



# Executive Summary

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## City of Pickering Recreation & Parks Master Plan



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## The Master Planning Context

Pickering's recreation and parks system is essential to the well-being of its residents. Recreation facilities, parks and the wealth of quality programs that take place within them provide Pickering's residents with countless physical, psychological, economic and environmental benefits. By the year 2026, the number of people living in Pickering is projected to grow from 96,000 at present to more than 135,000 persons. With nearly 40,000 more people (33,000 of whom are forecasted to be located in Seaton) expected to arrive in Pickering over this time, a plan is needed for recreation and parks services to keep pace. A strategy is also required to respond to the changing interests and abilities of residents given that Pickering continues to become increasingly diverse in terms of people of different ages, incomes, cultural backgrounds and abilities/disabilities.

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan guides decision-making to the year 2026 for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, parks, and related programs and services provided by the City of Pickering. The Vision set out for parks and recreation services in Pickering is as follows:

### Vision for Recreation and Parks in Pickering

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

Over 500 people directly participated in consultations held throughout the master planning period, many of whom spoke on behalf of hundreds of others in their households and/or community organizations. Their ideas collectively helped shape the Master Plan through their involvement in public input sessions, pop-up events, surveys, workshops, interviews and written submissions. The most common themes arising out of the consultations were:

- Residents enjoy the local recreation and parks system, most notably the Pickering Recreation Complex, the types of programs and services available to them, as well as Pickering's waterfront, parks, and green spaces.
- Making sure programs are available for a wide range of age groups as well as for people that have interests beyond sport (e.g. programs for families, arts and crafts, individual health and fitness).
- Enhancing the parks system by expanding the trail system, investing in the Pickering waterfront, and improving various amenities (such as shade areas, garbage bins, seating, washrooms, etc.).
- Recreation and parks opportunities should be inclusive and accessible to all members of the community.

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan contains 77 recommendations to be implemented over the next ten years. The following is a synopsis of the most pressing actions for the City to undertake, listed in no particular order:

## **Aligning with the Framework for Recreation in Canada**

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

The majority of the Master Plan’s recommendations align with one or more the F.R.C.’s goals which are:

- **Active Living:** Foster active living through physical recreation
- **Inclusion and Access:** Increase inclusion and access to recreation for population that face constraints to participation
- **Connecting People and Nature:** Help people connect to nature through recreation
- **Supportive Environments:** Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities
- **Recreation Capacity:** Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field

## **Recreation Facilities and Parks for the Seaton Community**

In the years to come, Pickering is set to undergo substantial growth as a result of the planned developments in the Seaton community, as identified through the Central Pickering Development Plan. Presently an undeveloped area occupied by very few people, Seaton could ultimately be home to 70,000 residents with nearly half of these (33,000) expected to live there by the year 2026. As a result of this growth, greater pressures will be placed on all of Pickering’s recreation and parks system compared to years past, but particularly in the Seaton community given that most services are now located in Pickering’s established areas to the south.

The majority of growth-related recommendations arising out of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan are a result of residential developments in the Seaton community, which accounts for over three-quarters of forecasted population growth in Pickering during the master planning period. To address the needs of the more than 33,000 new residents expected in Seaton by the year 2026, the Master Plan recommends the following strategy for recreation and park services in Seaton.

### **Lands for Parks and Recreation Facilities**

Through the approved Neighbourhood Plan for Seaton and resulting draft plans of subdivision, the Seaton community will be served by 90 hectares (223 acres) of municipal parkland upon its ultimate build-out that is distributed through 1 City Park (formerly known as District Park), 4 Community Parks, 12 Neighbourhood Parks, and 27 Village Greens. These lands will provide opportunity through which to address needs for active and passive forms of recreation. Within the master planning period, 37% of the area's parkland (34.8 hectares or 86.1 acres) is expected to be conveyed to the City.

Official Plan Amendment No. 22 designates lands for a recreation facility southeast of Whitevale Road and Sideline 24. It is at this location where a new multi-use recreation facility, as described in subsequent paragraphs, is proposed to be located. Beyond the year 2027, land at the northeast corner of Brock Road and Whitevale Road have been designated for a second indoor community recreation facility.

