

MUNICIPALITY OF MEAFORD 2015 - 2025
RECREATION & CULTURE
STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN



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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Plan

This Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan provides a multi-year framework of short (1-2 years), medium (3-6 years) and longer-term (7-10 years) priorities for the development of arts, culture, recreation and leisure opportunities, services and facilities in the Municipality of Meaford. The Master Plan should also be placed in the broader context of all obligations of the Municipality of Meaford as a provider of services, facilities and infrastructure. Changes in the wider municipal environment in terms of fiscal priorities can be expected to impact the priorities contained in this Master Plan.

Master Plan Priorities

Over 400 residents participated in the Master Plan consultation process, the following reflect key priorities expressed by residents as being important to consider in the development of this Master Plan and which should inform the vision for recreation and culture in Meaford.

- 1 Prudent Investment & Operational Efficiency:** *Use what we have better (explore multi-use where possible).*
- 2 Create Multi-Generational Experiences, Facilities and Activities:** *Invest in youth, seniors and families*
- 3 Create Community Hubs:** *Enhance co-location of facilities and activities.*
- 4 Consider Seasonality:** *Expand indoor opportunities for recreation.*
- 5 Make the Most of Waterfront Assets:** *Culturally the water’s edge is significant and current planning for enhancement should be supported and used as a leverage for greater cultural tourism.*
- 6 Make Culture Accessible:** *This includes both cultural spaces and programs.*

Approach to Estimating Future Needs

As it relates to recreation, as a community that is expected to experience low population growth over the planning period to 2025, a number of recommendations are based on factors other than population-related needs for recreation facilities and services. These other factors include:

- **The relative utilization of existing facilities** benchmarked against identified trends in recreation and culture consumption within the community;
- **The age and functional condition of major indoor and outdoor facilities** and the degree of anticipated impact to the Municipality’s capital budget in future years in order to maintain these facilities in their current state; and
- **The variety of community input on the quality of services and facilities in Meaford** as well as the extent and timing of change that is required.

Based on the abovementioned, the extent and timing of individual actions are presented within this Master Plan.

In addition to these considerations, this Master Plan lends itself to a multi-pronged approach which evaluates the recreation delivery model in Meaford through an analysis of existing and potential partnerships for recreation and cultural delivery as well as other municipal investment (infrastructure, tourism etc.) which support the development of leisure opportunities in the Municipality.

The cultural mandate is different. The emergence of this sector, its needs and potential is rooted in a range of conditions – not the least of which is the imagination and depth of existing cultural expression. For culture, the primary goal is to explore, deepen and resource cultural development in all its forms.



The Vision & Mission

“Meaford is a community that offers exceptional leisure experiences that celebrate and showcase our natural and scenic vistas, cultural charm and embraces our rural and urban heritage.”

- Long-term Vision

“To optimize community infrastructure and partnerships for the innovative and sustainable delivery of services for quality recreation experiences and cultural prosperity.”

- Mission

Principles for Recreation and Culture

The following outlines principles of recreation on which the goals and recommendations of this Master Plan are based:

Promoting Community Quality of Life

1. The Municipality of Meaford will encourage and enable sustainable delivery and investment in cultural and recreation spaces, experiences and amenities as a means of ensuring quality of life and community legacy for present and future generations.
2. The Municipality recognizes the role that recreation and culture play in promoting health lifestyles and community well-being.
3. The Municipality will encourage participation in sport at every stage of life and the pursuit of healthy, active lifestyles.
4. The Municipality will facilitate health and wellness through passive and active leisure opportunities which allow residents to maximize participation in recreation in their daily lives.

Affordability and Access

5. The Municipality of Meaford supports access to cultural and recreation opportunities for all residents irrespective of education, age, income, ethnicity and gender.
6. The Community Services Department will continue to explore and implement ways to remove physical, financial and social barriers to participation in recreation and culture through efficient facility planning, maintenance and operations as well as management procedures.
7. The Community Services Department will aim to provide affordable programs, services and access to facilities for children, youth and parents/guardians. In so doing, The Department will aim to ensure that the pricing of recreational and cultural services do not impede or reduce participation.

Evolutionary Programming: Maximizing Opportunities Over Time

8. The Municipality will strive to accommodate new and emerging demand for recreation and cultural activities through programming.
9. The Community Services Department will continue to develop its recreation and cultural programming mandate over time as a means of ensuring residents experience the full benefit of facilities.

Prioritizing Sustainability

10. Investment in new recreation infrastructure should ensure commitment to sustainability of the environment. This is anticipated to translate into consideration of systems, design, construction methods and operating processes that seek to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact.



- 11. All investment should be sustainable in financial and operational terms within the context of municipal subsidy of recreational activities and facilities. To that end, detailed business plans should be prepared as necessary for major investment. Accordingly there is a balance to be struck between the elements of sustainability - environmental impact, social impact and fiscal impact.

Enhancing Community Connections

- 12. The Municipality commits to enhance and facilitate opportunities for festivals and events, talent and cultural industry development, recognizing cultural prosperity as a contributor to economic prosperity.
- 13. The Community Services Department will strive to accommodate emerging recreation and cultural user groups within its facilities.
- 14. The Municipality will continue to maximize its role as a public information provider and supporter of community wellness through the promotion of recreation and cultural programs, activities and facilities.
- 15. The Community Services Department will promote the benefits of participation in recreation and culture through web-based, social and other media marketing as well as through strategic partnerships with local/regional health organizations.

Partnerships and Collaboration a Core Strategy

- 16. The Community Services Department recognizes the value of partnerships for culture and recreation program development. The department will strive to ensure the most effective use of the Municipality’s resources in order to maximize all opportunities for partnership development with other municipalities, school boards, institutions etc.

- 17. Where appropriate, the Municipality will pursue partnerships with other public, community and private sector providers in order to facilitate the provision of a diverse range of recreation and culture services.
- 18. Community Services recognizes the value of partnerships for the development of recreation and culture and will strive to ensure the most effective use of Municipal resources to maximize all opportunities for partnership development and sponsorship (including with industry and the corporate sector).

Celebrate Natural Assets

- 19. The Municipality will continue to celebrate its natural and waterfront assets through strategic investment and development which showcases Meaford Harbour as a resident and visitor attraction.
- 20. The Municipality will continue to maximize public access and use of its natural and waterfront assets through the exploration of programming options and the promotion of recreation and cultural activities associated with these assets.
- 21. The Municipality will ensure public enjoyment of its parks and open spaces through festivals and events as a principle of ongoing planning.

Investment in Infrastructure

- 22. The Community Services Department will continue to maintain a high standard of facility maintenance and will plan efficiently towards the replacement of facilities and amenities as may be required over time.
- 23. Facility provision/planning for recreation and culture in Meaford is to be undertaken on a Municipal-wide basis. The Municipality will maintain the existing practice of the urban area servicing the recreation needs of the rural area.



24. Where appropriate, the Municipality will supplement planning for facilities at the level of service districts as relevant for specific community-serving outdoor facilities.

Goals for Recreation

- 1: Ensure Responsive & Long-term Planning for Infrastructure
- 2: Promote Health, Wellness and Active Living
- 3: Maximize Access to Recreational Opportunities, Programs and Services
- 4: Enhance the Operations of the Community Services
- 5: Target Children and Youth through Recreation
- 6: Prioritize and Enhance Passive Recreational Opportunities & Event Hosting through Trail, Open Space and Waterfront Development

Goals for Culture

- 1: To Enhance Existing Cultural Infrastructure
- 2: To Improve Access to Cultural Opportunities for Residents
- 3: To Advocate for Culture and Facilitate the Organization of the Sector
- 4: To Achieve the Maximum Benefit of Cultural Tourism
- 5: To Facilitate and Enhance Community Collaboration for Cultural Prosperity

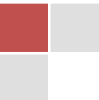
Summary of Recommendations

Detailed facility, service and programming-related recommendations and the rationale for each are outlined in Part 2 of this document. This Master Plan provides for the highest and best use of existing facilities in Meaford and recommends some investment in renovations and new amenities where these the both fiscally prudent and may better address the leisure needs of the current community.

The following provides a summary of the recommendations and suggested timeline for their implementation.

This Master Plan recognizes that the implementation of facility, programming and service related recommendations will be contingent on future economic and municipal corporate demands and needs. Accordingly, the following table identifies alternative timelines for the implementation of individual recommendations where appropriate. **Items highlighted in green reflect overlapping priorities across both recreation and culture.**

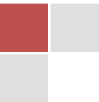
Legend	
Commencement/Initiation	
Alternative timeframe for implementation	
Ongoing implementation, progress and development	
Recommendation addresses both recreation & culture	



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
	Recreation Facilities			
1	Continue to invest in necessary repairs the arena facility. Undertake a feasibility study for the renovation of the facility to include larger dressing room facilities, efficient storage areas, new seating and a required accessibility upgrade.			
2	Effectively link the arena, curling club and adjacent fairgrounds through landscaping/hardscaping as part of a campus master planning exercise to take advantage of the logistic adjacencies of these assets to help spur more efficient community use of these spaces.			
3	Continue to investigate the option for the Municipality to operate and program an indoor pool facility as part of a Public Private Partnership with a local condominium corporation.			
4	Review existing agreements with the Hall Associations to ensure these allow the Municipality to meet its obligations to provide programs and maximize access to the facilities for the public and residents.			
5	Continue with plans to replace the existing Blue Dolphin Pool in situ in the long-term. Designs for a new outdoor pool facility should include larger washrooms/showers, a designated ticket area and lobby and be part of a broader campus master planning exercise to include the skatepark and ball diamonds.			
6	Fix the drainage issues at the William Croft site as an immediate priority. Budget capital funds for this based on determining the precise engineering solution required.			
7	Contingent on the successful implementation of a drainage solution for the Croft Diamonds, implement plans to resurface the diamonds and improve the concession and washroom facilities as well as undertake lighting replacement etc.			
8	Maintain the Annan Ball Diamond per the Capital Plan (lighting, fencing etc.).			
9	Should the demand for ball diamonds increase, continue to invest in and maintain the Bognor Ball Diamond (line painting, fencing) etc.			
10	Work with the Thornbury Soccer Club to determine the validity of using Municipally-owned soccer fields in Meaford should investment occur in the urban area. The Municipality should seek to retain local user group use of soccer fields in the municipality.			
11	Contingent on the ability to retain the soccer club locally, invest in (2) multi-use fields for soccer on municipally-owned Fairgrounds land. The fields should be developed as part of a broader recreation campus to include the arena and Curling Club.			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
12	Maintain the existing Bognor Soccer Field in SD#2 – South and invest in improvements (line markings and nets).			
13	Maintain the Meaford Tennis Court and invest in lighting.			
14	Continue to maintain existing basketball facilities at Peter Cameron Park and Bognor Park.			
15	Continue the practice of utilizing movable nets for pickleball in the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre Hall to facilitate indoor racquet sport.			
16	Continue to maintain the Beach Volleyball court at Coast Guard Beach in Service District #1			
17	Investigate opportunities to develop beach volleyball courts at other beach locations in the Municipality should community demand for these facilities increase.			
18	Contingent on the acquisition of vacant land adjacent the Annan Ball Diamond, develop (1) new multi-use court facility at Annan Park.			
19	Confirm that Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols (as outlined in the Municipality’s existing Official Plan) will be used where available for improvements to existing parks where new residential subdivisions are within the standard of 1 park/playground within 500-800 metres of all built up residential areas. Where the recommended standard is not met, the Municipality may enforce Parkland Dedication and/or Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols provided by the Official Plan to have new parkland dedicated.			
20	Develop a park design strategy in partnership with the community – specifically engaging youth			
21	Invest in new playground infrastructure at William Croft Park in order to address the playground service gap in the mid-urban core area.			
22	Evaluate the opportunity to develop a new playground to address the north area service gap based on available and appropriate municipal lands in this zone.			
23	Prioritize playground replacement based on a 20-year trigger date.			
24	Continue plans to maintain and upgrade the existing skate park near the Blue Dolphin Pool; making improvements based on community consultation.			
25	Continue to support the development of an Active Transportation Plan and Cycling Plan for Grey County.			
26	Participate in the development of any County commissioned Trails Master Plan as a comprehensive tool and long-term framework for local trail development in the community.			



