• The program reduces the City's financial contributions and leverages funding from other sources.</li> </ul>
City of Toronto, ON	<p><b>Parks People</b> is a not-for-profit organization with goals to serve as the catalyst for better parks across Toronto, based on the premise that when residents get involved, parks get better. The organization is working with 100 park friends groups, City workers and other partners to plant trees and add gardens, fix broken infrastructure and get more people out to parks. The organization presently has several major funding partners including: Evergreen Foundation; the Home Depot Foundation; and the W. Garfield Weston Foundation. As an example the W. Garfield Weston Foundation is partnering with Parks People by providing up to \$5 million in aggregate for Toronto's parks over a period of three-years for "transformational projects that enhance Toronto's greenspaces and build innovative new partnership models. The program is designed to generate a broad range of ideas and encourage private-public partnerships in conserving and sustaining parks in the City of Toronto". Parks People also provides 'how to' best practice and guidelines for community initiatives such as building an outdoor ice rink.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This funding and partnership model encourages private investment in public parks, and enables community groups to generate and be involved in park improvement projects that range from facility repair to transformational projects.</li> <li>• The organization brings together community-based ideas and efforts for local park improvements with funding from sponsors.</li> </ul>
City of San Francisco, CA, USA	<p><b>The San Francisco Parks Alliance (SFPA)</b> is a partnership that includes the City, Neighbourhood Parks Council, the San Francisco Parks Trust, and resident representatives. The Alliance uses a P3 Funding Model to obtain funds from grants and donors for park redevelopment, and in turn provides funds to community groups and the City. Money that is provided to the City is used to enhance and improve existing parks, open spaces, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The model leverages partnerships through a single credible and well-regarded community-based organization with the resources, leadership, and complementary skills and objectives to mobilize community efforts.</li> </ul>

City	Partnership Model and Factors of Success	Best Practice to Consider
	recreational areas. The Alliance is well regarded and possesses strong credibility within the community. Through its community building programs and partnerships, the Alliance has developed a strong relationship with community groups, residents, and corporations. SFPA has the resources to lead philanthropic efforts and the capabilities of attracting sizeable private donations due to their profile and ability to communicate the positive benefits of parks development. Engagement is undertaken in partnership with 100 community groups to engage residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through its policy program SFPA provides qualitative community-based research on park user needs to add to quantitative City data, to assist in making informed decisions about development/redevelopment in the parks and green open spaces.</li> <li>Policy development and decision making is data driven, and incorporates qualitative and quantitative community based research data to help inform municipal expenditures in parks.</li> </ul>
New York City, NY, USA	<b>The Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation</b> is a public private partnership that includes multiple governmental agencies. A <b>Park Improvement District</b> was established surrounding the park as part of redevelopment activities in the area. The partnership model was successful in creating a financially self-sustaining park that minimizes the City resources for annual operation and maintenance or eventual capital improvements and replacements. Messaging was communicated to the businesses within the district with regards to the benefits that the park would bring to local businesses and maintenance and operating expenses were recovered by ground rent, pilot project fees, and other revenue sources throughout the first phase of construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The model towards partnerships with private sector for community improvements, including parks, is increasing in the United States and is emerging in Canada. The community improvement districts include public spaces and commercial areas and increases the responsibility of businesses in maintaining public spaces.</li> <li>The model employs a diverse range of potential revenue-generating strategies.</li> </ul>

City	Partnership Model and Factors of Success	Best Practice to Consider
City of Calgary, AL	<b>Parks Foundation Calgary (PFC), Calgary, ON</b> Foundation Calgary (PFC) is a non-profit organization established in 1985, as an agent for The City of Calgary, to facilitate the creation, protection and enhancement of the City's parks and green spaces, and encouragement of amateur sport. Since its inception in 1985 the PFC has overseen \$150 M in capital development and improvements, and sport recreation program expansion. The foundation is overseen by a volunteer Board of Governors, with several committees overseeing the allocation of donated funds for specific project types, e.g. playgrounds, horticultural programs in parks, bench donations, and amateur sport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This model employs a single window approach to coordinating and allocating donations, contributions and volunteer efforts targeted for parks and recreation. The committee, which includes City staff and community members, prioritizes projects in areas of most need. The foundation oversees City-wide initiatives (greenways, trails) as well as grants to community groups for projects, which are accompanied by volunteer involvement.</li> </ul>
City of Toronto, ON	Toronto has a <b>Partnership Development Unit</b> within the Parks, Forestry & Recreation Department. The Partnership Development Unit helps grassroots community groups such as Parks People with their fundraising projects, and works with donors from corporations, foundations and philanthropists. The Partnership Development unit has successfully leveraged millions of dollars for parks, recreation and urban forestry projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The model makes it easier for donors and sponsors to channel their contributions through one organization.</li> <li>The model enables residents and community groups to directly support identified City-building projects.</li> </ul>
Town of Apex, NC, USA	The community of Apex, North Carolina has significant demand for recreational programs due to an increase of children and adolescents in the past 10 years. To meet this demand, the parks and recreation department uses school facilities to deliver parks and recreation programs and services in the form of comprehensive <b>Joint use agreements with the county school district</b> . Long-term agreements are written for 25 year terms, are available only to municipalities, and involve only the use of outdoor fields and facilities. Under long-term agreements, municipalities use school facilities at no cost during non-school hours in exchange for maintenance of the outdoor fields and areas designated within the agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The model shows that for joint use agreements to work there must be cooperation and effort by all parties involved, clearly stated objectives, and the pursuit of mutually beneficial outcomes.</li> <li>The model recognizes the importance of positive relationships as being critical to the success of joint use. Having a shared vision and acknowledgement of the greater public health benefit can serve to elevate the value of joint use agreements and guide how they are implemented.</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> City of Toronto Staff Report: Parks, Forestry and Recreation – Capital Program – the Backlog in Needed Repairs Continues to Grow, January 23, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Staff Report for Action on Parkland Acquisitions from 1998-2009

<sup>3</sup> Scrivener, Leslie. *Greenwood Park gets a needed makeover*. Toronto Star, Sunday November 24, 2013, p. A8