

## Strategies of the Plan:

The Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan establishes the long-term direction for parks, recreation, culture and trails based on the community's vision for the future. This is accomplished by looking at how these four critical components best function together in Orillia.

### VISION STATEMENT FOR THE MASTER PLAN

To build on the City's notoriety for offering significant regional events by making Orillia renown for its trails, parks, open space and inclusivity. Guiding the achievement of this vision are seven goals for the future:

#### GOAL 1: IDENTITY

For Orillia to be known for its outstanding park, recreation, culture and trail system and to value this system as critical to the City's identity.

#### GOAL 2: DESIGN

Promote a high quality parks, recreation, culture and trails system.



#### GOAL 3: LINKAGE

Utilize the parks, recreation, culture and trails system as the organizing feature within the City.

#### GOAL 4: INCLUSIVITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Promote accessibility for all residents and visitors to all parks and facilities and equal opportunity to participate in the parks, recreation and culture system.

#### GOAL 5: HEALTH, SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

Ensure that all parks, recreation, culture and trails promote the safety and well-being of residents and visitors.

#### GOAL 6: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Promote the enhancement and understanding of the natural environment.

#### GOAL 7: PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Promote an active environment through the enhancement of programs and events.

*Utilizing community input, the goals guide the development of the Master Plan and its implementation towards a shared vision for parks, recreation, culture and trails.*

### SYSTEMS PLAN FOR PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURE AND TRAILS

An interrelated, connected system of parks, recreation, culture and trails, the Master Plan promotes the development of the community as "grounds for play."

To develop the Systems Plan, each element plays a significant role in the development of Grounds for Play:

- **Parks** provide the physical spaces that are the foundation for the Systems Plan.
- **Recreation** activates the Systems Plan for the residents and visitors to utilize the system's spaces.
- **Culture** showcases the community identity and tells the story of Orillia, past and present, in the system's spaces.
- **Trails** link the community together by providing the key connections to bring people into the system.

The Systems Plan Map shows how the system is connected through existing and proposed parks, a conceptual trail network, green streets (linear parks along the roadway) along Coldwater Road, Hwy 12 Bypass and West Street South and a parkway (a signature route that is the gateway to the City) along Atherley Road.

**Grounds for Play Concept**  
In Orillia, a place known for its cultural, recreational and natural assets, there is an extraordinary opportunity to take a bold approach to community development by concentrating on elements of play as a strategy to improve the community for residents and visitors. This means enhancing aspects of the community that move us (physically, mentally, creatively, emotionally, etc.) for an environment that fosters health and attracts visitors by creating "grounds for play."

*Grounds for play is the concept for Orillia's Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan.*

### NEEDS ANALYSIS

Incorporated into the Systems Plan is the Needs Analysis that was conducted for outdoor recreation facilities. The results of this analysis identified the need for the following facilities:

- **Two full size basketball courts** (Proposed location in the proposed West Street South Park)
- **Four beach volleyball courts** (Proposed location in J.B. Tudhope Memorial Park)
- **Two splash pads** (Proposed location in Homewood Park and either Couchiching Beach Park or Kitchener Park)
- **Four ball diamonds** for a total of six softball and six baseball diamonds (Proposed location in the proposed West Street South Park)
- **Two natural multi-use fields** (Proposed location in the proposed West Street South Park)

In addition, it is recommended that, overtime, the skate park at Veterans' Memorial Park and the disc golf course at Homewood Park both be relocated to develop expanded facilities that better serve its users.



### INTERPRETIVE PLAN

To enhance the experience of Orillia, the interpretive plan concept utilizes public space, including parks and open spaces, to tell the stories that form the community's cultural significance. A collection of interpretive themes provide learning opportunities within the fabric of the City. Each theme is identified in the Interpretive Plan Map. The development and implementation of an interpretive program should involve local stakeholders and community groups to assist in capturing the relevance of each theme.

The plan works to design memorable experiences that reflect the people, history and nature of the community connects residents and visitors to the value of the system and the community.



## Long Range Implementation:

The Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan identifies priorities and recommendations that will help to accomplish the strategies of the plan in a step-by-step process that will occur over the short, medium and long term future of Orillia.

### PRIORITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION FOR ORILLIA

To achieve the goals of the plan and create a parks, recreation and culture system in Orillia, there are three key priorities of implementation:

#### Priority #1: Development of the Trails Network

Trails should be the iconic symbol of the City. Widely appreciated by the community and the primary feature that links together all the different elements of the system, trails should be seen as critical not only to parks, recreation and culture development but also community development.



##### Priority Recommendations:

###### Multi-Use Trail Network

The City should work to continuously expand the trails network to provide a complete comprehensive system of trails in Orillia. Specific trail recommendations are provided in the Trails Master Plan.

###### Development of Atherley Road Parkway

The City should develop Atherley Road as a parkway providing a gateway to the City and the waterfront.

###### Development of Green Streets

As the connecting spine across the community, the City should develop green streets as part of its transportation network, featuring alternative transportation as a major component of the network and tying the City to parks, recreation, culture and trails.

#### Priority #2: Development of West Street South Park

The City should develop 255 West Street South as a central outdoor park facility to fulfill many of the outstanding outdoor park needs. As a City owned property, proximate to the downtown, this brownfield site provide is a prime location for community use.



##### Priority Recommendations:

###### Accommodate Outdoor Park Facilities at West Street South Park

The West Street South Park should be developed to accommodate outdoor park facility needs. The proposed park should include: two full size basketball courts, four ball diamonds and two multi-use fields (natural).

###### Relocate the Skate Park

Over time, the City should relocate the skate park at Veterans' Memorial Park to West Street South Park to provide a facility that better serves the users and to maintain the waterfront for water-related uses. Prior to the development of the new facility, the existing facility may remain in place.

###### Relocate the Disc Golf Course

The disc golf course should be relocated, potentially to the West Street South Park. The current location at Homewood Park is too small and causes conflicts between disc golf and other park users. Prior to the development of the new facility, the existing facility may remain in place.

#### Priority #3: Focus on Waterfront Celebration Parks

Focus on Waterfront Celebration Parks: The jewels of the system, waterfront parks should be a focus for water-based used and become the feature location for festivals and events. As part of this focus, the City should acquire the former Huronia Regional Centre (HRC) property, particularly the waterfront portion.



##### Priority Recommendations:

###### Lobby to Acquire Huronia Regional Centre

The City should lobby the Province to acquire the entire Huronia Regional Centre (HRC) property, particularly the waterfront portion of the property, for development of a Celebration Park.

###### Festivals and Event Strategy

The City should develop a clear and consistent approach to providing services to festivals and events, potentially identifying a staff member in the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department that is the liaison for festivals and events.

###### Development of Atherley Narrows Bridge Park

There is an opportunity to develop a cultural park at the dead end along the Millennium Trail. This park could then be integrated into the development of the new bridge.

###### Development of Proposed Portal Parks

Several portal parks should be developed to provide additional public access to the waterfront. These parks are road ends or edges that provide facilities such as boardwalks, overlooks, a pathway from the street and seating. These portal parks include: Borland Street East Park, Fittons Road East Park, Forest Avenue South Park and Victoria Crescent Park.

###### Develop Additional Beach Volleyball Courts

J.B. Tudhope Memorial Park should accommodate the four additional beach volleyball courts, locating them adjacent to the existing courts.

###### Develop Additional Splash Pads

Two additional splash pads should be developed to accommodate existing needs, one should be located at Homewood Park, while the other could be located at either Couchiching Beach Park or Kitchener Park.

###### Citywide Interpretive Program

The City should develop a citywide interpretive program involving local stakeholders and community groups in the process.

###### Interpretive Centre

The City should develop an Interpretive Centre located at the West Orillia Sports Complex, adjacent to Scout Valley, to provide a more well-rounded destination for residents and visitors to the western portion of Orillia. The Centre would interpret the natural areas of Scout Valley as well as the many other interpretive themes of the City.

###### Accommodate Gallery Space

Facilities should utilize available space to provide community gallery space and increase the multi-functionality of the City's facilities.

###### Update the Cultural Plan

The Cultural Plan should be updated at regular intervals of 5-10 years to accommodate cultural needs. The City may want to consider updating its cultural mapping to transform the information into accessible web-based information that can be updated and utilized in tourism development as well.