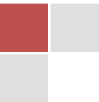
		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
27	The Municipality of Meaford should seek to encourage the appropriate development in active transportation linkages between planned recreation nodes as investment occurs over time. This should generally align with the County’s priorities to develop an Interim Active Transportation Master Plan and a Cycling Plan in the short-term.			
28	Consider the potential to extend the waterfront trail network to other recreation assets in the urban area.			
29	Commission a Design Strategy for the campground to include options for enhancements to the site. The Strategy should include a framework for the phased development of the site and associated order of magnitude capital costs. The Strategy should be accompanied by a business plan outlining mechanisms to improve revenue generation related to the campsite development.			
30	Revisit and revise the Capital Plan for the campground, taking into account recommendations of the Design Strategy.			
31	This Master Plan supports the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan including plans to develop a Harbour village concept for the area as well as investment in cultural infrastructure on-site (i.e. outdoor pavilion for events and festivals). In keeping recommendations, establish a capital reserve for the future development of recreation facilities to include the Harbour.			
Recreation Programs and Services				
32	Continue efforts to expand the range of programs offered to the community with a focus on enhancing opportunities for older youth (13-19 years of age) as well as seniors.			
33	Progressively assess the role of the Municipality in the provision of soccer locally based on developments with the Meaford Amateur Soccer Association.			
34	Contingent on the ability to secure an agreement for the Municipal management and use of an indoor pool as part of public-private partnership with a local condominium corporation, expand the roster of aquatic programs to include year-round/winter activities to include aqua-fit and public swim options.			
35	With the development of basketball and/or multi-use court facilities, expand youth programming options to include basketball, volleyball and other court-based opportunities.			
36	Continue to implement teen tennis programs for youth (8-18) as well as other court-based programs such as pickleball workshops for older adults.			
37	Investigate opportunities to develop outdoor youth recreation program options for soccer in the rural area.			
38	Continue to offer fitness program options at Woodford Hall as a means of servicing the rural community			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
39	Continue to assess the feasibility of opportunities to develop and initiate new (and scoped) programming options in the rural area.			
40	Partner with the local trail associations such as the Beaver Valley Trail Club to develop trail/environmental education programs for children and youth.			
41	Develop multi-faceted programs which combine culture, recreation and wellness			
42	Appoint a Programming Assistant to provide the Recreation Programs Supervisor with planning and support assistance for the development and implementation of new recreation programs and events			
43	Annually commission a summer student for the role of Research Coordinator with responsibility to design and implement customer service tools (such as community surveys) to annually monitor community satisfaction with recreation facilities, services and programs in the Town.			
44	As part of future municipal organizational reviews, continue to monitor the effectiveness of the staff roles within the Community Services Department, particularly as Master Plan implementation occurs over time.			
45	Develop and implement an Ice Allocation Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.			
46	Continue with plans to invest in an electronic booking system for facilities and programs as means of operational efficiency for tracking registration volumes and facility utilization as well as associated revenues.			
47	Undertake annual customer service monitoring (satisfaction surveys etc.) to regularly assess resident/user needs and requisite improvements to the Municipality’s recreation service delivery model.			
48	Develop an online facility maintenance reporting system (e.g. via an online e-mail/message submission tool on the Municipal website) for real-time staff updates on needed repairs, washroom maintenance etc.			
49	Undertake a review of the Municipality’s Family Youth Subsidy program to assess the extent to which the program meets the needs of residents and, if required, evaluate the need to enhance protocols.			
50	Undertake a comprehensive review of all Municipally-owned indoor recreation facilities for compliance with standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) in light of 2013 accessibility amendments (effective in 2015) within the Ontario Building Code.			
51	Continue to implement priorities outlined in the Municipality’s 2014 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in order to ensure barrier-free access to recreation. This includes investment in accessible trail and playground infrastructure.			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
52	Continue to regularly update and implement the Municipality’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and address future regulatory changes as established within the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).			
53	Host an annual recreation forum with user/community group stakeholders as a means of regularly addressing challenges/opportunities for program and partnership growth and development.			
54	Continue to support the Georgian Bay Youth Roots group. Work in partnership with the group’s leadership to evaluate the potential for this organization to transition into a Youth Advisory Council.			
55	Continue to take advantage of ParticipACTION funding and maximize available resources from this organization.			
56	In partnership with local schools/school boards, evaluate the benefits of implementing Joint Use Agreements for community/municipal use of school facilities and vice-versa.			
57	Develop and implement a marketing and positioning strategy for the Community Recreation Guide which differentiates this document from the tourist-focused ‘Meaford Guide’.			
58	Continue to develop, expand and reorganize the Community Recreation Guide to better promote the range of recreation opportunities available to residents.			
59	Establish an easy, workable protocol to collect and regularly update contact and program-related information from community groups and sports groups for publication in the Community Recreation Guide.			
60	Integrate the Recreation & Culture Asset database (developed as part of the Master Plan project) into the Municipality’s GIS System and further develop and translate the database into an Interactive Community Map to be hosted on the Municipality’s website.			
61	Develop a Management Plan for regularly expanding, updating and maintaining the Recreation & Cultural Asset Databases.			
62	As part of the Municipality’s website maintenance protocols, continue to improve the resident-focused ‘Play’ Portal to further enhance recreation information services to include an online facility maintenance reporting system and social media updates directly linked to the Community Services Department’s Facebook page in order to provide real-time alerts on unexpected program cancellations, special events, available ice etc.			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
Cultural Facilities				
63	Continue to invest in the Meaford Public Library as it is an important County asset.			
64	Proceed with planned capital improvements to Meaford Hall. Major investments to be prioritized include the renovation of the balcony area and related seating.			
65	Invest in a facility booking system for Meaford Hall to better track and monitor shifts in annual utilization over time.			
66	Proceed with planned capital improvements to the Meaford Museum and continue efforts to optimize storage capacity at the facility.			
67	Implement landscape and streetscape enhancements to the museum site per the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan.			
Cultural Programs and Services				
68	The Supervisor of Recreation Programs, the Museum Services Coordinator and the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services should continue to work collaboratively to develop arts and cultural programming offer in Meaford.			
69	Review the composition of the Heritage Advisory Committee to include the Museum Services Coordinator in the capacity of a staff advisory role to the Committee.			
70	Develop and adopt a Municipal Cultural Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.			
71	Develop a Municipal Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the Municipality of Meaford.			
72	Redirect a dedicated portion of municipal funding for the Community Grant Fund to establish a Cultural Grant funding stream.			
73	Develop a formal grant application and criteria-based approval process for the Cultural Grant Fund.			
74	Revise and update the Municipality of Meaford’s Special Events Policy.			
75	Plan and initiate an annual/seasonal Cultural Forum with cultural groups/leaders as a means of fostering consistent dialogue and collaboration for the development of new cultural initiatives for the community.			
76	Develop a system to allow community groups to contribute seasonally to the Community Recreation Guide (see related recommendation 57).			
77	As part of the Municipality’s efforts to progressively enhance the Community Recreation Guide, explore the modest restructuring of the booklet to provide a designated section for culture, complete with a list of facilities			



	and rental information as well as seasonal roster of activities and programs hosted at these facilities.			
78	Work progressively to develop the 'cultural brand' of Meaford. This should involve effective positioning within the Meaford [Visitor] Guide as well as the exploring the potential to incorporate the brand within community wayfinding signage.			
79	Ensure a digital version of the Meaford [Visitor] Guide is provided within the visitor portal of the municipal website to allow for the maximum profile of this tool.			
80	In the short to medium-term, seek to progressively enhance the tourism portal of the Municipal website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford') to improve the showcase the thematic tourist offer of the municipality. Information and site pages should focus on tourism strengths of the municipality, including: 'The Outdoors' as well as 'Arts and Culture' and 'Culinary Escapes & Adventures' (wineries, agri-tourism etc.).			
81	Utilize existing municipal databases on local tourism assets including those identified in the Culture and Recreation asset databases developed for this project to develop a Visitor Information Map to be hosted on the Municipal tourism website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford').			
82	Continue to progressively explore partnership opportunities with community and regional groups for the development cultural programming in Meaford as an on-going requirement through the annual implementation of the Cultural Forum.			
83	Continue plans to expand local summer camps and program options for children and older youth to include dance, theatre, craft and other cultural activities.			
84	Develop year-round introductory cultural programs for youth, adults and seniors. The Municipality should seek to develop partnerships with local artists and/or groups to implement these programs specifically where skills are required for instructional teaching.			
85	Meaford Museum should continue to work with local health care providers to develop historic scrapbooking programs for Alzheimer's patients.			
86	Explore the opportunity to develop an Artist-in-Residence program at Meaford Hall in partnership with Grey County Artists. This may include short-term artist-run community programs, presentations, workshops and other special projects. The Municipality will need to consider available funding opportunities for the development of this kind of program.			
87	Explore the opportunity to develop mobile library programming for the rural area.			
88	Utilize the Cultural Forum to regularly engage local event organizers in discussions on planned activities and opportunities for greater collaboration and assistance for event hosting, development and marketing.			



89	Annually assess the events in Meaford based on a product life cycle approach and identify those ones which have the potential to grow to facilitate a greater regional or out-of-region draw. Progressively investigate and partner for the development and marketing of these events.			
90	Investigate and promote the use of event tracking resources and funding available from RTO7 for events in Meaford; working with event organizers to identify and implement affordable methodologies in keeping with their fiscal and operating capacity.			
91	Continue to diversify and strengthen existing major festivals and events.			
92	Over the long-term, seek to develop linked local events as a means of packaging experiences for the tourist market. This may involve coordinating and promoting local activities with seasonal sporting events/tournaments in Collingwood and the Town of the Blue Mountains.			
93	Collaboratively expand and develop public cultural education events such as Culture Days and Doors Open in Meaford. In the long-term this may evolve into the development of a regional Cultural Passport program encourages residents from other communities to participate in multiple Culture Day events hosted across Grey County.			
94	Assess the economic impact of Meaford’s cultural sector as growth and investment occur over time.			



PART 1

CONTEXT OF THE PLAN



1 Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Plan

This Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan provides a multi-year framework of short (1-2 years), medium (3-6 years) and longer-term (7-10 years) priorities for the development of arts, culture, recreation and leisure opportunities, services and facilities in the Municipality of Meaford.

This Master Plan is a municipal guidance document designed to further effective planning, budgeting and implementation of stated goals and objectives for recreation, leisure and culture in Meaford until the year 2025. The Master Plan should also be placed in the broader context of all obligations of the Municipality of Meaford as a provider of services, facilities and infrastructure. Changes in the wider municipal environment in terms of fiscal priorities can be expected to impact the priorities contained in this Master Plan.

1.2. Recreation and Culture: Contributors to Community & Economic Prosperity

1.2.1. Supporting Regional Priorities

Regional priorities for the development of culture and recreation, as expressed in Grey County’s Official Plan (2013), center on the basis that both sectors contribute to the vitality of local communities through the provision of quality of life experiences and services for residents, by catering to the active pursuits and desires of the seasonal residents and cottagers and bolstering local and regional tourism activity. The County recognizes that the provision of adequate social, recreational, cultural, health and educational services will “strengthen the role of Grey County as a desirable place to work, live, and visit” and subsequently meet planned growth objectives.

The County’s mission, as outlined in the OP, recognizes “Grey County is a family of distinctive communities which values its heritage, natural beauty, clean

healthy environment, and rural lifestyle.” (Section1.3) In achieving this direction, the County’s aims include the following:

- “Properly plan growth for current and future generations;
- Encourage economic diversification in addition to agriculture and tourism;
- Preserve the integrity of the environment and the wise use of resources;
- Respect and support local heritage and culture;
- Foster a County government built upon co-operative relationship.” (Section 1.3)



Source: RTO 7 Bruce Grey Simcoe



This Master Plan maintains the above mentioned tenets by proposing a series of measures to facilitate the wise management, planning and use of municipal resources for the preservation, development and/or enhancement of recreation and cultural facilities, services and programs as well as fostering those linked economic development (i.e. tourism) opportunities associated with the growth of each sector.

Goals of the Official Plan which speak directly to the mandate of this assignment include:

- “Strengthen the role of Grey County as a desirable place to work, live, and visit by encouraging the provision of affordable, diverse and accessible housing and by promoting the provision of adequate social, recreational, cultural, health and educational services. (Section 1.5 (8))
- Maintain the agricultural/rural way of life through the protection of the land base and agricultural operations, the creation of compatible economic opportunities, and the continued presence of social and recreational support facilities within the rural community. (Section 1.5 (9))
- Preserve the agricultural/rural character of Grey County by encouraging local municipalities to designate rural heritage areas and/or countryside landscapes under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act as conservation districts and/or defined cultural heritage landscapes.” (Section 1.5 (10))

Similarly, the County economic development objectives provide further impetus for the development of this Master Plan:

“To encourage the maintenance of existing recreation and tourism-related activities and land uses and the establishment of new facilities which diversify

recreational opportunities within the context of a year-round recreational/tourism community for all possible forms of recreation, such as skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, golfing, walking, hiking, biking, equestrian, and nature trail uses, and marina or water access activities, in a manner consistent with the preservation of the natural environment (Section 1.6.4).”

Within the context of Grey County, the preservation of the agricultural/rural way of life which defines the area has laced strategic importance on the creation of compatible economic opportunities in addition to the designation of rural heritage areas and/or countryside landscapes under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

This Master Plan serves to facilitate County priorities at the local policy level through the directions and recommendations outlined within.



William Croft Ball Diamonds & Irish Mountain Lookout (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



1.2.2.Achieving the Municipal Vision

The Municipality’s 2015-18 Strategic Plan identifies a vision for Meaford as “THE place to be on Southern Georgian Bay”. With a corporate mission to “provide leadership and effective governance in the delivery of quality, sustainable services”, the Strategic Plan sets forth priorities which seek to enhance quality of life for the community through the provision of municipal services and programs which maintain the following values:

- Respect – Inclusive, Open and Empathetic
- Integrity – Honest, Ethical and Accountable
- Community – Common Good, Resilient and Authentic
- Key strategies cited to accomplish this are as follows:
 - Implementing progressive service delivery
 - Ensuring properly aligned staffing resources
 - Investing in infrastructure
 - Celebrating heritage and promoting arts and culture
 - Enhancing parks and recreation

These elements and targets have been factored into the recommendations for recreation and culture.

The Municipality of Meaford, within its 2014 Official Plan, further recognizes the provision and development of culture and recreation services, programs and facilities and an opportunity to accommodate planned growth and economic development objectives. Strategic objectives to address growth and settlement priorities, as outlined in the Municipality’s OP are as follows:

“To reinforce the function of the downtown area as the primary cultural, business, entertainment and commercial focal point of the community.”

Municipality of Meaford Official Plan, Section A2.2.2(6)

“To encourage the further intensification of the urban area and the redevelopment of certain waterfront areas into a viable mixed-use area in such a way that it becomes a major tourism attraction in the area.”

Municipality of Meaford Official Plan, Section A2.2.2(7)

Local tourism has traditionally benefited from major culture and recreation attractors such as the Meaford Hall and Meaford Harbour. Enhancing and expanding the local leisure offer will in turn facilitate growth in the tourism industry. The Meaford Economic Development Strategy (2010) has identified targets as follows:

- *Meaford is known as a regional centre for arts and culture by 2020; and*
- *Meaford is known as a physical recreation centre (in/outdoors) by 2015.*

This Master Plan provides a framework to achieve and maintain these targets over the next 7+ years.



Source: RTO 7 Bruce Grey Simcoe

2 Plan Development Process

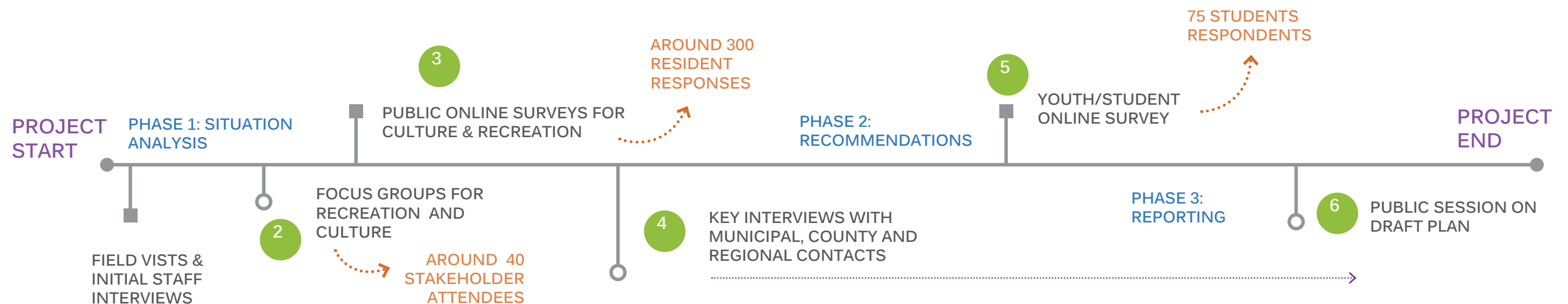
The recommendations contained within this Plan are based on a multi-layered, evidenced-based approach to providing for and furthering the enjoyment of recreation and cultural facilities and services in the Municipality. In accomplishing this, a series of consultation activities were launched to ensure that input from a range of audiences served to inform the document. The activities included:

- Municipal, regional and other stakeholder discussions and interviews;

- Two (2) initial focus group sessions/workshops with local leaders and community organizations for recreation and culture to identify strengths, challenges and opportunities for the development of the sectors;
- Public online surveys for culture and recreation; and
- Targeted youth surveys initiated in partnership with the Georgian Bay Secondary School.

Over 400 residents participated in the Master Plan consultation process. The details of their input can be found in the accompanying *Consultation Summary Report*.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE





3 Community Narrative

Meaford is a lower-tier municipality in Grey County, and is located in the Nottawasaga Bay in southwestern Ontario. The community’s cultural and physical landscape is evidence of a number of historic shifts in economy and settlement that have shaped existing dynamics. Prior to amalgamation the area was comprised on the following settlements:

- The Town of Meaford;
- The Township of St. Vincent; and
- The Township of Sydenham.

Each of these localities continue to offer character and distinction within the amalgamated municipality.

Historic Roots: Development and Settlement

Up to 1835, the land on which the Municipality of Meaford now sits was relatively unoccupied. In the summer of 1833, deputy provincial surveyor Charles Rankin was commissioned by the Province survey the land along the shores of the Nottawasaga Bay and, having worked his way through the territory, reserved 200 acres on the southern shore of Georgian Bay at the mouth of the Big Head River for the town plot of Meaford in 1835.