### **A New Multi-Use Recreation Facility**

When Pickering's population reaches approximately 120,000, anticipated around the year 2021, the City should consider building a multi-use recreation facility at the Community Park identified through the OPA 22 located southeast of Whitevale Road and Sideline 24. This new recreation facility is envisioned to be a major community hub for recreation activity with sport-friendly design as well as for other civic uses that may be rationalized through separate analyses. The multi-use community centre would contain the following recreational components:

- **Indoor Aquatics Centre** employing a multi-tank template containing a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular pool and a free-form leisure pool in order to facilitate a diverse range of aquatic programming. The leisure pool would optimally contain features such as zero-depth entry, water play features, and also be designed to accommodate lessons for younger age groups as well as aquatic fitness programs.
- **Fitness Centre** containing aerobic and free-weight equipment, group fitness studio, and complementary amenities such as saunas and hot tubs to complement the indoor aquatic centre, particularly from a therapeutic programming perspective. Opportunities to integrate digital media systems and the latest technologies to enhance the health and wellness experience for users should also be contemplated, including the infrastructure space required to adapt to new technologies.

- **Full Size Double gymnasium** designed to accommodate regional level competitions (at a minimum) and to be subdivided into smaller gyms to allow simultaneous programming to take place. The gym floor should be lined in a manner that allows sports such as (but not limited to) basketball, volleyball, and pickleball to take place while ensuring sufficient playout lines between the court and surrounding walls.
- **Indoor Walking Track** located either within the fitness centre or suspended above the gymnasium via a second floor access. Most designs employ a two or three lane configuration with elastomeric resilient surface and lane lines which is sufficient for general public use (walking and light jogging). If designed to encourage distance running or sprinting, other sport-friendly design features would need to be considered – along with their added costs - including length of the track, more durable and cushioned surfacing, banked corners, and increasing the number of lanes.
- **Dedicated Youth Space** through which components should be designed in consultation with local youth and teens, embodying the City’s successful philosophies that have resulted in it being recognized as a Platinum-level Youth Friendly Community. At an early stage, a youth space would benefit from areas oriented to hanging out, accessing multi-media equipment, study space, etc.
- **Multi-Purpose Program Rooms** designed to accommodate general interest programs, community rentals for gatherings and meetings, arts and craft activities, and potentially some active living programs to relieve pressures on the group fitness studio. Design features should consider flexibility of space through durable flooring, appropriate ceiling heights, integration of audio-visual equipment for meetings, and/or storage. One multi-purpose program room should be designed in a manner to be re-purposed to dedicated older adult space, should it be required over the long-term, as there is insufficient evidence of demand at present to warrant the provision of older adult space.

The ultimate design of the facility components, including the features contained within them, should be confirmed through the detailed design stage that would likely be initiated sometime around the year 2020. As part of that architectural design phase, subsequent community engagement would be beneficial to ensure that the ultimate community centre design is reflective of public opinions as well as best practices in sport-friendly features, barrier-free accessibility, safety, and functionality. The community centre should also be designed under the premise that it would be expanded through a second phase of construction thereby leaving sufficient room on the site to add a multi-pad arena, if supported by a mid-term Arena Provision Strategy.

Integration of a splash pad within that Community Park would allow residents to benefit from the community centre’s washrooms, change rooms and parking while reinforcing the site as a year-round destination of activity. Depending upon site availability, inclusion of sports fields should also be considered as should a library branch in recognition of the Pickering Public Libraries’ 10-Year Facilities Plan (2010) that recommends a District

Branch to serve Seaton (an updated library assessment would be required given library services are not in the scope of this Master Plan). Ideally, the community centre would be connected to the City's trails/active transportation network and would be serviced by transit to maximize its accessibility.

## **Sports Field Development**

Seaton provides an opportunity to enhance the City's supply of sports fields given its relatively undeveloped state, more so than areas of Pickering that are more established and land acquisition for fields is more difficult or cost-prohibitive. The following sports fields are recommended for the Seaton community:

- **Rectangular Fields** consisting of one lit artificial full size field and four lit natural grass fields at a future Community Park(s). In addition, four unlit natural grass fields should be constructed at future Community and/or Neighbourhood Parks. The Master Plan also recommends removing two existing soccer fields from Brockridge Community Park in South Pickering and relocating them to a Neighbourhood Park(s) in Seaton. Collectively, this strategy would add 11 soccer fields in the Seaton community that would provide the "unlit equivalent" of 14 fields due to the proposed use of artificial turf and field lighting systems that extend the playing capacity of the fields.
- **Ball Diamonds** consisting of two lit softball diamonds co-located at a Community Park to facilitate simultaneous games and tournaments, along with two unlit hardball diamonds at a Neighbourhood Park (unless there is sufficient room at the Community Park proposed for softball diamonds that would allow the City to create a ball diamond complex). Collectively, this strategy would add 4 ball diamonds in the Seaton community that would provide the "unlit equivalent" of 5 diamonds due to the proposed field lighting systems.
- **Cricket Pitch** requirements are such that Pickering requires one venue over the master planning period and would thus be addressed by the pitch at Alex Robertson Park. However, the existing cricket pitch is undersized and its user groups are looking for selected improvements to enhance the playing experience but it would be risky for the City to invest in its existing pitch without a long-term guarantee of access given it sits on leased land. Removing the cricket pitch from Alex Robertson Park and relocating it to a future park in Seaton is an opportunity worth considering provided that its planned base of parkland can accommodate a pitch, quantifiable demand for cricket is demonstrated, and that the cultural makeup of Seaton creates a sufficient market for cricket.

## **A Recreation Services Plan for Seaton**

A number of other recreation and parks amenities have been recommended for the Seaton including a community garden (contingent on a willing community organization contributing towards its general maintenance and operation), six tennis courts distributed across three parks, three basketball courts at up to three parks, and a minimum of eleven

playgrounds with the intent that all residential areas have access to a playground within an 800 metre service radius unobstructed by major pedestrian barriers. In addition to the splash pad recommended at the multi-use recreation facility site, an additional splash pad should be provided at a future Village Green as part of an ongoing discussion with the land development industry.

Upon the Seaton community beginning to develop more robustly and attaining a critical mass of population, the City should develop a Recreation Service Plan specifically for Seaton in order to be proactive about the programming and service needs of the increased population. At a minimum, this would include a communications strategy to promote existing City of Pickering recreation and parks services, an approach to providing/enabling the appropriate range of services in Seaton, and engaging residents to form self-governing groups to bolster community capacity in supplementing the number and type of recreation activities in the area.

## **Constructing a Seniors' and Youth Centre in Downtown Pickering**

With greater demands for housing throughout the G.T.A., Pickering and many area municipalities are creatively exploring ways to increase residential densities within established areas. Known as infill or intensification-related development, Pickering is planning ways to accommodate new residents within its City Centre and create a livable, vibrant environment that provides quality civic services including through recreation and parks. Although much of intensification related growth will occur beyond the master planning period, Pickering has been experiencing growth in the City Centre and the number of persons living there is projected to increase by 73% over the course of the master planning period.

It is important for the City to proactively provide recreation and parks amenities in established areas where significant growth is expected to occur, largely because developable land is at a premium and often expensive to purchase or redevelop. The most notable recommendation of the Master Plan as it relates to the City Centre is to construct a new Seniors' and Youth Centre, re-affirming previous analyses completed by the City. The vision for a new Seniors' and Youth Community Centre is to be located adjacent to the Pickering Civic Centre and Library, and would effectively replace the 70 year old East Shore Community Centre. The adjacency of the proposed facility to the Central Library should also provide unique and supportive programming opportunities to the benefit of youth and seniors.

Based on an evaluation of recreation space needs through the Master Plan, the Seniors' and Youth Community Centre should include the following recreational components:

- **Dedicated Spaces for Older Adults and Youth**, designed in consultation with residents representing those respective age categories and embodying Age-Friendly and Youth-Friendly design philosophies. Productivity areas such as computer or multi-media labs should also be considered as should "green rooms" for sound and video editing, music studios, lounges and games rooms, etc.

- **Full Size Gymnasium** that is lined in a manner that allows sports such as (but not limited to) basketball, volleyball, badminton and pickleball to take place while ensuring sufficient playout lines between the court and surrounding walls.
- **Multi-Purpose Program Rooms** designed to accommodate general interest programs, gatherings and meetings, arts and craft activities, and potentially some active living programs to relieve pressures on the gymnasium. Design features should consider flexibility of space through durable flooring, appropriate ceiling heights, integration of audio-visual equipment for meetings, and/or storage.

Timing for construction should take place within the next five years given the East Shore Community Centre's condition and its ongoing challenges in meeting community programming demands. Once constructed is complete, all programming from East Shore should be shifted to the new community centre after which the City should investigate options to repurpose or decommission the East Shore Community Centre.