###### Wi-fi in Parks

If the City decides to provide wi-fi in parks it should prioritize the location in Celebration Parks, particularly those proximate to the downtown such as Centennial Park/Couchiching Beach Park due to these locations being most likely able to meet infrastructure needs and to reach the largest number of people.

###### Community Gardens

As the demand for community gardening in Orillia increases, there is an opportunity to expand the places where the City may offer this activity. In considering siting other community gardens in parks, the locations should be spread throughout the City, there should be available space in the park somewhat close to parking and the park should ideally have a water source. Given this, Clayt French, Homewood, and potentially Murray Street Parks offer possible future locations for community gardens.

### PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

To develop parks and open spaces that provide a diversity of activities and atmospheres, a new classification system has been developed for Orillia. This classification supports traditional park needs and uses of while using a character-based approach to expand the types of parks developed for a more varied system of activities and environments. The table below identifies the seven types of parks. For each park, a sample park proto-type was developed to show what the park might look like.

Type	Activity Park	Celebration Park	Connector Park	Cultural Park	Leisure Park	Nature Park	Portal Park
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active use</li> <li>Flat</li> <li>Maintained &amp; naturalized</li> <li>Multi-use</li> <li>Open</li> <li>Specific use areas</li> <li>Vistas</li> <li>Well organized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active</li> <li>Continuous</li> <li>Lakefront</li> <li>Linked nodes</li> <li>Monumental &amp; Urban</li> <li>Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linear</li> <li>Linked nodes</li> <li>Recreationway</li> <li>Wayfinding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informative</li> <li>Inspirational</li> <li>Organized</li> <li>Orillia Identity</li> <li>Shade/trees</li> <li>Unique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintained</li> <li>Mix of open and treed areas</li> <li>Sunshade</li> <li>Unique to neighbourhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low/no maintenance</li> <li>Passive</li> <li>Shoreline</li> <li>Stream corridor</li> <li>Valley land</li> <li>Wildlife habitat</li> <li>Wooded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lakefront</li> </ul>
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large gatherings</li> <li>Major sports activities</li> <li>Sports &amp; Athletics</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Festivals</li> <li>Lake access</li> <li>Large gatherings</li> <li>Panoramic Views</li> <li>Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to gathering spaces</li> <li>Create connected open space system</li> <li>Linkage</li> <li>Orientation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Art</li> <li>Culture</li> <li>Events</li> <li>History</li> <li>Linkage</li> <li>Variety of gathering sizes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood information</li> <li>Pathway</li> <li>Play</li> <li>Primary passive recreation</li> <li>Small gatherings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education</li> <li>Nature appreciation</li> <li>Nature preservation</li> <li>Small group gatherings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental protection</li> <li>Lake access/views</li> </ul>



Sample Activity Park Proto-type



Sample Celebration Park Proto-type



Sample Connector Park Proto-type



Sample Cultural Park Proto-type



Sample Leisure Park Proto-type



Sample Nature Park Proto-type

##### Additional Recommendations:

In addition to the recommendations associated with the three priorities of the Master Plan, there are several other recommendations that should be addressed as part of implementation. These recommendations include:

###### Adopt a New Park Classification System

The City should adopt the new parks classification system and utilize the park design guidelines and levels of service as it develops and improves City parks.

###### Development of Parks in Western Orillia

As development occurs in the western corner of Orillia, north of Lakehead University, the City should facilitate the development of new parks as an organization feature of new growth. New parks should be well linked to the trails network.

###### Outcome-Based Model for Programming

As the City controls more facilities, it should consider shifting from a direct service delivery model to an outcome-based model for the provision of programming. This model would benchmark against goals for participation and cost recovery and allow the cancellation of programs that do not perform.

###### Review the Need for Pickleball Programs

The City has seen increasing demands for pickleball, as have other surrounding communities some of which are providing programming for this new sport. The City should consider programming to accommodate this growing demand.

###### Exit Surveys for Programs

To better identify programming needs, the City should consider surveying program participants and the end of each program.

###### Fitness in the Park

A potential new event to raise awareness of the parks, recreation, culture and trails system and encourage active lifestyles is an event where fitness programs are provided at all parks to help engage residents in these activities.