By 1845, lands allocated for the town were subdivided and continuous planning and development efforts yielded steady growth in settlement, and the development of infrastructure. By late 1872, the first train arrived in Meaford and 1875 by the town’s first Council took office. In the late 19th Century, the area which now functions as the municipality’s urban area sited multiple mills, carriage, factories, tanneries, foundries, shops, offices, insurance and money brokers, bakeries, dress and shoemakers, general and grocery stores. There were

also 10 hotels servicing the community and providing accommodations for the industrial and seasonal workforce.

Despite some initial settlement in the early 1820's, the immediate area surrounding the former town of Meaford, known as St. Vincent Township, was only formerly surveyed by the Province in 1833. The area was first called ‘Zero Township’ as it was the most northerly and thought to be the coldest. In 1837 when the settlers of St. Vincent lobbied the government of Upper Canada for the reservation of land for the development of a harbour at the mouth of the Bighead River in the town of Meaford – today known as the Meaford Harbour. The harbour facilitated the importing of goods and materials and export of local produce. With the development of the harbour, farm-related industry flourished. Even prior to amalgamation, inter-community collaboration allowed for settlements in the region to thrive.

Because of the township's bay-side location, the land was very conducive to agriculture. The Township also became a military base community with 23% (17,000 acres) of the township lands being occupied by the Department of National Defence as a training facility in 1942. The Canadian Forces continues to maintain this facility, now known the 4th Canadian Division Training Centre Meaford.

Just west of St. Vincent Township along the eastern border of Owen Sound, the geographic area comprising Sydenham Township was to be surveyed some 7 years after the town of Meaford in 1842. As new lot concessions were carved out, settlement and industry in the area began to extend further westward from the town of Meaford. With the development of schools, services and infrastructure, the area began to comprise of several small villages including: Leith, Annan, Hoath Head, Bognor, Balaclava, and Woodford. By 1861 there were over 3,000 people living in the township. The majority of first settlers in the area now known as the municipality of Meaford were immigrants from Scotland and Ireland.



With the amalgamation of the 3 municipalities in 2001, the Municipality of Meaford has a melded industrial, agricultural and military heritage which continues to shape its community. Meaford Harbour remains a vital tourism and recreational asset in the community. Likewise the urban area continues to be a service and employment centre to the rural areas comprising the former St. Vincent and Sydenham townships. Nonetheless, the Downtown has evolved from a heavily industrial community into a commercial, office and retail hub. The former townships continue to comprise the majority of the municipality's agricultural industries.





4 Impetus for Plan Development

4.1. Approach to Estimating Future Needs

As it relates to recreation, as a community that is expected to experience low population growth over the planning period to 2025, a number of recommendations are based on factors other than population-related needs for recreation facilities and services. These other factors include:

- **The relative utilization of existing facilities** benchmarked against identified trends in recreation and culture consumption within the community;
- **The age and functional condition of major indoor and outdoor facilities** and the degree of anticipated impact to the Municipality’s capital budget in future years in order to maintain these facilities in their current state; and
- **The variety of community input on the quality of services and facilities in Meaford** as well as the extent and timing of change that is required.

Based on the abovementioned, the extent and timing of individual actions are presented within this Master Plan.

In addition to these considerations, this Master Plan lends itself to a multi-pronged approach which evaluates the recreation delivery model in Meaford through an analysis of existing and potential partnerships for recreation and cultural delivery as well as other municipal investment (infrastructure, tourism etc.) which support the development of leisure opportunities in the Municipality.

The cultural mandate is different. The emergence of this sector, its needs and potential is rooted in a range of conditions – not the least of which is the imagination and depth of existing cultural expression. For culture, the primary goal is to explore, deepen and resource cultural development in all its forms.



Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre

4.2. Demographic Change

In assessing population dynamics, this Master Plan considers present and anticipated future population changes in the town and the surrounding area. In general, recommendations of this Master Plan take into account the following:

The Rate of Population Growth in Meaford has outpaced that of the County of Grey

- The residents of the Municipality of Meaford represent approximately 12% of Grey County’s population.
- As of 2011, the municipality’s population grew by 1.4% (from 10,948 persons in 2006 to 11,100 residents in 2011), compared to 0.2% for the



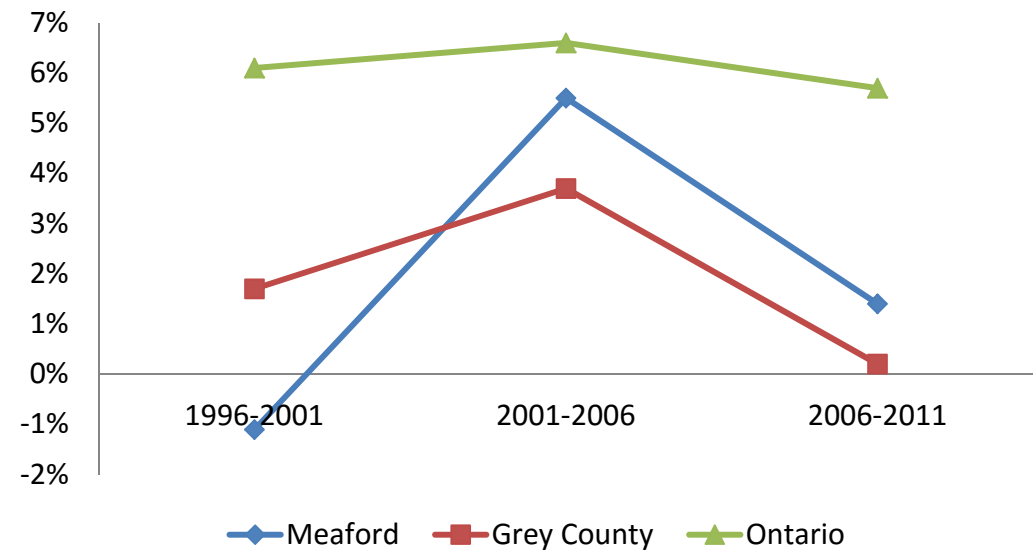
County and 5.7% for the Province.

- Compared to other communities in the County, the Meaford is a mid-growth municipality.

Exhibit 1: 2006-2011 Population Change for Neighbouring Municipalities

Census subdivision (CSD)	CSD type	Population		
		2011	2006	% Change
South Bruce Peninsula	T	8,413	8,415	0
Grey Highlands	MU	9,520	9,480	+0.4
Chatsworth	TP	6,437	6,392	+0.7
Meaford	MU	11,100	10,948	+1.4
The Blue Mountains	T	6,453	6,825	-5.5
Georgian Bluffs	TP	10,404	10,506	-1.0
Owen Sound	CY	21,688	21,753	-0.3
Hanover	T	7,490	7,147	+4.8
Southgate	TP	7,190	7,072	+1.7
West Grey	MU	12,286	12,288	0

Exhibit 2: 1996-2011 5-Year Permanent Population Growth Rates



Note: The 2001 Census shows Meaford as a Town which has since dissolved due to 2001 amalgamation of the Town of Meaford, St. Vincent and Sydenham Township. The 2001 figures are a summary of all three municipalities Census counts in 2001
Source: Statistics Canada, 2001-2011 Census years.

Meaford’s permanent population is expected to experience marginal growth over the next 10 years

- The municipality’s 2015 population is an estimated 12,207 residents.
- Meaford’s permanent population is expected to grow to 13,260 residents by 2025 at a compounded growth rate of .83%.

The Municipality is expected to accommodate 1,053 new residents over the 10 year planning period of this Master Plan.

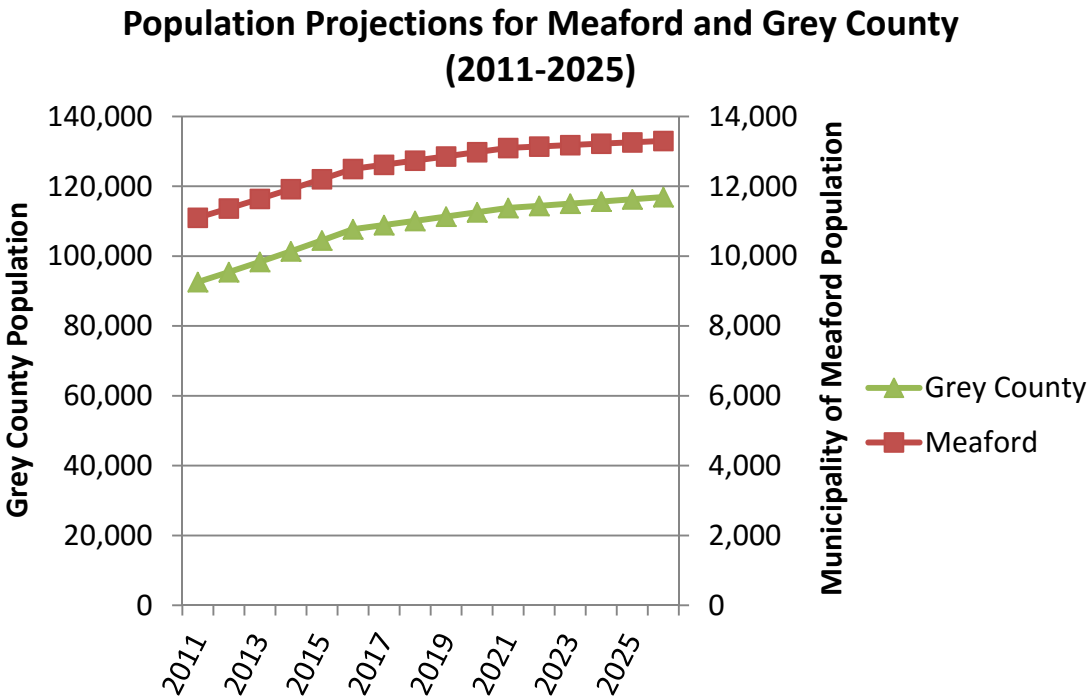
Exhibit 3: Meaford and Grey County Projected Population Count 2011-31

	Meaford Permanent Population	Grey County Permanent Population	Meaford's Share of Grey County
2011 Actual*	11,100	92,568	11.99%
2012	11,367	95,414	11.91%
2013	11,640	98,347	11.84%
2014	11,920	101,371	11.76%
2015	12,207	104,488	11.68%
2016	12,500	107,700	11.61%
2017	12,618	108,893	11.59%
2018	12,737	110,100	11.57%
2019	12,857	111,320	11.55%
2020	12,978	112,553	11.53%
2021	13,100	113,800	11.51%
2022	13,140	114,413	11.48%
2023	13,180	115,030	11.46%
2024	13,220	115,650	11.43%
2025	13,260	116,273	11.40%

(*) Note: Actual figures based on published 2011 Census data from Statistics Canada.

Note: Cells highlighted in green are based on population projections from Grey County’s Official Plan. Population projections in Municipality of Meaford Official Plan (Office Consolidation May 12, 2014) are the same as and align with the County’s estimates. Those cells which are not highlighted are based on the compound average annual growth.

Exhibit 4: 2011-2025 Permanent Population for Grey County and Meaford



Source: Municipality of Meaford Official Plan (Office Consolidation May 12, 2014) and Grey County Growth Management Strategy (2008)



Meaford’s seasonal population is expected to impact future demand for recreation and culture

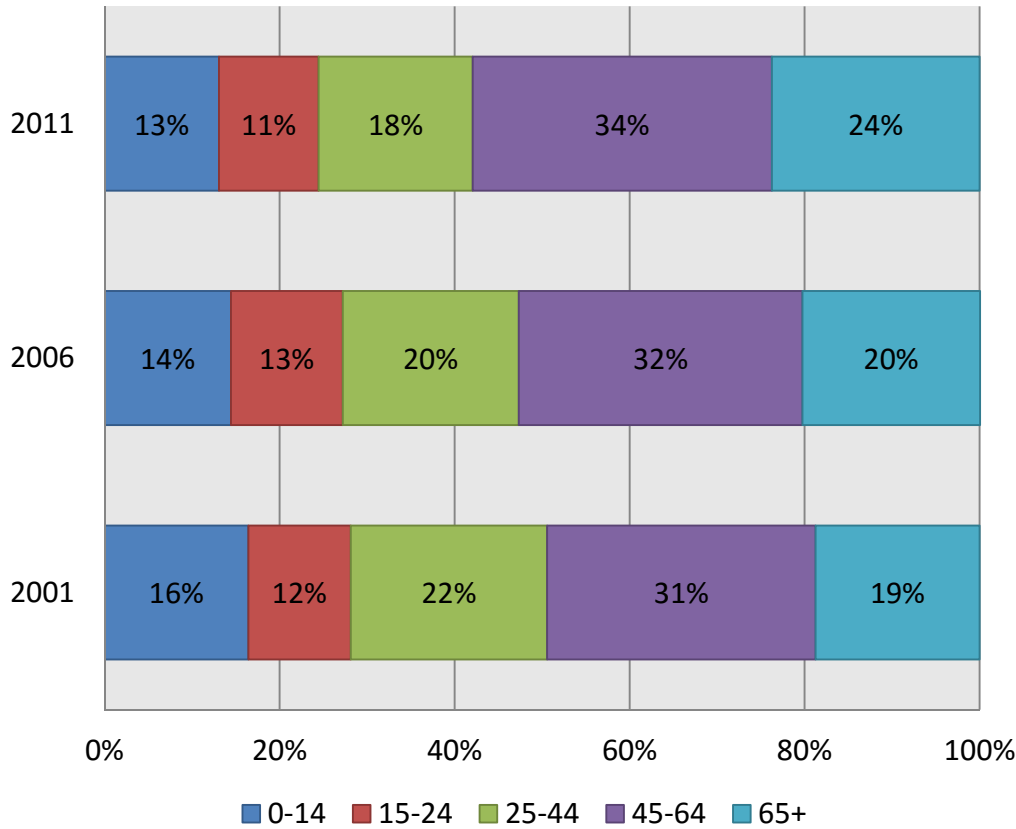
- Meaford had a total of 5,327 private dwellings in 2011, 13% (694 private dwellings) of which were seasonal homes and cottages. This accounts for a seasonal swell in the local population by approximately 2,500-3,000 +/- persons.
- Grey County projects that the number of seasonal dwellings in Meaford will grow to 1,200 by 2031 – an estimated 506 new seasonal homes over 20 years.
- This Master Plan takes into account current and projected seasonal population dynamics which are expected to affect demand for cultural and recreation services in the Municipality.

Meaford is Experiencing and Aging Population

- Meaford, like other communities across Ontario, is experiencing an aging population. The municipality’s 45-65+ age cohort increased from 50% in 2001 to 58% in 2011.
- Based on median age, the municipality’s population is relatively older than that of the County and the Province. In 2011, the median age of the Meaford’s population was 50.4 compared to the 47.3 for the County and 40.4 for the Province.
- As of 2011, the Municipality’s 45-65+ age cohort represented a larger share (58%) of its total population compared to the County (53%) and Province (46%).

- This is a major reason why planning for recreation and culture is important to maintaining opportunities for families and creative workers¹.