## **Connecting Physical Activities to the Outdoors**

Parks and natural area lands are an oasis within urban environments, providing the connection to nature and green space that humans instinctively crave. Increasing urbanization has heightened the role of parkland in providing important recreation, cultural and social opportunities for people particularly as urbanization and busy lifestyles is resulting in many people not getting outdoors enough. There is literature to suggest a disconnection to nature can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, aggression, sadness and negative emotions. Furthermore, children are given fewer opportunities to engage in outdoor and 'risky' play compared previous generations which has led to less time being spent outdoors and more time spent indoors engaged in sedentary behaviours (and most likely in front of screens).

The Master Plan emphasizes the "reconnection" to the outdoors through parks and recreation experiences. From recommendations aimed at bolstering parkland supplies and quality of design to constructing sports fields, hard surface courts, and splash pads, the intent is to make the outdoors part of the daily physical activity regimen among Pickering residents. Also of note is a recommendation for the City to explore 'adventure' playground designs that centred upon balance, agility and replication of what today constitutes 'risky' environments despite it not being perceived as such in the past. Beyond the provision of facilities is the 'animation' of outdoor public spaces so that multi-seasonal program opportunities can be facilitated formally or informally through use of sensory gardens, areas for yoga and tai chi, integration of small berms for interval training, etc.

## **Continue Collaborations and the Pursuit of Partnerships**

The City works with its partners to provide the highest level of service to the public while considering sharing of resources and reducing duplication. The City is open to working with community partners and has numerous arrangements in place. In all partnership arrangements, specifications and requirements must ensure that the partner respects and

aligns with the Department's vision, mandate, values, strategic priorities and service standards. The value in seeking out partnerships to provide a net benefit to both organizations and essentially reduce costs to the municipality. The City should continue to maximize partnerships with community agencies to broaden recreation and parks opportunities to the public with consideration given to cost containment and other community benefits.

## **Pricing Programs and Services to be Fair and Sustainable**

The City of Pickering's pricing of rates and fees for parks and recreation services is, for the most part, based on historical pricing plus inflation and a comparison to the market. This approach relies on historical practices and does not reflect cost recovery based on the true cost of the service. Current best practices in recreation pricing suggest that a municipality first understand the cost to deliver the service including both direct and indirect costs which can then be used to determine where efficiencies could be gained. A Pricing Policy could then be developed to determine the value of the program or service to individual and community good and the percentage of the program or service that must be cost recoverable to ensure fiscal sustainability over time.

The City will need to undertake work in order to set a defensible pricing policy. It is strongly recommended that staff work to fully understand and define the true costs of programs and services so that a subsequent pricing policy can outline what percentage of the costs should be recovered through rates and fees.

## **Summary of the Master Plan's Recommendations**

The following is a summary of all 77 recommendations contained in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, categorized by facility and service delivery areas of focus.

### **Parks System**

1. Adopt a new parkland hierarchy system as part of a future Official Plan Review or amendment, based on the framework identified in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan to provide greater clarity and accuracy towards locational characteristics, service area, permitted uses, and other details to guide the development and redevelopment of parkland in Pickering.
2. On an opportunity basis, pursue opportunities to acquire parkland over and above the 34.8 hectares planned for acquisition by the year 2026 to address the needs of areas under growth pressures and service gaps, through use of parkland development strategies identified in this Master Plan. The acquisition and development of future parkland shall have regard for the natural heritage system and as necessary, consultation with the T.R.C.A. is encouraged.