## Trails Master Plan: *The Trails Master Plan is a companion document to the Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan. It furthers the concepts of the Systems Plan by identifying specific trail network recommendations.*

### CITYWIDE TRAIL NETWORK

To develop a citywide trail network, the Master Plan identifies the specific connections and routes of Orillia's trails and identifies the priorities of trail development:

#### Priority #1: Complete the Connections to the Existing Network of Trails

The current gaps in the trails should be addressed. These locations include:

- The downtown/waterfront gap in the gravel trail (Jarvis Street to old railroad station area). This will require the design / development to be completed for the three downtown waterfront parks.
- Reconnection along the reconstructed Atherley Road segment (from Front Street to Forest Avenue)
- Leacock Museum connection (from the museum to Atherley Road)

#### Priority #2: Complete the Main Loop Trail

By putting in place a main loop trail, the City may begin to market their trail system to visitors that want to stay in one place, yet partake in a trail system experience.

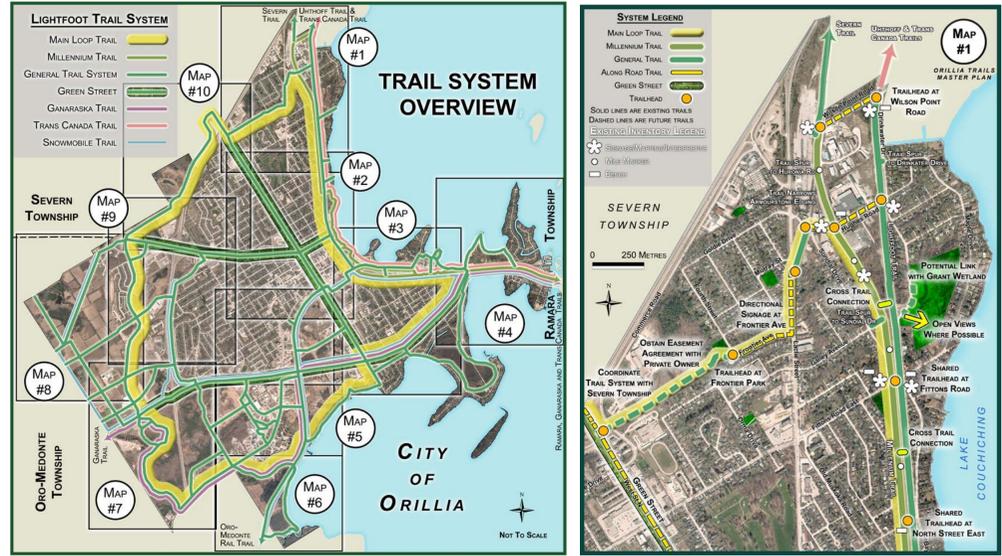
#### Priority #3: Complete the Green Street Trail Network

The Coldwater Road, Highway 12 By-pass and West Street trails will facilitate access through the downtown by trail users.

#### Priority #4: Complete the Remaining Sections of the Trail Network

The remaining trail spurs and cross street connections should be developed.

The adjacent maps illustrate the complete citywide trail network for Orillia.



### TRAIL IDENTITY

An iconic symbol of Orillia, the trails should be visible and clearly identifiable. To assist highlighting the trails network, identity and guideline recommendations include:

Develop an Iconic Symbol for Orillia's trails that is eye catching and recognizable, such the adjacent purple logo.