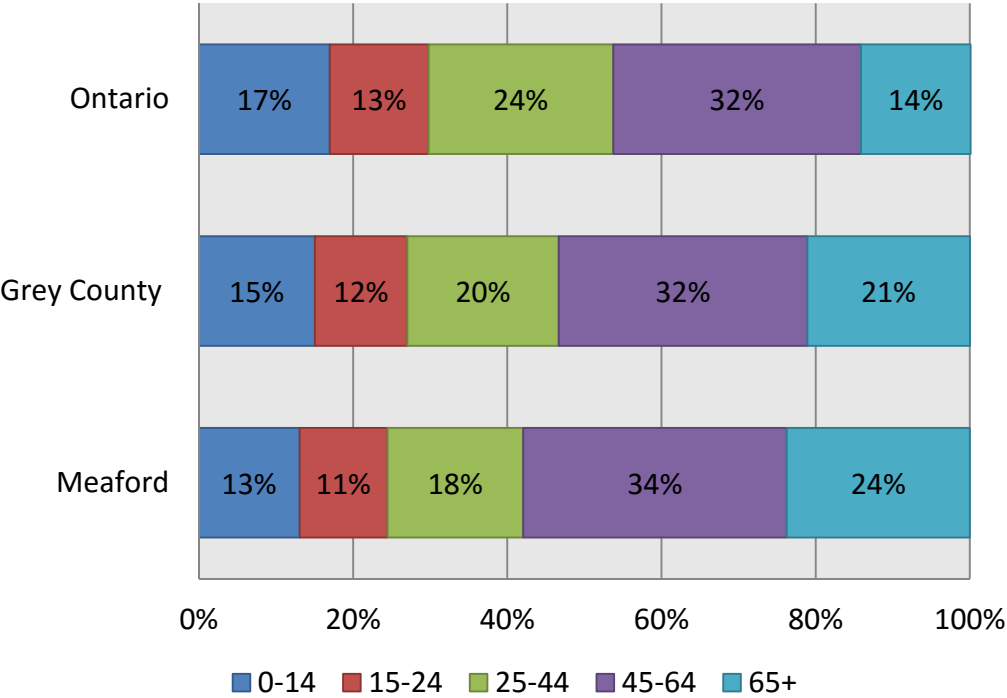
Exhibit 5: Municipality of Meaford 2001-2011 Age Distribution of the Population



¹ Creative workers is a general term applied to individuals that create designs or new products that are readily transferable. This includes cultural workers such as graphic designers as well as creators of new software etc.

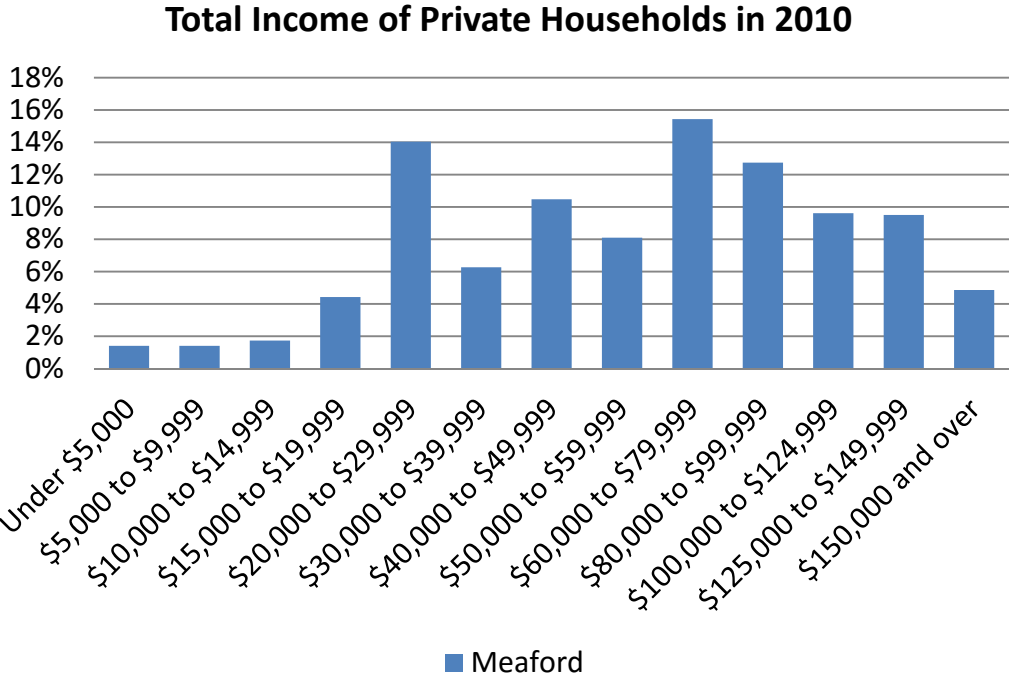


Exhibit 6: 2011 Age Distribution of the Permanent Population



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Exhibit 7: Distribution of Total Income for Households in Meaford



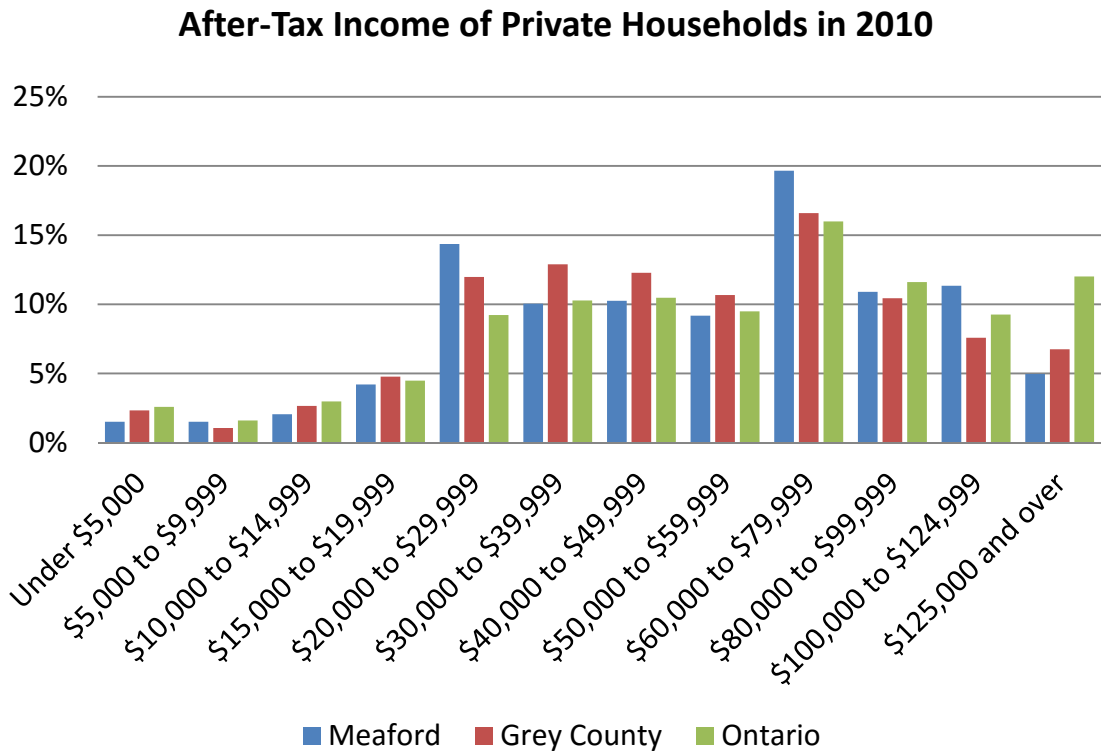
Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

Income impacts participation and access to recreation and cultural opportunities

Based on latest available National Household Survey data (2010), the average after-tax income for households in Meaford was \$62,614, compared to \$60,964 for Grey County and \$71,523 for the Province. Roughly 25% of households in Meaford were single person households and almost 30% of households generated a total income of under \$40,000 per annum. While Meaford’s households are relatively higher income compared to other communities in Grey County, this Master Plan considers that an important segment of Meaford’s population is relatively low-income, and recreation and cultural services must be designed to address this.



Exhibit 8: Distribution of Total Income for Households in Meaford, Grey County and Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey



Georgian Trail

Recreation and culture as a facilitator of family and youth retention

In 2005 the Bruce Grey Huron Perth Georgian Triangle Training Board in partnership with the University of Guelph, undertook an in-depth study of the labour force dynamics in Bruce and Grey Counties. The Bruce Grey Skills Inventory: Present and Future report identified the following:

- Grey County has a higher proportion of males and females in the 45 years and over age group and a much lower proportion of males and females in the 20-25 and 25-44 year old primary working age group compared to the Province.



- The County also saw a reduction in its young families due to out-migration of the younger members of the work force resulting in a lower representation of the 0-4 age group than the Province.

A 2012 migration patterns study commissioned by the Four County (Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth) Labour Market Planning Board also identified similar trends. The 2012 Migration Trends and Characteristics Report (2006-2011) identified that Grey County attracted 20,916 persons through in-migration (largely intra-provincial migration) while losing 18,925 to out-migration. The initiation of County and municipal economic development and industry growth initiatives as well as other market dynamics will dictate the employment opportunities in the County – this includes those priorities related to the recreation, culture and tourism sectors.

The ability to sustain Meaford’s young families and residents will in part be influence by the quality of life equation offered in the community. Recreation and cultural opportunities form part of the quality of life offer to both existing and potential residents of Meaford.



Meaford’s Scenic Views (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



New residential developments are expected to impact demand for services

The Municipality in its Official Plan identifies that as a result of growth to the west and east of Meaford, it is estimated that the population of the Municipality will increase by between 2,000 and 4,000 people by 2026. Many of the new residents are expected to be active adults, empty nesters and retirees; however, Meaford is also poised to attract additional population due to the expanding recreational/service industry in the wider area.

Population growth is also anticipated to occur as a result of people seeking an alternative to the housing options available in Owen Sound. It is one of the goals of the municipality to attract a balanced population to ensure that the schools and hospital in the community remain viable.

5 The Assets

5.1. The Recreation Inventory

5.1.1. The Indoor Asset Base

The table below summarizes the consulting team’s review and inventory of indoor leisure facilities in Meaford based on ownership and type of facility. The findings below are an amalgamation of the results of the consulting team’s September 2014 field review as well as existing data provided by the Municipality of Meaford and other available databases of information.

There are 30 indoor recreation and cultural facilities in Meaford, 21 of which are municipally-owned including one single pad arena at the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre, the Meaford Hall and 4 community halls dispersed across the urban and rural areas of the Municipality.

Major privately-owned assets include the Meaford Curling Club. The Municipality’s local gymnasias are largely within school board ownership. The local Canadian Military Training base, when feasible, makes its fitness space available for public use.

	Ownership				Total
	Municipal	School Board	Private	Other*	
Indoor Facilities					
Ice Pads	1	0	0	0	1
Auditoria	1	3	0	0	4
Community Halls/Centres	4	0	0	0	4
Arts and Cultural Centre	1	0	0	0	1
Library	1	0	0	0	1
Museum	1	0	0	0	1
Designated Community Meeting Spaces ²	11	0	0	0	11
Curling Facility	0	0	1	0	1
Gymnasia/Fitness	0	3	0	1	4

5.1.2. The Outdoor Asset Base

Parks, trails and open space are signature features in the Municipality of Meaford. Meaford’s portfolio of outdoor leisure facilities includes basketball and tennis courts, soccer fields, play areas and an outdoor pool.

² This figure includes halls as well as individual meeting spaces within other major facilities (e.g. the Terrace Room within Meaford Hall) which are available for community use.

	Ownership				Total
	Municipal	School Board	Private	Other*	
Outdoor Facilities					
Tennis Courts	2	0	0	0	2
Basketball Courts	2.5	2	0	0	4.5
Multi-use Courts	1	0	0	0	1
Outdoor Pool	1	0	0	0	1
Ball Diamonds	4	0	0	1	5
Sportsfields	1	5	3 ³	0	9
Skateboard Park	1	0	0	0	1
Splash Pads	1	0	0	0	1
Running Track	0	1	0	0	1
Golf Courses	0	0	3	0	3
Mini-Golf Course	1	0	0	0	1
Lawn Bowling	0	0	1	0	1
Harbour/Marina	1	0	0	0	1
Playground areas	5	2	0	3	10
Parks	18	0	0	0	18
Dog Park/Dog Friendly Area	2	0	0	0	2
Campgrounds	1	0	2	0	3
Beaches	8	0	0	1	9
Beach Volleyball Court	1	0	0	0	1
Trails	1	0	1	5	7
Conservation Areas/ Reserves/Management Areas	0	0	0	14	14

³ This figure comprise two full-sized soccer fields and two mini (.5) soccer fields as maintained by the soccer club.

The Municipality has approximately 95 outdoor recreation and leisure facilities (51 of which are in Municipal ownership) for passive, active, formal and informal use by for residents. Meaford’s outdoor facilities constitute the larger share of its recreation asset inventory. These include:

- 1 standard 25-metre outdoor pool;
- 1 double court tennis facility;
- 10 playground areas and a splashpad;
- 1 skatepark facility;
- 4 ball diamonds (3 lit, 1 unlit);
- 1 Municipally-owned and operated campground;
- Several beach areas and the Meaford Harbour facility; and
- A privately operated lawn-bowling facility.



Meaford’s Waterfront (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



5.2. Meaford’s Cultural Assets: Industries, Events & Artistic Flair

Section 10 of this report provides a definition of culture and outlines the parameters for analysis of the sector in Meaford. The identification and mapping of cultural assets built of previous cultural mapping work undertaken by the Municipality and Grey County as well as other data available from the local heritage society, event listings etc. This resource mapping exercise involved the identification and recording of tangible cultural resources by means of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools and platforms. Consistent with the Ontario Cultural Resource Framework (CRF), baseline database mapping identified over 150 cultural assets in Meaford as follows:

Exhibit 9: Cultural Resources in Meaford



Key spaces and facilities include Meaford Hall, the Museum and Public Library as well as other community assets such as Leith Church which hosts concert series for the community. Meaford is home to a host of independent artists and cultural enterprises, most of which function as home occupations. An analysis of 2014 Canadian Business Pattern (CBP) data from Statistics Canada further validates this (see below).

5.2.1. Cultural Industries

In a more detailed assessment of local cultural industries, our team identified a total of 46 registered cultural businesses in Meaford, 57% of which were involved in the Design/Civic Arts sector (based on 2014 Canadian Business Pattern (CBP) data provided by Statistics Canada).



Meaford Hall (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

The Canadian Business Pattern data provided a count of business establishments (by nine employment size ranges) in Meaford, Grey County and Ontario by 6-digit NAICS industry code⁴. The 6-digit NAICS categories were then assessed against the 2011 Classification Guide for the Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS)⁵. The selected 6-digit NAICS codes were then grouped into broader cultural industry categories as follows:

Exhibit 10: Sierra Planning & Management Categorization of 6-Digit NAICS Cultural Codes

Categories	Industries
Communications Media	Broadcasting (Radio, Television and Internet) etc.
Electronic Arts	Sound Recording, Motion Picture and Software Publishing etc.
Design/Civic Arts	Architecture and related services, Graphic Design etc.
Visual Arts and Crafts	Photography , Pottery, Textile and Jewelry Design etc.
Literary Arts	Print Publications, Libraries and Archives etc.
Performing Arts	Theatre, Music and Dance Companies, Live Performers etc.
Heritage	Heritage and Historic Sites, Natural Heritage etc.