3. During the next Official Plan Review, consider the City's parkland dedication policies to ensure that they are consistent with the amended Planning Act as a result of Bill 73.
4. To supplement parkland dedications, utilize alternative parkland acquisition tools to enhance future parkland opportunities. Potential strategies include partnerships (e.g., T.R.C.A., school board, Hydro One, etc.), land purchase, or other methods described in this Master Plan. Emphasis should be placed on securing suitably sized and quality parkland parcels oriented towards recreational uses.
5. Continue to monitor the use and evaluate opportunities to expand the number of garden plots available at Diana, Princess of Wales Park as surrounding areas intensify residential lands. Any expansion of the community garden should be undertaken in conjunction with the Valley Plentiful Community Gardeners. The City should also investigate the potential to provide parking near the garden plots to provide gardeners with convenient and accessible access.
6. Establish a second community garden in Seaton contingent on seeking a willing community organization that will commit human and/or financial resources towards general maintenance and operation of the community garden. In consultation with residents and community stakeholders, a suitable site in Seaton should be selected, with consideration given to being centrally located, co-located with other recreation and park facilities, available amenities (e.g., water), and other site criteria identified by the City.
7. Monitor the usage and carrying capacity of the Grand Valley Park leash free area. Should the City receive significant requests and supporting study determines the need for additional leash free area, investigate appropriate locations and potential partnerships at that time.
8. With respect to the planning of active transportation infrastructure, Pickering's Integrated Transportation Master Plan should enhance existing recreational and utilitarian connections, linking future parks with the existing network, active transportation design, supporting amenities, maintenance, accessibility, and other relevant land uses/destinations as identified by the City. Alignment with T.R.C.A.'s Trails Strategy (which is currently being completed) is also encouraged.

## **Indoor Recreation Facilities**

9. Detailed design of future indoor recreation facilities should be undertaken with an architect and in consultation with stakeholders and the public to define the allocation of space by component, confirm space needs, and to identify required supporting amenities (including sport-friendly features).

10. Construct a new multi-use recreation facility in Seaton as Pickering's population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after 2021), which should include a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular indoor pool and separate warm water leisure pool, fitness centre and studio, full size double gymnasium, walking track, dedicated youth space, and multi-purpose spaces.
11. Construct a Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in Pickering's City Centre within the next five years to replace the aging East Shore Community Centre. The new Community Centre should include a full size gymnasium with an elevated walking track, dedicated spaces for older adults and youth, and multi-purpose spaces.
12. Contingent upon the construction of the Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in Pickering's City Centre, investigate options to repurpose or decommission the East Shore Community Centre due to its advanced age and deteriorating condition, which has limited the functionality to program space optimally to meet the needs of residents.
13. Design the recommended multi-use recreation facility in the Seaton area in a manner that allows it to be expanded to include a multi-pad arena through a second construction phase, contingent upon findings of a comprehensive arena provision strategy (Recommendation #14) undertaken at a future time.
14. Prepare an Arena Provision Strategy, or a comprehensive arena assessment as part of the scheduled 5-Year Update to the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, to determine whether a net expansion to the City's supply of ice pads and/or relocation of an existing ice pad(s) is warranted based on prevailing market forces and arena operating conditions.
15. Construct one indoor pool as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton as the population reaches approximately 120,000 (forecasted after the year 2021). The indoor pool should contain a 25 metre, 6 lane rectangular pool and a separate warm water leisure tank to support swimming instruction, aquafit, therapy, and more.
16. Develop a full size gymnasium as a part of the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and a full size double gymnasium as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. Both gymnasium locations should be designed with sport friendly features in mind.
17. Construct a fitness centre as part of a future multi-use community centre in Seaton. A group fitness studio(s) should be included to support the delivery of health and wellness programming. Supporting amenities should be considered including, but not limited to, flooring types, mirror walls, drinking fountain stations, storage space, and opportunities to integrate digital media systems and the latest technologies to enhance the health and wellness experience for users (including the provision of infrastructure space).

18. Integrate outdoor fitness equipment in existing or future parks. Potential locations include active parks, along trail routes and/or the waterfront, and in neighbourhoods with concentrations of lower income households and/or older adults.
19. Incorporate an indoor walking track as a part of the proposed multi-use recreation facility in Seaton and at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering.
20. A dedicated children and youth centre should be included as a part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. The provision of a new children and youth space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering is also supported by this Master Plan. The integration of dedicated children and youth space should include various space arrangements depending on the intended use and function such as a lounge, games room, multi-media room, general activity space, and shared kitchen. Further consultation with children and youth is encouraged to identify and confirm space requirements.
21. This Master Plan supports the provision of a new older adult space at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre in south Pickering. The provision of space should include, but not limited to, a games room and lounge, computer room, and activity room. Consultation with the public is recommended to identify and confirm facility space requirements.
22. While the integration of dedicated older adult space at the proposed multi-use community centre in Seaton is not recommended at this time, the facility's meeting and/or program rooms should be designed with the potential to be converted to older adult space, should it be required in the future. The City should monitor requests and re-evaluate the need for dedicated older adult space during the next Master Plan period.
23. Multi-purpose rooms should be integrated at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre and as part of a multi-use community centre in Seaton. These spaces should be flexibly designed to accommodate a broad range of programming opportunities that respond to community needs and to be converted to other facility uses (if required). Supporting facility amenities may include, but not be limited to, partition walls, storage, sinks, kitchen, and other ancillaries staff deem necessary.
24. Investigate strategies to enhance utilization of the indoor tennis courts such as offering free or low-cost clinics/programs on a temporary basis, engage outdoor tennis clubs to increase usage during the winter months, or other strategies identified by the City.

25. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball on the gymnasium floor at the proposed Seniors' and Youth Community Centre, the proposed multi-use facility in Seaton, and at the existing indoor tennis courts at the Pickering Recreation Complex. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas with other court markings.
26. Repurpose a minimum of one racquetball court at the Pickering Recreation Complex for other uses such as additional group fitness space. Alternatively, creative strategies should be explored to offer non-traditional recreation activities on a temporary basis such as virtual reality simulators (e.g., golf, digital fitness), rock-climbing wall, or another activity. Potential repurposing options should be guided by input from the public.
27. Continue to monitor the demand for indoor turf facilities over the master planning period, including the collection of utilization data, to determine if/when a second facility is needed.

## **Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

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

- b. Two unlit hardball diamonds at a Neighbourhood Park unless there is sufficient room at the Community Park proposed for softball diamonds and the City intends to create a ball diamond complex in Seaton.
- 31. Evaluate opportunities to remove, relocate, and/or repurpose surplus ball diamonds, with consideration given to the following:
  - a. Convert underutilized or antiquated softball diamonds, as appropriate, to hardball diamonds to relieve pressures at existing hardball diamonds.
  - b. Repurpose the non-permitted ball diamond at Maple Ridge Park to an intermediate soccer field, thereby creating a multi-field location suitable for simultaneous and tournament play, given the presence of an intermediate soccer field already on site.
- 32. Engage the Durham District School Board and the Durham Dolphins Football Club to explore ways to collaboratively improve the playing experience at Beverly Morgan Park.
- 33. As a long term strategy, explore opportunities to relocate the cricket pitch at Alex Robertson Park. The relocation of the cricket pitch should be subject to demand and the ability to identify a park (preferably in Seaton) with sufficient space to accommodate a new pitch and supporting amenities to be determined in consultation with the Cricket Club.
- 34. Construct a two tennis court pod at a minimum of three future parks in Seaton and, if feasible, at Rouge Valley Park.
- 35. Engage the neighbourhood tennis clubs to discuss ways in which to improve the local sustainability of the sport, improve operational efficiencies of the City and the Clubs, and explore potential amalgamation of Tennis Clubs and consolidation of the club-court supply.
- 36. Delineate playing boundaries for pickleball at a select number of the new tennis courts recommended in this Master Plan. Consideration should be given to using a distinct boundary colour to differentiate playing areas in order to avoid confusion between the two sports. Preferred locations should include parks that are within proximity to high concentrations of older adults or along major transportations/transit corridors for ease of access.
- 37. Construct two basketball courts at Beechlawn Park and Creekside Park to reconcile service gaps in south Pickering.

38. Evaluate and identify future parks in Seaton to construct three basketball courts. Site considerations should be given to availability and proximity to schools and other recreation facilities used by youth, walkability, visibility, and other criteria to be identified by the City.
39. At a minimum, future basketball courts should be designed to be full size basketball courts with two posts, hoops, and surface paint markings. Additional features for consideration include, but are not limited to, seating, shade, paint markings for other hard surface activities, landscaping, and appropriate sound buffering.
40. Recognizing that a new outdoor rink is included in the Master Plan for Claremont Memorial Park, additional or future outdoor ice rink(s) should only be considered in conjunction with other civic planning, urban design and/or economic development analyses given the sizeable costs to construct and operate refrigerated rinks.
41. Implement the recommendations of the City's Skateboard Park Strategy.
42. Construct two splash pads in Seaton. One splash pad should be developed in concert with the proposed multi-use community centre. The City and a developer are currently in the process of planning a second splash pad, which will be located in a future Village Green in Seaton, which is expected to meet this need.
43. Address playground gaps through future park development within the South Pickering Urban Area.
44. A minimum of 11 playgrounds should be strategically located at future parks within Seaton to provide sufficient coverage within residential areas. At the City's discretion, additional playgrounds should be considered, where appropriate, to enhance geographic distribution and serve gap areas. Future playgrounds should be located within 800 metres of residential areas, without intersecting major obstructions such as arterial roads and railways.
45. The construction of new or redeveloped playgrounds should integrate natural / adventure features, which may include the use of natural materials (e.g., wood, stones, boulders, etc.), higher climbing structures, rope courses, and more. Playground design shall have regard for the Design of Public Spaces Standard and incorporate accessible playground features, such as using a firm and stable surface. Consultation with accessible groups and users is also encouraged. These factors should be considered as the City continues to prepare its playground replacement program.
46. Where possible, accommodate requests for access to, or increased use of, outdoor running tracks at Pickering's existing facilities and school facilities.