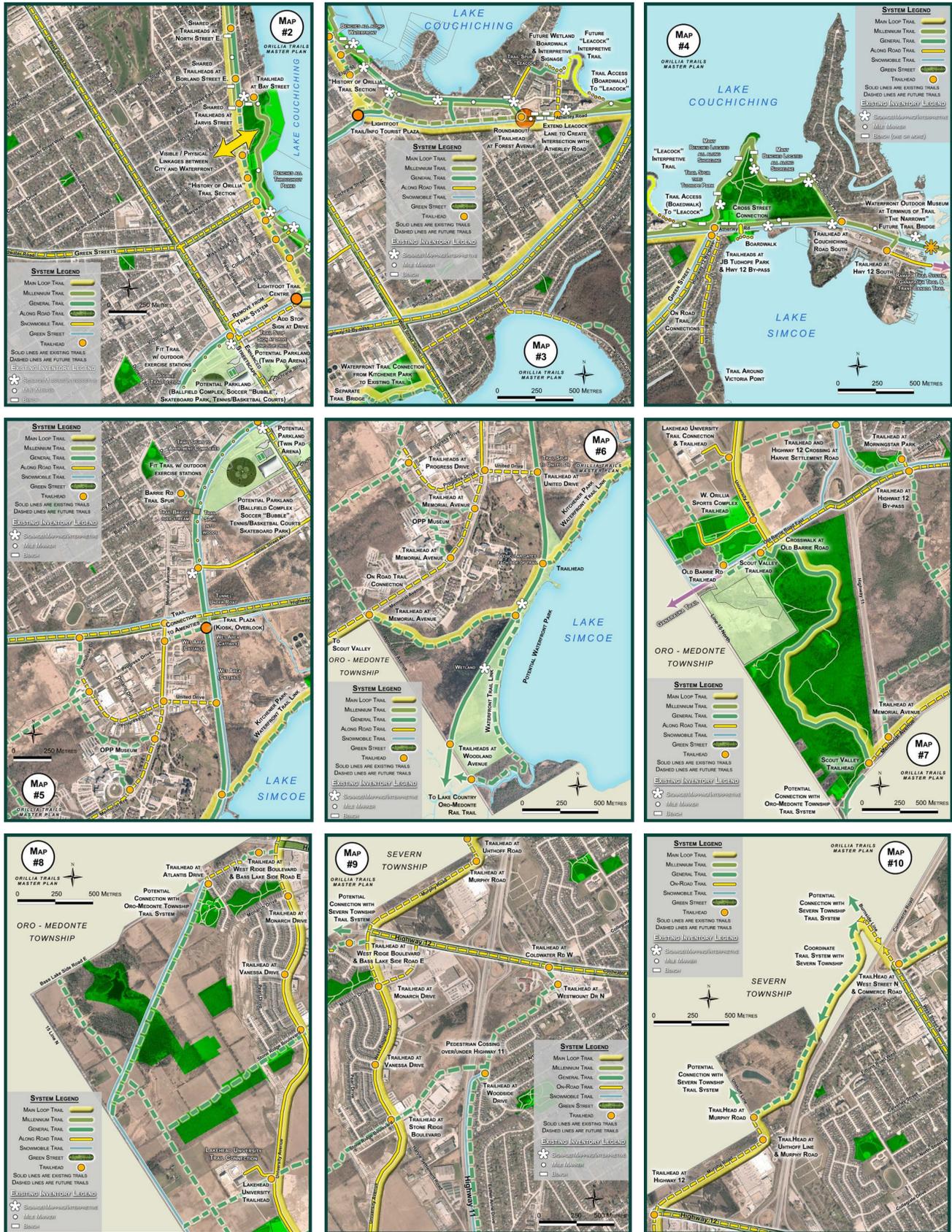
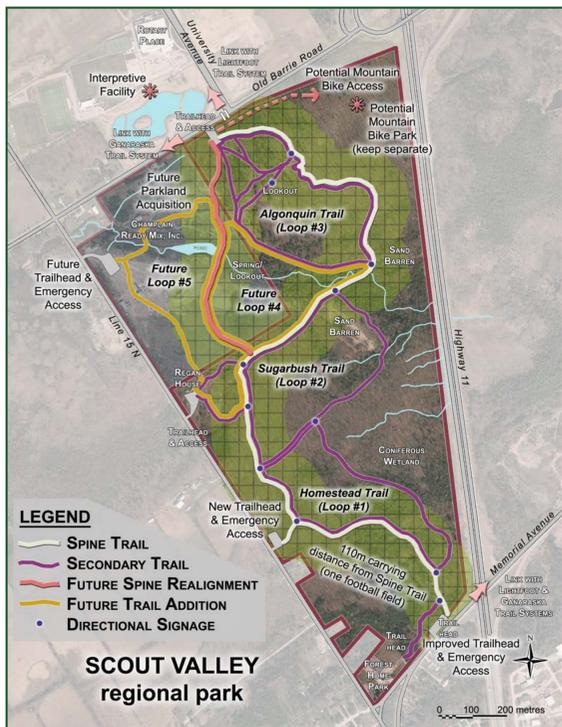


Trails should be designed with sustainable features. The following design guidelines illustrate what these features could look like.