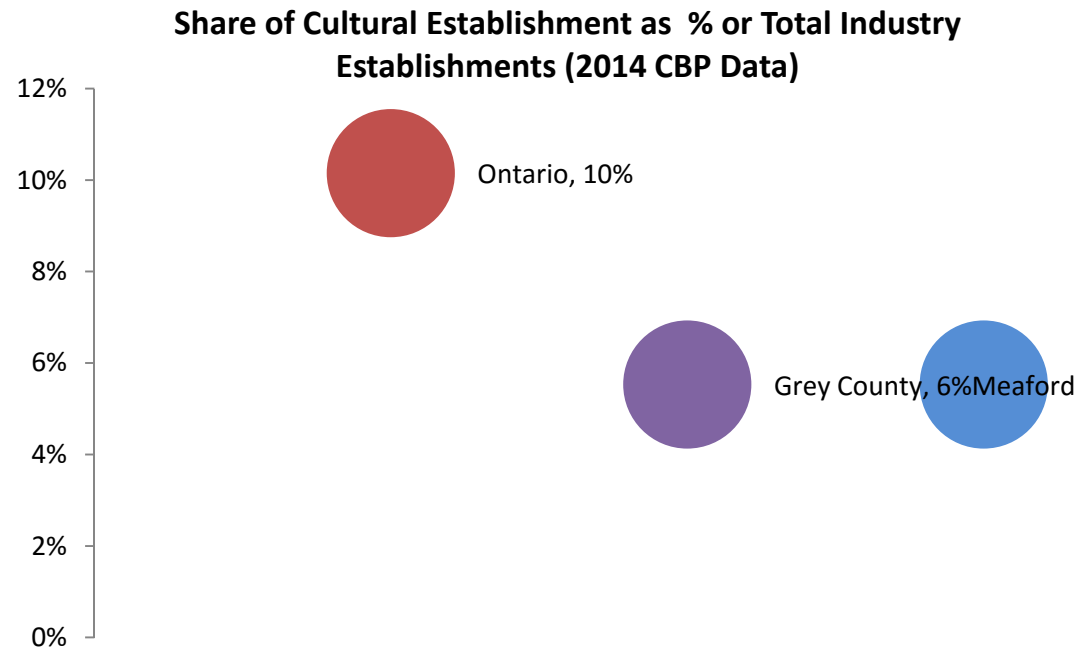
*Based on North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as outlined in Statistics Canada’s 2011 Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics.

⁴ The data published reflects the number of business locations or establishments identified from the Canadian Business Register Database for the year 2014.

⁵ The Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics (CFCS), which represents Canada’s first conceptual model for culture statistics that provided a systematic approach to measurement and analysis of the culture sector in Canada from which the Cultural resource Framework (CRF) was developed.

Of the 46 businesses located in the municipality, 33 of these establishments (71%) were classified as ‘indeterminate’ and were defined to “not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce which consists of contracted workers, family members or business owners”⁶. With respect to those establishments with determinable employment figures, the majority comprised 1 – 4 employees (i.e. mostly small businesses). Based on Canadian Business Pattern data, cultural businesses represent roughly 6% of total establishments in Meaford. Similar industry trends were identified for Grey County.

Exhibit 11: Cultural Establishments as a Share of Total Enterprise in Ontario, Grey County and Meaford



Source: Sierra Planning and Management based on 2014 Canadian Business Patterns Data from Statistics Canada

⁶ June 2014 Canadian Business Register Database – Definitions.



6 Current Delivery Model for Recreation and Culture

6.1. The Municipality as a Recreation Provider

A Provider of the First Choice for Select Local Facilities

Currently, the Municipality of Meaford is the provider of first choice for select leisure facilities within the municipality, having operational control of the only indoor ice surface in the community, the lion-share of marine, beach and park facilities and associated infrastructure such as ball diamonds etc.

There are, however, select and/or niche sporting activities for which the Municipality is not synonymously associated with as a primary delivery agent. This includes activities such as basketball, track and field, soccer, curling and lawn bowling – programs and facilities for which are largely provided by the private sector and/or the school board.

School facilities supplement to the leisure facility supply in the Meaford and work well to provide additional opportunities for recreation for the community. Nonetheless, public access to such facilities is secondary and limited to availability outside of school/school board activities. For this reason, school facilities play a supporting role by and large for recreation use by members of the public. While school facilities serve to meet current gaps in the municipal supply of indoor facilities – particularly as it relates to gymnasias – no joint use agreements exist between the Municipality of Meaford and the Board to help facilitate and encourage greater community use of these facilities. This is an opportunity which should be addressed as a forward measure.

More readily, residents and groups in Meaford may otherwise opt to utilize recreation facilities in the surrounding communities (e.g. Owen Sound and Town of Blue Mountains) where local facilities are deemed to be insufficient in scale, availability and/or lacking altogether from the recreation portfolio.

Municipal entry into Programming

The delivery of leisure programming in Meaford has historically been a largely community and volunteer-driven initiative. As an organization, the Municipality of Meaford has only in the past few of years sought to establish itself as a recreation program provider. This move came as a result of the recognition of significant gaps and inconsistency in recreation activities made available to the public. The Municipality has generally positioned itself as a provider of programs that are not otherwise and/or are insufficiently offered by other entities in the community. The development of new public program options is a progressive initiative; one in which the Municipality aims to be highly responsive to community need and demand. This Master Plan retains this principle for program provision.

6.2. The Municipality as Provider of Cultural Services & Facilities

With respect to culture, the Municipality is also the sole owner and operator of the community’s major theatre, performance and cultural venue – the Meaford Hall. Other major community cultural assets within the Municipal portfolio include the Meaford Museum and Library building. With the exception of the Meaford Public Library, staff support for culture has, in the past, largely focused on facility management rather than direct program delivery – to a greater extent allowing the volunteer sector to lead the programming mandate and cater to the diverse cultural programming needs of residents.

The Municipality currently adopts a hybrid approach with respect to the delivery of cultural facilities, services and programming. In recent years the Municipality has taken a more ‘hands-on’ and interventionist role in the development of cultural opportunities, working in partnership with community groups to stimulate new experiences. Recognizing the gaps in support/resources available to cultural groups to fully expand the cultural mandate, the Municipality is actively leveraging and directing its resources for the development of new cultural opportunities locally. The Municipality desires to better facilitate community programming (offered by local groups) within its existing spaces to create more visibility and



viability for arts and cultural opportunities. Similar to its approach to recreation, where gaps in activities exist, the Municipality actively seeks partnerships and planning solutions to initiate these opportunities were feasible.

Section 9 and 10 further details Municipal organizational resources for culture and recreation delivery.

7 Establishing the Vision

Beyond the demographic, geographic and economic results, there are key pillars in plan-making that help cast the vision, principles and goals. With over 400 individuals providing their input to this project, the following reflect key priorities/principles expressed by residents as being important to consider in the development of this Master Plan and which should inform the vision for recreation and culture in Meaford.

1

Prudent Investment & Operational Efficiency:

Use what we have better (explore multi-use where possible).

2

Create Multi-Generational Experiences, Facilities and Activities:

Invest in youth, seniors and families

3

Create Community Hubs:

Enhance co-location of facilities and activities.

4

Consider Seasonality:

Expand indoor opportunities for recreation.

5

Make the Most of Waterfront Assets:

Culturally the water's edge is significant and current planning for enhancement should be supported and used as a leverage for greater cultural tourism.

6

Make Culture Accessible:

This includes both cultural spaces and programs.

PART 2

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE



8.1 The Vision

Meaford is a community that offers exceptional leisure experiences that celebrate and showcase our natural and scenic vistas, cultural charm and embraces our rural and urban heritage.

8.2 Mission

To optimize community infrastructure and partnerships for the innovative and sustainable delivery of services for quality recreation experiences and cultural prosperity.



8.3 Principles for Recreation & Culture

The following outlines the principles for recreation and culture on which the goals and recommendations of this Master Plan are based:

Promoting Community Quality of Life

1

1. The Municipality of Meaford will encourage and enable sustainable delivery and investment in cultural and recreation spaces, experiences and amenities as a means of ensuring quality of life and community legacy for present and future generations.
2. The Municipality recognizes the role that recreation and culture play in promoting health lifestyles and community well-being.
3. The Municipality will encourage participation in sport at every stage of life and the pursuit of healthy, active lifestyles.
4. The Municipality will facilitate health and wellness through passive and active leisure opportunities which allow residents to maximize participation in recreation in their daily lives.

Affordability and Access

2

1. The Municipality of Meaford supports access to cultural and recreation opportunities for all residents irrespective of education, age, income, ethnicity and gender.
2. The Community Services Department will continue to explore and implement ways to remove physical, financial and social barriers to participation in recreation and culture through efficient facility planning, maintenance and operations as well as management procedures.
3. The Community Services Department will aim to provide affordable programs, services and access to facilities for children, youth and parents/guardians. In so doing, The Department will aim to ensure that the pricing of recreational and cultural services do not impede or reduce participation.

Evolutionary Programming: Maximizing Opportunities Over Time

3

1. The Municipality will strive to accommodate new and emerging demand for recreation and cultural activities through programming.
2. The Community Services Department will continue to develop its recreation and cultural programming mandate over time as a means of ensuring residents experience the full benefit of facilities.

Prioritizing Sustainability

4

1. Investment in new recreation infrastructure should ensure commitment to sustainability of the environment. This is anticipated to translate into consideration of systems, design, construction methods and operating processes that seek to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact.
2. All investment should be sustainable in financial and operational terms within the context of municipal subsidy of recreational activities and facilities. To that end, detailed business plans should be prepared as necessary for major investment. Accordingly there is a balance to be struck between the elements of sustainability - environmental impact, social impact and fiscal impact.



Enhancing Community Connections

5

1. The Municipality commits to enhance and facilitate opportunities for festivals and events, talent and cultural industry development, recognizing cultural prosperity as a contributor to economic prosperity.
2. The Community Services Department will strive to accommodate emerging recreation and cultural user groups within its facilities.
3. The Municipality will continue to maximize its role as a public information provider and supporter of community wellness through the promotion of recreation and cultural programs, activities and facilities.
4. The Community Services Department will promote the benefits of participation in recreation and culture through web-based, social and other media marketing as well as through strategic partnerships with local/regional health organizations.

Partnerships and Collaboration a Core Strategy

6

1. The Community Services Department recognizes the value of partnerships for culture and recreation program development. The department will strive to ensure the most effective use of the Municipality's resources in order to maximize all opportunities for partnership development with other municipalities, school boards, institutions etc.
2. Where appropriate, the Municipality will pursue partnerships with other public, community and private sector providers in order to facilitate the provision of a diverse range of recreation and culture services.
3. Community Services recognizes the value of partnerships for the development of recreation and culture and will strive to ensure the most effective use of Municipal resources to maximize all opportunities for partnership development and sponsorship (including with industry and the corporate sector).

Celebrate Natural Assets

7

1. The Municipality will continue to celebrate its natural and waterfront assets through strategic investment and development which showcases Meaford Harbour as a resident and visitor attraction.
2. The Municipality will continue to maximize public access and use of its natural and waterfront assets through the exploration of programming options and the promotion of recreation and cultural activities associated with these assets.
3. The Municipality will ensure public enjoyment of its parks and open spaces through festivals and events as a principle of ongoing planning.

Investment in Infrastructure

8

1. The Community Services Department will continue to maintain a high standard of facility maintenance and will plan efficiently towards the replacement of facilities and amenities as may be required over time.
2. Facility provision/planning for recreation and culture in Meaford is to be undertaken on a Municipal-wide basis. The Municipality will maintain the existing practice of the urban area servicing the recreation needs of the rural area. It follows that facility planning needs to reflect:
 - Value for money in capital investment;
 - Operational efficiency through multi-use of facilities and co-location; and
 - Maximizing the economic development potential (for e.g. sport tourism) associated with such investment.
3. Where appropriate, the Municipality will supplement planning for facilities at the level of service districts as relevant for specific community-serving outdoor facilities.

9 The Blueprint for Recreation

9.1 Goals & Objectives

Goal: Ensure Responsive & Long-term Planning for Infrastructure

1

- To enhance where feasible and fiscally sustainable the use life of existing facilities through investment in improvements and renewal. This requires a comparison of the costs and benefits of facility renewal against new construction.
- To consider alternative facility delivery/operation models and pursue partnerships in this regard where other community partners best able to provide specific types of facilities.
- To pursue all opportunities to develop recreation and cultural infrastructure by leveraging Provincial and other funding programs that exist.
- To support investment in facilities which enhances opportunities for multi-use and/or alternative use in order to enhance utilization and revenue generation.

2

Goal: Promote Health, Wellness and Active Living

2

- To promote physical activity as a way of life and quality of life through programming and education.
- To offer opportunities for participation in recreation for all members of the community irrespective of age, ability, ethnicity and income; and
- To ensure passive and active recreational opportunities are accessible through a range of unaffiliated activities (e.g. trails).

3

Goal: Maximize Access to Recreational Opportunities, Programs and Services

3

- To become the recreation program provider of the ‘first resort’ where gaps and limitations exist in the programs offered by the private/volunteer sector.
- To continue to promote and enhance public awareness of recreation programs, services, opportunities, and events through community-based knowledge and information-sharing tools;
- To facilitate new and emerging needs for recreation activities and programs which are responsive to demographic and community change.
- To develop and maintain a range of essential programs which have multi-generational appeal, from youth to seniors.
- To continuously investigate new ways to develop programs in partnership with local/regional service organizations.
- To ensure best possible access to facilities through effective facility booking protocols and subsidized rates.
- To investigate flexible program options to enhance the participation (e.g. mobile programming).

Goal: Enhance the Operations of the Community Services Department

4

- To grow department revenues (through programming, fees etc.) and reduce costs associated with operations while maintaining participation;
- To continue to ensure municipal cross-departmental collaboration, planning and decision-making, where tourism as well as planning and development considerations give priority to the conservation and expansion of recreational and cultural opportunities in the Municipality;
- To develop and maintain effective partnerships for program development as well as service and facility delivery by continually seeking to enhance communication and collaboration with regional, municipal/public, private, institutional and community stakeholders to ensure effective planning for recreation (through facility use mechanisms, policies etc.).

Goal: Target Children and Youth through Recreation

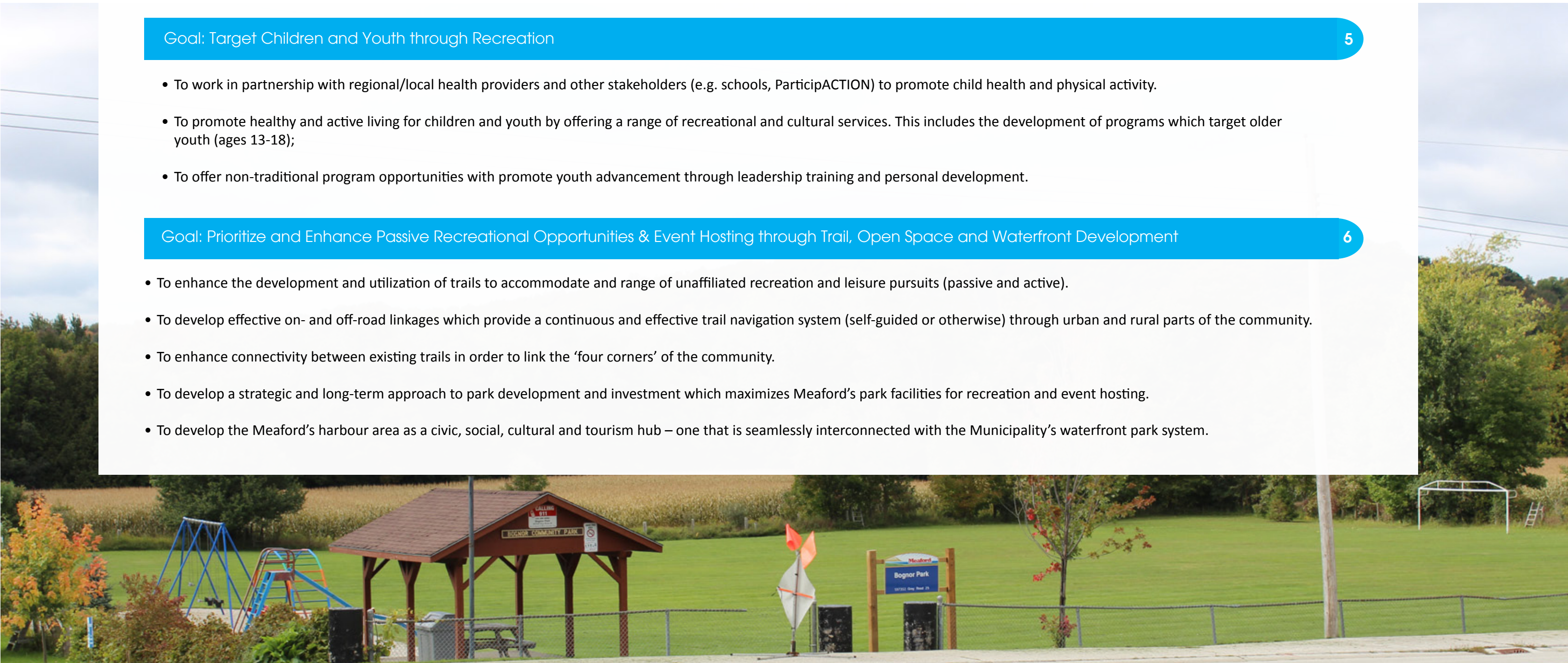
5

- To work in partnership with regional/local health providers and other stakeholders (e.g. schools, ParticipACTION) to promote child health and physical activity.
- To promote healthy and active living for children and youth by offering a range of recreational and cultural services. This includes the development of programs which target older youth (ages 13-18);
- To offer non-traditional program opportunities with promote youth advancement through leadership training and personal development.