## **Encouraging Greater Participation in Recreation and Parks Activities**

47. Strengthen the Service Delivery Model by convening joint meetings with all providers and related agencies (e.g., T.R.C.A.) in Pickering to share priorities and address common issues collectively.
48. Develop a Community Engagement Strategy to welcome new residents to Seaton, inform them of recreation and parks opportunities and begin to assist groups form or expand existing groups to provide localized recreation and parks opportunities.
49. Continue to stress the importance of the need for children and families to be safe in and around water. Place a greater emphasis on public education and the need to learn to swim.
50. Continue to work with the school boards to broaden the Swim to Survive program.
51. Work to reduce screen time and at a minimum place larger toys in playgrounds to encourage children and caregivers to stay outdoors longer.
52. Continue to engage youth and meet the Playworks Partnership revised criteria for Youth Friendly Communities.
53. Work with community partners to jointly fund a youth worker over a period of 3 years and evaluate the merits of this approach to youth engagement and empowerment.
54. Host focus groups with adults to determine the right mix of programs and services with a view to increasing participation in this segment of the population.
55. Investigate the feasibility of adopting Parks and Recreation Ontario High Five – The Principles of Active Aging in the provision / enabling of programs and services to the older adult population.
56. Continue to monitor penetration rates and participation in drop-in opportunities to maximize participation.
57. Develop a Recreation Service Plan for the Seaton community in order to be proactive about the recreation needs of the increased population. Include at a minimum, a communications strategy to promote existing services, an approach to providing/enabling a range of services and engaging residents to form self-governing groups.

## **Increasing Access and Inclusion**

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

## **Encouraging Physical Activity in the Outdoors**

65. Develop a multi-year Communications Strategy on the advantages of being active and being outdoors. Ensure that the Strategy targets various segments of the population using appropriate communication vehicles. Include a community signage program to encourage physical activity.
66. Animate outdoor public spaces with active program opportunities such as yoga, tai chi, and other activities during appropriate seasons.
67. Further research and experiment with risky play applications to keep families outdoors longer and engage in self-discovery.

68. Identify Heart Healthy choices in the Leisure Guide and use the guide for public messaging with respect to the benefits of active living.
69. Work with surrounding municipalities and the Region of Durham to implement the evidence-based strategies identified by the World Health Organization to increase levels of physical fitness in Pickering.

## **Strengthening Community Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness**

70. Continue to maximize partnerships with community agencies to broaden recreation and parks opportunities to the public with consideration given to cost containment and other community benefits.
71. Articulate the costs to provide individual units of service (cost for set of swim lessons, maintain a sports field, etc.) in order to develop an equitable and fair-minded Pricing Policy.
72. Research and obtain volunteer software to offer online volunteer opportunities, a pre-screening process, training, and tracking of volunteer hours with a view to increasing volunteerism in Pickering.
73. Work as a staff team to define the Community Services Department culture, values, and respective behaviours to maximize cohesion, efficiencies and effectiveness across divisions.
74. Formalize levels of service with a view to determining the description of service, target conditions, scheduled actions and work effort to arrive at an equitable distribution of work and allocation of resources.
75. Develop a standard methodology of testing satisfaction levels in programs and services.
76. Refine and gather baseline data in year one to inform Council and residents as to the recommended performance measures.
77. Establish a system for the regular implementation, monitor, and review of the Master Plan, including the creation of an annual work plan to identify accomplishments and priorities for the coming year. A high level 5-year review and a detailed 10-year update should be undertaken.