### SCOUT VALLEY TRAILS

The Trails Master Plan specifically addresses the trail system in Scout Valley. One of the primary recommendations for the trails is the development of an accessible spine trail throughout the park. The map below demonstrates the future of trails in Scout Valley.



## Directions from Public Involvement:

Extensive public involvement was conducted as part of the Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan. Highlighted below are key directions from the input received.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SESSIONS

Recognizing the community significance of this planning effort, a variety of involvement techniques were used to ensure that all voices were heard as part of the process. Sessions included:

- Committee Meetings:** The Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan is guided by a Steering Committee that is made up of City staff and community stakeholders.
- Vision Session:** A vision session was conducted with the Steering Committee to initiate discussion of the future of parks, recreation and culture in Orillia.
- Focus Groups:** A variety of stakeholders and interest groups were included in a series of focus groups to spur discussions on parks, recreation, culture and trails.
- Stakeholder Interviews:** Numerous interviews were conducted throughout the planning process to ensure key parks, recreation and culture stakeholders were involved in the plan development process.
- Public Meeting:** An initial public meeting was conducted to focus on physical potentials for the future of parks, recreation and culture in Orillia.
- Community Surveys:** Several different types of surveys were utilized as part of the involvement program including an online community survey, an intercept survey (conducted in parks to gather information about park users) and a facilities survey (focused on facility users).



Focus Group Session

### Highlights of the Input Sessions

\* Community involvement demonstrated a strong appreciation for a variety of city resources including parks, the waterfronts, trails, recreation and culture facilities, festivals and Scout Valley

#### Community Surveys

- 71% of respondents go to City parks and recreation facilities once a week or more
- Majority of respondents (61%) use parks for outdoor space
- 72% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the City should expand the trail system and 62% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the City should acquire new parkland
- The majority of respondents are aware of cultural facilities and events as well as City recreation programs

#### Public Meetings

- Parks are well maintained and have high quality facilities
- Priority issues include:
  - » Development of the Huronia Regional Centre (HRC) property as a park / cultural facility
  - » Bike routes and trail connections to Lakehead University / Scout Valley

#### Focus Groups & Interviews

Focus on:

- Affordability & accessibility for all
- Trails with better connections
- Better coordination
- Continued waterfront enhancement
- Health & walkability

- Potential for sports tourism
- Significance of culture
- Winter activities
- Potential of the Huronia Regional Centre (HRC) property

#### Vision Session

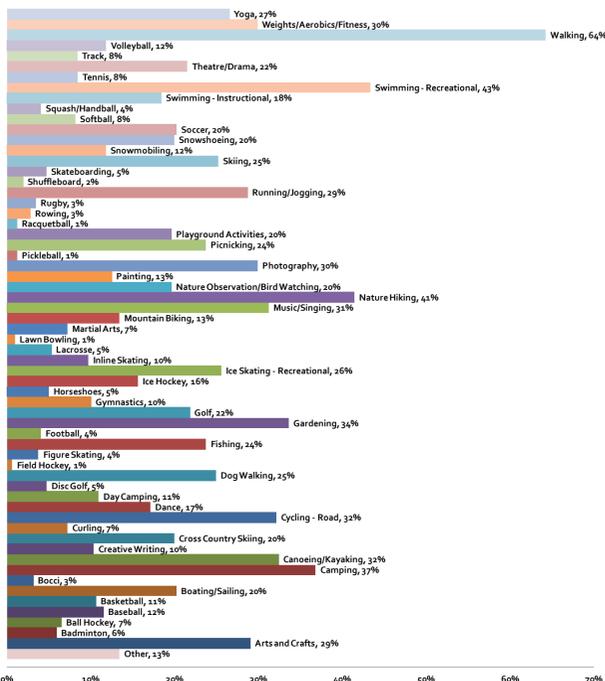
The future system should be:

- Attractive, accessible & affordable for all
- Highly connected, inclusive, inviting and offer a diversity of facilities & amenities
- A major focus in the City that is sustainable and well-maintained
- A balance between programmed & non-programmed space

### COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS & FINDINGS

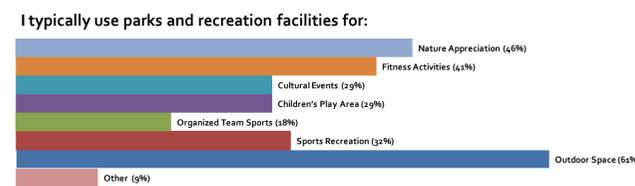
With 354 responses received, the online community survey was the most comprehensive involvement technique for the Parks, Recreation, Culture Master Plan. The results of the survey provided important information to help guide the development of the plan. The following charts illustrates some of the key results:

#### Recreation Participation: I participate in the following activities:

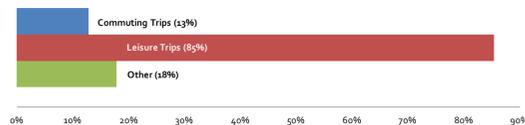


Walking is the most highly participate in activity.

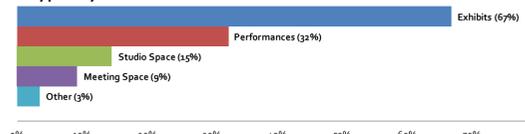
#### Use of City Parks Trails and Recreation and Culture Facilities:



#### My reasons for using trails in Orillia include:

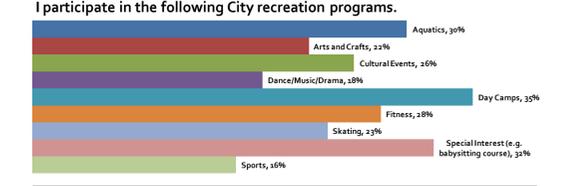


#### I typically use cultural facilities for:

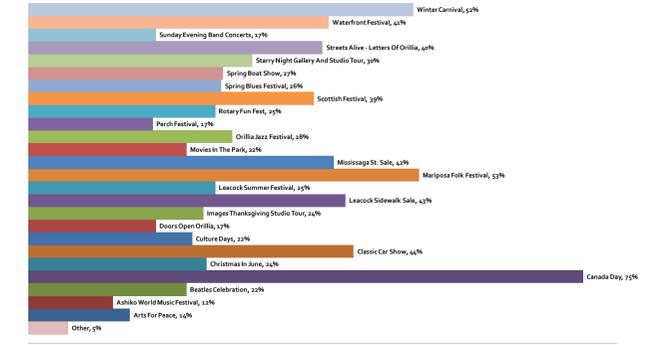


Respondents use parks and recreation facilities primarily for outdoor space, use trails primarily for leisure trips and use cultural facilities primarily for exhibits.

#### Participation in Recreation Programs and Cultural Events:



#### I participate in the following cultural events:



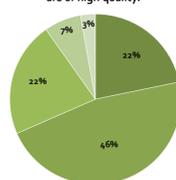
Based on the survey results, day camps are the most participated in recreation program. The survey also shows a high percentage of respondents participate in cultural events.

### Quality, Access and Expansion of Parks, Trails and Recreation and Cultural Facilities

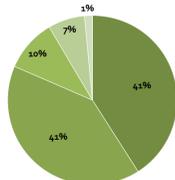
The following scale applies to each of the pie charts shown:

Scale: **Strongly Agree** **Agree** **Neutral** **Disagree** **Strongly Disagree**

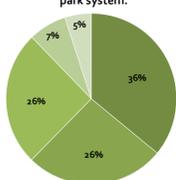
Overall, I believe that parks, trails and recreation and cultural facilities in Orillia are of high quality.



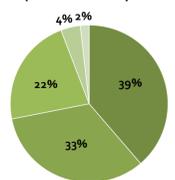
I am easily able to access parks from where I live in Orillia.



I believe the City of Orillia should acquire new park land to expand the park system.



I believe the City of Orillia should expand the trail system.



I believe there is adequate access to the waterfront in Orillia.