Goal: Prioritize and Enhance Passive Recreational Opportunities & Event Hosting through Trail, Open Space and Waterfront Development

6

- To enhance the development and utilization of trails to accommodate a range of unaffiliated recreation and leisure pursuits (passive and active).
- To develop effective on- and off-road linkages which provide a continuous and effective trail navigation system (self-guided or otherwise) through urban and rural parts of the community.
- To enhance connectivity between existing trails in order to link the 'four corners' of the community.
- To develop a strategic and long-term approach to park development and investment which maximizes Meaford's park facilities for recreation and event hosting.
- To develop the Meaford's harbour area as a civic, social, cultural and tourism hub – one that is seamlessly interconnected with the Municipality's waterfront park system.





9.2. An Approach to Service Delivery

This Master Plan recognizes individual service districts/areas within the municipality. The identification of service districts is meant to ensure that **both** the rural and urban areas of the municipality are appropriately serviced by facilities. Dependent on the nature and scale of use of amenities, facility recommendations are based on planning for various types of facilities at a municipal, community and/or neighbourhood level of service as appropriate. The use of service districts also serves to ensure that where there are important differences in the population, demographic and household makeup across various parts of the municipality (including the rural area) – that these are recognized and addressed in the forward planning efforts of the Community Service Department.

The Master Plan identifies service districts as follows:

- **SD1 – Urban Service Area:** comprises the urban and commercial core of Meaford and its immediate surroundings. This area has the highest level of population and household concentration.
- **SD 2 – Rural Area North:** comprises the communities of Annan, Leith, Balaclava and Woodford.
- **SD 2 – Rural Area South:** comprises the communities of Bognor and Sydenham.

The idea of service districts:

- Is to be responsive to needs in a community that is so large or split between the urban and rural area, that attention to sub-areas is warranted; and
- Reflects the use of differing standards.



9.2.1.Characteristics of Service Districts

The following provides an overview of the demographic make-up of recreation service districts in Meaford.

Population and Households

SD1 – Urban Service Area:

Service District 1 has roughly 62% of the municipality’s population (i.e. 6,850 residents in 2011) and 58% of its youth⁷ base. However, with the youth cohort representing less than 20% of the area’s population, SD1 is generally the older of service districts based on median age and surpasses the median age for the entire municipality (see the table below). SD 1 also comprises Meaford’s smaller households (at 2.2 persons per household compared to 2.6 and 2.5 for SD 2 North and South respectively).

Exhibit 12: Characteristics of Service Districts based on 2011 Census Data

	SD 1	SD 2 N	SD 2 S	Total Meaford
Total Pop. (2011)	6650	2508	1942	11100
0-19 Pop. (2011)	1225	465	410	2100
0-9 Pop. (2011)	575	180	160	915
Median Age (2011)	52	50	47.4	50.4
Occupied Households	2896	960	777	4633
Average PPH	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.3

Source: Statistics Canada 2011 Census and 2010 National Household Survey (NHS)

⁷ Youth is defined to be persons 0-19 years of age.

Service District 2 – North: features the larger of Meaford’s households and has approximately 22% of the municipality’s youth population.

Service District 2 – South: is the younger of the districts based on median age (47.4) and has a large Person Per Household (PPH) rate. This area is likely home to many of Meaford’s younger families.

9.2.2.Hub Zones for Recreation

Meaford’s 2013 Sustainability Report recommended the development of community hubs at key locations in the Municipality as means of ensuring a range of efficiencies in service delivery. The report identified that:

“Community hubs provide needed resources, often in centralized locations combining a number of services and agencies. Community hubs are typically established in public buildings where there is the co-location of services and facilities to provide local access to communities. Hubs can operate outside of typical business hours (evenings & weekends) and provide a wide range of services and facilities including: education, parks, meeting places, health services, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, drop-in centres for parents or youth, social services, etc. Very often, older buildings used for schools, churches, community centres, etc. are the only buildings available, especially in smaller communities, that are centrally located and have the building space (or land for building expansion) to provide these hubs.”

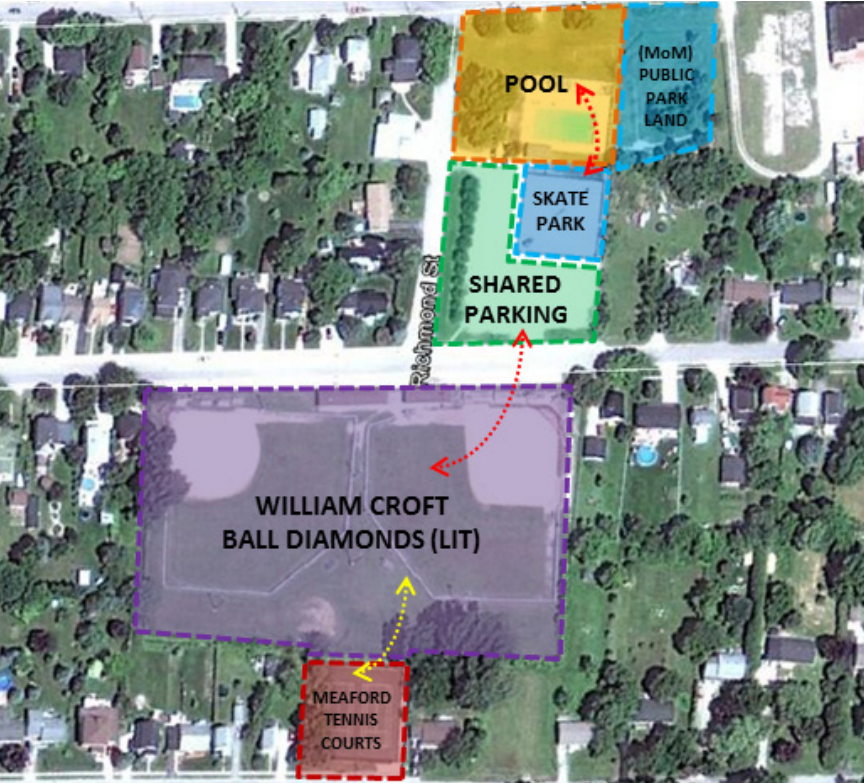
This Master Plan recognizes the benefit of developing community recreation hubs, however, as it relates to Meaford and the recommendations of this document, these are largely outdoor recreation hubs. Major considerations for indoor amenities center solely on the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre and surrounding lands/facilities.

**SD 1: NODE #1:
Meaford Arena, Curling Club Site**



Over the long-term, the potential exists to enhance the physical connections (via landscaping and hardscaping) between the arena, curling club and Fairgrounds properties to create a ‘connected’ experience for residents.

**SD 1: NODE #2:
Blue Dolphin Pool, Skate Park and Area**



Investment in facilities should be complemented by improved the physical connections (via landscaping and hardscaping) to create more of a recreation ‘campus’.

**SD 1: NODE #3:
Meaford Harbour and Area**



The implementation of the Master Plan for Meaford Harbour will enhance the role of this area as a civic and social hub for the community.

SD 2 (S): Node #4: Bognor Park and Hall



The Bognor Park and Hall are existing recreation and cultural assets in Meaford. Modest investment in these facilities per the recommendations of this Master Plan will enhance the function of this location as a community hub.





9.3. Planning for Facilities

9.3.1. Facility Standards

Our facility-based recommendations reflect the balance between expressed community wants and needs, and population- and participation-based standards of provision.

Community needs and wants are those that are expressed by members of the public, stakeholders and community groups. They reflect the aspirations of the community as communicated through the public engagement process associated with the Master Plan process.

These identified aspirations are balanced by population- and participation-based standards of provision - guidelines to inform decision-making regarding the appropriate range of facilities at municipal/community and neighbourhood scales. They reflect, in part, expected utilization of a given facility versus its capacity, and accordingly expected revenues and subsidization. Population-based standards of provision can provide a more general picture of the required population to support a facility, while participation-based standards of provision more accurately reflect local recreation and leisure trends.

Standards represent important guidelines, however no one plan or standard can be applied to every community. They must rather be adapted to locally expressed needs, values, interests, and financial capabilities. As an example, while an “average” community across the country provides indoor arenas at a rate of 1 per 20,000 residents⁸, this may not apply to a community of 5,000 that decides that demand for indoor ice is sufficient to warrant the initial investment and ongoing operating subsidy associated with the development of an indoor arena.

We have provided our professional opinion on the range of recreation facilities in Meaford. The adoption of the Master Plan for future planning for recreation

⁸ Guidelines for Developing Public Recreation Facility Standards, Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation (2004)

facilities should include recognition of the importance of the use of service and facility standards. Changes to the rate of growth of the community do not alter the standards but instead impact the point at which population growth triggers the need for investment.

An appropriate use of standards can aid in decision-making well in advance of achieving the population triggers that justify new facilities. Based on predicted growth, even with variation in the rate of growth, the standards adopted in this plan translate into the necessary timeline for the following preparatory work to be undertaken:

- 1. Commitment to the development of facilities (new or existing);
- 2. Providing for advance planning in terms of the most appropriate locations; and
- 3. Creating the necessary funding strategy and delivery mechanisms to build and operate the facilities.

While the needs and opportunities in the rural area vary compared to the urban area, standards present the necessary framework to help plan for sustainable infrastructure. This, in part, results from the fact that standards broadly reflect the experience of other communities as well as the balance between the cost of facilities and community need. As an example, the cost to provide an outdoor aquatic facility generally restricts this development to the urban area with a sufficient population and tax base to justify development and ongoing operating subsidy. Knowing this gives the Municipality the option to determine whether or not to vary or otherwise alter the standards in relation to specific circumstances. It is in this context that we recognize that Council may deviate from the minimum standards of provision outlined in this Master Plan.

Exhibit 13: Current and Target Population-based Standards of Recreation Facility Provision for the Municipality of Meaford

	Ownership				Total	Standards	
	Municipal	School Board	Private	Other*		Current	Target
Indoor Facilities							
Ice Pad	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	1: 15,000 residents
Auditoria	1	3	0	0	4	1: 3,052 residents	Target not applicable
Community Halls/Centres	4	0	0	0	4	1: 3,052 residents	Target not applicable
Designated Community Meeting Spaces	11	0	0	0	11	1: 1,110 residents	Target not applicable
Curling Facility	0	0	1	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable
Gymnasia/Fitness Space*	0	3	1	1	4	1: 3,052 residents	Target not applicable
Equestrian Centre	0	0	1	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable
Outdoor Facilities							
Tennis Courts	2	0	0	0	2	1: 6,103 residents	1: 4,000 residents
Basketball Courts	2.5	2	0	0	4.5	1: 2,713 residents	1: 5,000 residents
Multi-use Courts	2	0	0	0	2	1: 6,103 residents	Target not applicable
Outdoor Pool	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	1: 20,000 residents
Ball Diamonds	4	0	0	1	5	1: 2,441 residents	1: 4,000 residents
Sportsfields	1	5	3	0	9	1: 1,356 residents	1: 3,000 residents
Skateboard Park	1	0	0	0	1	1: 2,105 youth*	1: 5,000 youth*
Splash Pads	1	0	0	0	1	1: 2,105 youth*	1: 5,000 youth*
Running Track	0	1	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	1: 6,000 residents
Golf Courses	0	0	3	0	3	1: 4,069 residents	Target not applicable
Mini-golf Course	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable
Lawn Bowling	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable
Harbour/Marina	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable
Playgrounds	5	2	0	3	10	1: 1,221 residents	Target not applicable
Dog Park/Dog Friendly Area	2	0	0	0	2	1: 6,103 residents	Target not applicable
Campgrounds	1	0	2	0	3	1: 4,069 residents	Target not applicable
Beaches	8	0	0	1	9	1: 1,356 residents	Target not applicable
Beach Volleyball Court	1	0	0	0	1	1: 12,207 residents	Target not applicable

*For example: other institutional (excluding school boards) or government ownership

*Standard based on 2011 Census youth population (0-19 years): 2,105

* Play areas reflects the number of locations of facilities and not the number of individual play structures on-site.

Parks and Open Space		Standard	
	Total	Current	Target
Total Maintained Parkland (ha)*	31.50	2.6 ha per 1,000 population	2 to 4 ha per 1,000 population
Trails (km)	183.2	15 km per 1,000 population	Target not applicable

* The standard for parkland land reflects active and passive maintained parkland in Municipal ownership and excludes Conservation Area lands which may be considered an addition to the open space supply.

Exhibit 14: Current and Target Participation-based Standards of Recreation Facility Provision for the Municipality of Meaford

	Current Standard	Target/Comparable Standard
Arena Ice	1 per 250 youth participants	1 per 450-600 youth participants
Curling Ice	1 per 100 participants	Not Comparable
Ball Diamonds	1 per 25 youth participants	1 per 80-100 youth participants
Soccer (<i>All Fields</i>)	1 per 43 youth participants	1 per 60-100 youth participants
<i>Soccer (Municipal Fields)</i>	1 per 298 youth participants	1 per 60-100 youth participants
Swimming	1 per 433 registered participants	Not Comparable



9.4. Recommendations

The following recommendations cover a range of considerations as it pertains to the provision of recreation facilities, programming and services in the Municipality of Meaford. Our recommendations provide guidance to Council on investment and planning for recreation over the planning period to 2025.

9.4.1. Arena

The Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre comprises a single-pad arena and is the only indoor ice surface in the municipality. The arena is a 38-year-old structure (originally built in 1977) and has undergone a series of required upgrades and improvements which have served to extend the useful life of the facility. A 2012 Building Condition Report (latest available) indicates there are no major structural issues with the facility and confirms that the arena is in reasonably good condition.

Based on the latest available Public Sector Accounting Board Data (PSAB), and the age of existing facility components, it is anticipated that there will be a need to replace the existing shell roofing and upgrade the interior furnishings of the facility. Despite condition, the arena does have dated amenities (e.g. small dressing rooms) which are inadequate to meet the needs of its current users.

The facility observes good prime-time utilization however there is no major pressure on the existing ice time to warrant an additional ice surface.

Exhibit 15: Ice Utilization Statistics for the Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre Arena

	Hrs Available	Hrs Booked	% Booked
Ice Season	3120.0	2080	67%
Prime-time	1657.5	1462.5	88%
Non Prime-time	1462.5	617.5	42%

Arena provision standards for comparable communities in Ontario do not support the need for a second ice surface in Meaford:



Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre

Exhibit 16: Current Standard of Ice Provision in the Municipality of Meaford

Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based Standard:	
1 per 12,207 residents	1 per 10,000-12,500 residents
Participation-based Standard:	
1 per 250 youth participants	1 per 450-600 youth participants

Marginal population growth and an aging population in the future are not expected to warrant a second pad. A single-pad arena will be able to appropriately service the community’s needs over the time frame of this Master Plan.



As population growth occurs, the standard worsens such that on the basis of the age of the building, utilization and standards, replacement and potentially an additional pad development is likely to occur beyond the current planning period to 2050.

Exhibit 17: Impact of Population Growth on the Standard of Ice Provision

Projected Provision Level (If Supply Remains Unchanged from 2014)			
	2015 Provision	2020 Provision	2025 Provision
Ice Pads	1: 12,207 residents	1: 12,978 residents	1: 13,260 residents

Neither condition nor demand warrant the jump to expansion of an additional ice surface. However, there are opportunities for investment in this existing complex. The Master Plan recommends doing so.

Recommendation #1: Very important to continue to invest in necessary repairs the arena facility. Undertake a feasibility study for the renovation of the facility to include larger dressing room facilities, efficient storage areas, new seating and a required accessibility upgrade. Consider the range of opportunities for better utilization of the existing spaces including: fitness rooms, youth space and dedicated space for arts groups.

Recommendation #2: Invest in the campus to create a sense of place, connection, accessibility and multi-use. Effectively link the arena, curling club and adjacent fairgrounds through landscaping/hardscaping as part of a campus master planning exercise to take advantage of the logistic adjacencies of these assets to help spur more efficient community use of these spaces. Investing in improvements speaks directly to the goals for meeting resident needs and retaining /attracting families.

9.4.2. Indoor Aquatics

Recognizing community demand for year-round aquatic opportunities, the Municipality of Meaford is actively investigating the option of a Public Private Partnership with a local condominium corporation for the potential municipal operation of an indoor pool facility which may accommodate aquatic programming during the fall and winter periods. This represents a more affordable community option with minimal capital investment requirements on the Municipality. Based on public consultation, many residents currently use the indoor pool facilities in Collingwood and Owen Sound (YMCA) to meet their need for year-round aquatic activities.

Recommendation # 3: Continue to investigate the option for the Municipality to operate and program an indoor pool facility as part of a Public Private Partnership with a local condominium corporation.



Kin Hall



9.4.3. Community Halls

The Municipality of Meaford owns 4⁹ community hall facilities which are available for public use for events, such as weddings and meetings etc.

Exhibit 18: Designated Community Hall Facilities in Meaford

Distribution of Halls by Service District	
SD1 (Urban Area)	- Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre - Riverside Hall
SD 2 (North)	Woodford Hall
SD 2 (South)	Bognor Hall

These facilities were traditionally built to service individual village/hamlet needs pre-amalgamation and should be maintained as a quality of life principle:

Exhibit 19: Standard of Provision for Community Halls in Meaford

Population-based Standard (Municipal-wide)	
Current Standard	Comparable Standard
1: 3,052 residents	Not applicable
Population-based Standard (by Service District)	
SD1 (Urban Area)	1: 3,325 residents
SD 2 (North)	1: 2,508 residents
SD 2 (South)	1: 1,407 residents

⁹ This figure excludes Kin Hall which is deemed to be an accessory building associated with the Meaford Campground.

A September 2014 site visit showed the majority of halls were aged facilities in need of accessibility upgrades and modern amenities.

All halls are planned to have electric upgrades and water system replacements. Bognor Hall is a priority for capital investment (including roof replacement, furnace/air conditioning, accessible washrooms etc.).

With the exception of the hall space at the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre, the daily operations of the rural halls are managed by local hall associations which coordinate bookings and collect revenues associated with rentals. As it relates to operating and capital expenses for these facilities, these are the sole responsibility of the Municipality of Meaford.

Exhibit 20: Utilization Rate for the Hall and Meeting Space at the Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre

	Total	Booked	% Booked
Auditorium Total	4992.0	1002	20%
Auditorium Weekday	4160.0	890	21%
Auditorium Weekend	832.0	112	13%
Meeting Room	4992.0	606	12%

Recommendation # 4: Continue to maintain the halls as a community benefit and review existing agreements with the Hall Associations to ensure these allow the Municipality to meet its obligations to provide programs and maximize access to the facilities for the public and residents.

9.4.4. Outdoor Pool

The Blue Dolphin Pool is the only municipally-owned outdoor pool in Meaford. The facility is a standard 25 m lane pool with shower facilities. The structure was originally built in 1967 and consequently reflects a dated pool design. PSAB data indicates the sub-structure and superstructure of the facility is in relatively good condition, however, the pool interior, services, equipment, furnishings and roofing are way beyond their useful life. Additionally, shower and other amenities on-site are not in keeping with the standards for a modern facility. In recognition of this the Municipality’s Capital Plan prioritizes the immediate replacement of the pool.

Exhibit 21: Utilization for the Blue Dolphin Outdoor Pool (2013) (Latest available)

2013 Pool Utilization	
Public Swimming (est. passes purchased):	3,262
Lessons & Swim Camps (based on registration numbers):	485
Tot. pool users based on public swims, lessons & camps	3,747
Estimated swims	60,000
Per person swims per season (Mid June - August)	16
Average swims per person per week (based on 9 wks)	1.8

Based on consultation, investment in the existing pool is a priority for residents. The current level of municipal subsidy for the facility is \$0.98 per swim. Aquatics is a worthwhile investment for the community.

Recommendation # 5: Continue with plans to replace and/or renovate the existing Blue Dolphin Pool in situ in the long term. Future designs for a new outdoor pool facility should include larger washrooms and showers, a

designated ticket admission area and lobby and be part of a broader campus master planning exercise to include the skatepark and ball diamonds.



Blue Dolphin Outdoor Pool (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

9.4.5. Ball Diamonds

The Municipality of Meaford operates 4 ball diamonds in the local supply:

- William Croft Athletic Field (twin diamond facility, lit);
- Annan Ball Park (single diamond, lit); and

- Bognor Ball Diamond (single diamond, unlit).

Exhibit 22: Ball Diamonds in the Municipality of Meaford

Distribution of Ball Diamonds by Service District	
SD1 (Urban Area)	• William Croft Ball Diamond #1 • William Croft Ball Diamond #2
SD 2 (North)	• Annan Ball Diamond
SD 2 (South)	• Bognor Ball Diamond

Based on geographic distribution each service district has at least one baseball diamond. This is appropriate considering the principle of adequately servicing outdoor recreation needs in the rural area.

At present the Annan and William Croft diamonds are the only facilities which observe regular utilization. Both facilities are seasonally used by the Meaford Minor Baseball Association. Regardless, each of the facilities have significant room to enhance utilization.



William Croft Ball Diamonds (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

Available PSAB data further shows that playing surfaces, concession/washroom amenities and fencing across all 4 ball diamonds are in varying states of repair but generally beyond their useful life and in need of replacement. A visual field review the William Croft diamonds allowed for the identification of significant drainage issues which must be resolved.

The Municipality’s Capital Plan provides for the reconstruction of the William Croft diamonds and long-term incremental lighting replacement across the Annan and William Croft facilities.

Based on total population, Meaford is within the acceptable provision standard for ball diamonds. Based on the current rate of participation in the sport, however, Meaford could reduce its supply of publicly-owned diamonds.

Exhibit 23: Standard of Provision for Baseball Diamonds in Meaford

Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based Standard:	
1 per 3,052 residents	1 per 2,500-4,000 residents
Participation-based Standard:	
1 per 25 youth participants	1 per 80-100 youth participants

Forecasted population growth is not expected to warrant any new diamonds in the future.

Projected Provision Level (If Supply Remains Unchanged from 2014)			
	2015 Provision	2020 Provision	2025 Provision
Ball Diamonds	1: 3,052 residents	1: 3,244 residents	1:3,275 residents

At the level of service districts, Meaford is within the comparable standard for other like Ontario communities.



Exhibit 24: Standard of Provision for Ball Diamonds by Service District

Standard of Provision by Service District	
SD1 (Urban Area)	1: 3,425 residents
SD 2 (North)	1: 2,508 residents
SD 2 (South)	1: 1,407 residents

The ball diamonds generally result in very little annual operating deficit and should be maintained as a quality of life principle.

Recommendation #6: Fix the drainage issues at the William Croft site as an immediate priority. Budget capital funds for this based on determining the precise engineering solution required.

Recommendation # 7: Contingent on the successful implementation of a drainage solution for the Croft Diamonds, implement plans to resurface the diamonds and improve the concession and washroom facilities as well as undertake lighting replacement etc.

A Standard for the Rural Area

It is recommended that the Municipality of Meaford retain its current standard of maintaining at least 1 ball diamond in each of the rural service districts.

Investment in the Rural Area
Recommendation # 8: Maintain the Annan Ball Diamond per the Capital Plan (lighting, fencing etc.).

Investment in the Rural Area
Recommendation # 9: Should the demand for ball diamonds increase, continue to invest in and maintain the Bognor Ball Diamond (line painting, fencing) etc.

Over time should community demand, need and utilization of the facilities warrant it, the Municipality may investigate options for the reuse of its ball diamonds in Service District 2 – North and Service District 2 – South for other community uses.



Bognor Park Ball Diamond and Soccer Field

9.4.6. Soccer Fields

The Municipality of Meaford owns one soccer field out of a total of 9 in the local supply. The existing field in the Bognor Park requires investment and improved maintenance standards. Available PSAB data further confirms this. Community utilization of this facility is likely minimal, however, the space offers a range of alternatives for community use and multi-use and generates minimal operating costs.

Other fields in the municipality include those provided by local schools. This ultimately means that the Municipality depends on other suppliers to facilitate soccer. While this is common in many municipalities, the opportunity exists for involvement over time to improve the Municipality’s ability to facilitate, direct and support soccer.

In terms of the current total supply of soccer fields, Meaford is within the comparable standard of provision for communities of its size:

Exhibit 25: Standard of Provision for Total Soccer Fields in Meaford

Total Fields (Municipal, Private, School-based)	
Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based Standard:	
1 per 1,356 residents	1 per 2,000-3,000 residents

However, when considering the municipal supply ONLY – the number of publicly-accessible soccer fields is insufficient. In terms of the municipal supply of fields,

Meaford is significantly below the comparable population and participation-based standard.

Exhibit 26: Standard of Provision for Municipal Soccer Fields in Meaford

Municipal Supply of Fields ONLY	
Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based Standard:	
1 per 12,207 residents	1: per 2,000-3,000 residents

Additionally, the geographic distribution of municipal fields is deemed to be inappropriate as the urban area is currently unsupplied by the Municipality.

At the time of this report, operational changes in the Meaford Amateur Soccer Association (MASA) resulted in the merger of this group with the Thornbury Soccer Club.

The soccer fields operated by MASA are currently on leased land, which at the owner’s discretion may be sold or otherwise utilized for other purposes in future. This would result in the loss of these fields from the local inventory. The Municipality has the following options:

- Non-intervention – however, this option this would not address the deficit in publicly-accessible fields in the urban area and further adds to the risk of the potential loss of the sport in the community.
- Intervention – Through investment in municipally-owned and operated fields, allowing the Municipality the opportunity to ensure that the



Thornbury Club utilizes these facilities to service local soccer participants in Meaford. It is also recognized that the Municipality may operate its own programming from these facilities (e.g. basic, introductory soccer programs and camps) but likely not on a sufficient scale to justify investment in fields. The focus should be to facilitate the soccer club on-site. From the perspective of user group convenience, the use of local fields for soccer is a better option for resident participants.

Municipal investment in soccer fields also allows for greater control over these assets in the local inventory and further provides an opportunity to create a recreation hub in the urban area through the co-location of these facilities as part of a campus comprising the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre.

Recommendation # 10: Work with the Thornbury Soccer Club to determine the validity of using Municipally-owned soccer fields in Meaford should investment occur in the urban area. The Municipality should seek to retain local user group use of soccer fields in the municipality.

Recommendation # 11: Contingent on the ability to retain the soccer club locally, invest in (2) multi-use fields for soccer on municipally-owned Fairgrounds land. The fields should be developed as part of a broader recreation campus to include the arena and Curling Club.

Investment in the Rural Area

Recommendation # 12: Maintain the existing Bognor Soccer Field in SD#2 – South. Should demand for the sport and facility increase over time, invest in improvements such as line markings and nets.

9.4.7. Courts

Tennis Courts

The Meaford Tennis Courts (double court) in Service District 1 (Urban Area) is the only public tennis court facility in the municipality. The tennis courts were resurfaced in 2014 and are in excellent condition. There is value in investing in lighting at the facility to offer extended play options for public users.

Exhibit 27: Standard of Provision for Tennis Courts in Meaford

Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based Standard:	
1 per 6,103 residents	1: 4,000-5,000 residents

Comparable standards of provision do not warrant investment in additional tennis court facilities in Meaford. Investment in tennis facilities is based on a quality of life principle. Courts offer opportunity for affordable and informal recreation activity.

Basketball Courts

Municipally-owned basketball facilities include full courts at Peter Cameron Park and the Meaford Skate Park area as well as one half court at Bognor Park. The Bognor and Skate Park area facilities are recent (2015) initiatives. The Peter Cameron Park Court is a more aged amenity which requires some investment in resurfacing.

Recommendation # 13: Maintain the Meaford Tennis Court and invest in lighting.



Recommendation # 14: Continue to maintain existing basketball facilities at Peter Cameron Park and Bognor Park.

Recommendation #15: Continue the practice of utilizing movable nets for pickleball in the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre Hall to facilitate indoor racquet sport.

Beach Volleyball Courts

The recent (2015) establishment of a beach volleyball facility at Coast Guard Beach in the Urban Area has been met with good utilization. Should this type of facility gain increasing public favour, the Municipality should seek to invest in other beach volleyball facilities at other beach locations in the Municipality. Particularly with respect to the rural area, this type of investment in the beach improvements is both economical and also enhances the recreational opportunities available to residents.

Recommendation # 16: Continue to maintain the Beach Volleyball court at Coast Guard Beach in Service District #1.

Investment in the Rural Area

Recommendation # 17: Investigate opportunities to develop beach volleyball courts at other beach locations in the Municipality should community demand for these facilities increase.

Multi-Use Courts

The Meaford Tennis/Pickleball Court is the only multi-use court facility in Meaford. The Municipality should consider investment in these types of facilities in the rural area as a means of offering multiple opportunities for play for varying age groups as well as to ensure the most efficient use of municipal funds. Building on the Municipality’s current practice, the opportunity exists to develop a second outdoor multi-use court in Service District #2 – North. This would serve to expand the recreation options for the local youth population in the area.



Bognor Park Basketball (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



Peter Cameron Park Basketball Court (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



Investment in the Rural Area

Recommendation # 18: Contingent on the acquisition of vacant land adjacent the Annan Ball Diamond, develop (1) new multi-use court facility at Annan Park to create a campus of activities. As an alternative, the Municipality may instead seek to develop the Peter Cameron Park Basketball Court as a multi-use court facility to include basketball as part of future investment in resurfacing.

9.4.8. Parks and Open Space

Parkland

The municipal supply of maintained parkland includes 31.5 hectares (77.84 acres) of parkland for active and passive park uses.



Irish Mountain Lookout (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

On a municipal-wide basis, Meaford is within the comparable standard of provision for maintained parks:

Exhibit 28: Municipal Parkland Standards

Municipal-wide Parkland Supply/Standard	
Current Standard	Comparable Standard
Population-based	
2.6 ha: 1,000 residents	2-4 ha: 1,000 residents

Note: The standard for Parkland does not include Conservation Area lands which are located in the rural area.

The Municipality of Meaford should continue the current practice of accepting cash-in-lieu of parkland where a residential subdivision development is adequately supplied by existing parks and play spaces in the surrounding area based on a standard of provision of 1 park/playground within 500-800 metres of all built up residential areas. Where new residential subdivisions fail to be within this standard, the Municipality should seeks to secure new park land to address this gap. This may also be done through Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols should any parcel conveyed by a developer be deemed by the Municipality (based on the requirements of policies of the Official Plan) to be of unsatisfactory physical condition or in a poor location.

Recommendation # 19: Confirm that Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols (as outlined in the Municipality’s existing Official Plan) will be used where available for improvements to existing parks where new residential subdivisions are within the standard of 1 park/playground within 500-800 metres of all built up residential areas. Where the recommended standard is not met, the Municipality may enforce Parkland Dedication and/or Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols provided by the Official Plan to have new parkland dedicated.

In all cases, the use of funds to support investment sufficient to meet resident



needs.

Recommendation # 20: Develop a park design strategy in partnership with the community – specifically engaging youth. This may be done in house by Community Services Staff. The strategy should give primacy to the development of the municipality’s waterfront park system which extends beyond the Meaford Harbour area.

9.4.9. Play Areas and Splash Pad

There are 9 playgrounds/play areas in the municipality, 4 of which are in the Municipal supply.



Standards for playgrounds are based on the geographic location of facilities relative to built-up residential areas and are more suitably applied to the urban core.

Comparable Standard for Playgrounds
1 within 500-800 metres of all built up residential areas (excluding rural lands) and unobstructed by major barriers.

Based on the comparable standard for the distribution of play structures, there are gaps in facilities in the north and mid-urban area (based on an 800 metre provision radius) (see image above). Where municipally-owned parklands exist in these areas, the municipality should seek to correct this gap in facility delivery.

Recommendation # 21: Invest in new playground infrastructure at William Croft Park in order to address the playground service gap in the mid-urban core area.

Recommendation # 22: Evaluate the opportunity to develop a new playground to address the north area service gap based on available and appropriate municipal lands in this zone.

Recommendation #23: Prioritize playground replacement based on a 20-year trigger date.

Recommendation #24: Continue plans to maintain and upgrade the existing skate park near the Blue Dolphin Pool; making improvements based on

community consultation.

9.4.10. Trails

The Municipality of Meaford is home to a variety of trails. These include off-road, local and County cycling and hiking routes which comprise part of Grey County’s existing active transportation (i.e. non-motorized) network.

Exhibit 29: Major Trail Systems in the Municipality of Meaford

Trail	Ownership/Management	Length (Km)	Surface
Georgian Trail	Municipality of Meaford	35	Mixed
Trout Hollow Trail	Big Head River	14	Grass/natural, gravel, soil - compacted
Tom Thomson Trail	Tom Thomson Trail Group	43.4	Gravel, Soil - Compacted
Bruce Trail	Bruce Trail Conservancy	107.6	Soil
Massie Hills Ski Trail	Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	10	Soil
Bognor Marsh Trails	Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	11.9	---
Total		183.2	

Grey County Cycling Routes		
Off-Road	Local	County
-	Balaclava	Balaclava
Tom Thompson Trail	Tom Thompson Trail	-
-	Meaford Loop	Meaford Loop
Georgian Bay Cycling Route	Georgian Bay Cycling Route	Georgian Bay Cycling Route

Other major components of the local and regional trail network include the Georgian Trail and Bruce Trail and offer prime hiking and trekking experience for residents and visitors alike.

The Georgian Trail: originally a railway line between Collingwood and Meaford, the trail is now a major recreational asset in Meaford and surrounding region. The trail is a linear park that spans 34 kilometers and offers users scenic waterfront views along Georgian Bay. The trail is used for hiking, cycling, jogging, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing and offers a number of rest-stops along the way.

Bruce Trail: The Bruce Trail passes through both public and private lands and runs from Niagara to Tobermory. The trail comprises over 885 kilometres of main trail and 400 kilometres of side trails. Meaford accounts for a total of 107.6 km of the Trail (approximately 81.1 km main trail and 26.5 km of side trails is located within the Municipality). The Bruce Trail in Meaford is a foot path for hiking unlike other local trails which are multi-use. The Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) comprises is a nine regional Bruce Trail Clubs with responsibility for maintaining and stewarding a section of the Trail. The Sydenham Bruce Trail Club (which stretches from Blantyre to Wiarton) and the Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club (which stretches from Blue Mountains to Blantyre) have responsibility for portions of the trail in Meaford. The Clubs run numerous hikes throughout the year and actively seek ways and partnerships to better engage local schools and residents in a range of outdoor and education experiences.

Tom Thomson Trail: The Tom Thomson Trail is a 43.4 km multi-use trail connecting the Fred Raper Park in Meaford and the Bayshore Community Centre in Owen Sound. The trail has both on-road and off-road sections and is maintained by a local volunteer trail group.

Snowmobile Routes and Ski Trails: Meaford also offers on and off route snowmobile routes throughout the Municipality. Approximately 10 km of ski trails run though the Massie Hills Management Area under the ownership of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. The Ski trails are used and maintained by the Owen Sound Cross Country Ski Club.



The 2014 Grey County Transportation Master Plan makes recommendations for the County to develop an Active Transportation Master Plan that promotes accessibility for all ages and abilities as well as enhanced pedestrian design features and guidelines and policies for implementing supporting infrastructure such as parking lots at trailheads, rest stops, wayfinding signage, etc. The Plan is to provide for the development of inter-connected routes between municipal centres, links to adjacent counties and cycling “loop routes” to accommodate recreational cycling.

Recommendation # 25: Continue to support the development of an Active Transportation Plan and Cycling Plan for Grey County. These studies will have implications for the development on local trails in Meaford. Municipal staff should be involved in the consultations which are expected to inform the plans in order to ensure that both the local and County agenda align.

While the Active Transportation Plan and Cycling Plan for Grey County are expected to have implications for the development of County Trails which traverse through Meaford, as well as select local trails; the plans are not expected to provide a comprehensive, long-term framework for local trail development in Meaford. This Master Plan provides some considerations for municipal trail development in Meaford, the feasibility of which is to be further evaluated as part of a detailed Trails Master Planning exercise for the municipality.

Recommendation # 26: Participate in the development of any County commissioned Trails Master Plan as a comprehensive tool and long-term framework for local trail development in the community. The Plan should identify opportunities to enhance the development of and links to multi-use

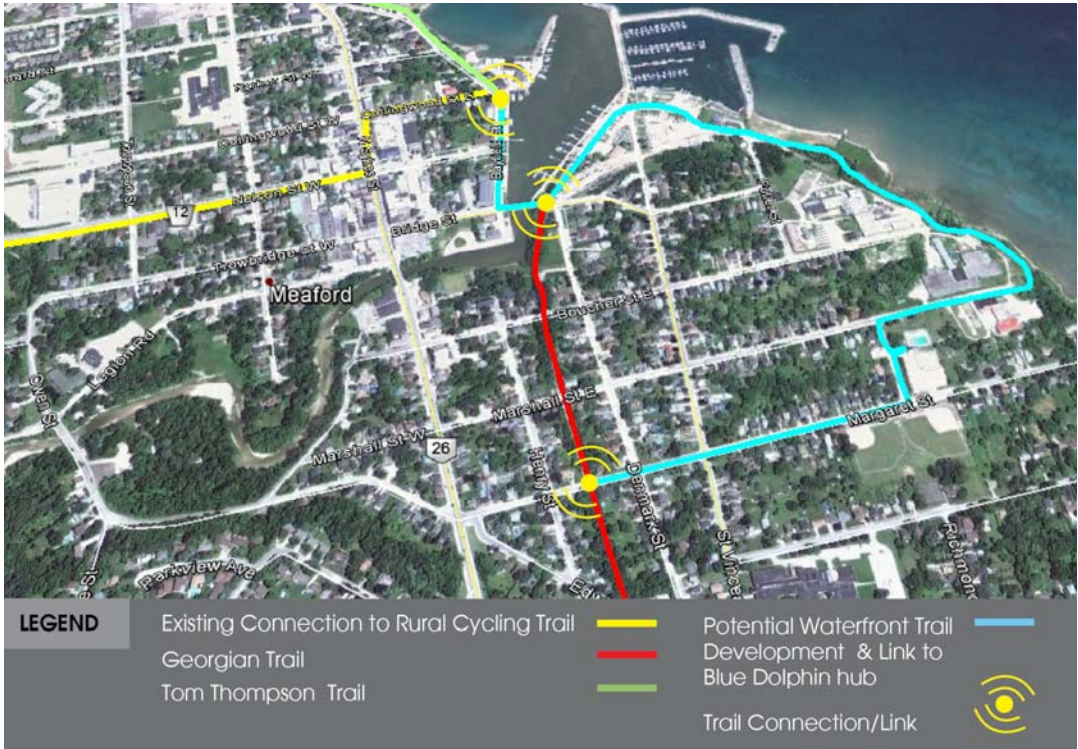
trails in Meaford in a manner which serves to implement priorities of the Ontario Trails Strategy and Grey County’s Active Transportation Plan and Cycling Plan at the local level. The plan development process should also investigate the tourism potential and economic benefit of promoting multi-use of the trails and allowing for the motorized use of trails.

Recommendation # 27: The Municipality of Meaford should seek to encourage the appropriate development in active transportation linkages between planned recreation nodes as investment occurs over time. This should generally align with the County’s priorities to develop an Interim Active Transportation Master Plan and a Cycling Plan in the short-term. Planning should take into consideration the proximity of these nodes to existing local cycling routes in the Municipality.





Recommendation # 28: Consider the potential to extend the waterfront trail network to other recreation assets in the urban area. There may be an opportunity to link the existing trail in Fred Raper’s Park and secure an extended waterfront linkage between the Harbour ‘node’ and Pool/Skate park/Ball diamonds via unimproved municipally-owned waterfront lands to create a ‘chain link’ of recreation experiences. This may include a potential looped link to the Georgian Trail.



9.4.11. Meaford Campground

Memorial Park Campground is the largest revenue-generating recreation facility owned by the Municipality. The facility offers 100 fully and partially-serviced camp sites as well as RV plug-in stations. The facility generates average annual revenue of upwards of \$300,000. After expenses, the facility records \$130,000+ in profit.



Memorial Park Campground

Available PSAB data indicates the campground has a lot of older structures/buildings in need of upgrades/replacement. Key items include: the comfort station, washroom (north end), picnic pavilion and Kin Hall/concession structure (roofing, interiors, and equipment) which are way beyond their estimated useful life.



The Municipality has projected a significant capital budget to enhance and improve the site. Just over \$1 million dollars in capital improvements has been planned for the campground over the next 10 years. Major upcoming expenditures include beach area development and parking enhancements.



Memorial Park Campground (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)



Memorial Park Campground (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

In 2014 campground utilization was at 35% for the entire 4-month opening season of the facility. Considering peak months only (July – August), utilization is likely around 60%. There is room for growth in the utilization of the existing campground site. Based on the current level of vacancies, the facility could earn an important amount of additional revenue if campground sites had a higher level of utilization. Considering this and the significant capital investment that is planned for the site, comprehensive and well-phased planning is required to maximize the marketability and use of this facility and its amenities (particularly in light of the opportunity to expand the number of waterfront sites).



A business plan for the facility should assess comparable rates for other campgrounds of similar size and in the region as well as the implications of options for site development and potential opportunity to increase to capture lost revenues.

Recommendation # 29: (Short-term) Commission a Design Strategy for the campground to include options for enhancements to the site to:

- Create greater connectivity and access between the campground and beach area in order to expand the site to take more advantage of the waterfront;
- Develop an increased number of full-serviced sites;
- Provide additional recreational activities on-site; and
- Respond to changes in demand for other types of accommodations (e.g. yurts, platforms, better pull-through etc.

The Strategy should include a framework for the phased development of the site and associated order of magnitude capital costs. The Strategy should be accompanied by a business plan outlining mechanisms to improve revenue generation related to the campsite development.

Recommendation #30: (Medium-term) Revisit and revise the Capital Plan for the campground, taking into account recommendations of the Design Strategy.



Meaford Harbour

9.4.12. Meaford Harbour

Meaford Harbour is a signature recreation and cultural asset and is a direct link the municipality’s marine heritage. The Harbour provides 200 seasonal rental and transient slips. There has been a decline in seasonal dockage in the past few years. In 2014, a decline in the transient boaters was observed.



Exhibit 30: Utilization Statistics for Meaford Harbour (for 2014)

Slip Rental Performance	
Total Slips	200
Optimal Number of Rentals:	185
2014 Actual Slip Rentals:	150
% Slip/Dock Utilization (2014)	75%

Transient Boaters during the Summer Months	
Typical Number of Boaters Served	75-100
2014 Actual Boaters Served	50

Beyond slip rentals the Harbour area serves the social and civic needs of the community. Sail Georgian Bay operates its youth sailing program from this facility. As of 2014, 180 youth were registered with the organization. Annual events brought an estimated 4,400 patrons to the Harbourfront:

Exhibit 31: Utilization Statistics for Meaford Harbour (for 2014)

2014 Event Season (June - Sept)	
Event/Activities	Est. Attendance
Tues Night - Car Shows	100
Fri Night - Farmers Market	300
July 1st Weekend Canada Day Celebrations	1500
August - Long Weekend Rotary Fish Fry	300
September Weekend - Tribute to Stompin Tom	200
Georgian Bay Sailing School (operates over a period of 8-10 weeks)	2000
Total:	4400

The 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan is the Council’s guiding document for the development of the Harbour. The Plan provides for enhanced tourist commercial and passive recreational activities on-site through the development of a Harbour Village concept.

The Culture and Recreation Master Plan supports the intent and principles for the development of the Harbour over the long-term.

Recommendation #31: This Master Plan supports the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan including plans to develop a Harbour village concept for the area as well as investment in cultural infrastructure on-site (i.e. outdoor pavilion for events and festivals). In keeping recommendations, establish a capital reserve for the future development of recreation facilities to include the Harbour.



Beautiful Joe Park



9.5. Program Development

In the last few years, the Municipality of Meaford has increased its profile as a recreation program provider in the community. The Community Services Department’s role is ever evolving in this regard (see Section 6). The Department should continue in its efforts to maintain existing programs where strongly demanded and progressively develop new non-competing and essential program options for residents. This Master Plan recognizes that the current staff contingent dedicated to program planning delivery is sufficient for the present mandate but additional human resources will be required over time as the municipal program roster expands in future.

This Master Plan further recognizes the need to efficiently explore available partnership options for the development of program mandate in order to effectively utilize local resources (human, financial and physical etc.) and avoid duplication. The Municipality has been able to successfully partner with organizations such as PLAY – BRUCE GREY in the delivery of annual recreation events such as Family Day of Play and the Longest Day of Play, the Owen Sound Aquatic Club for competitive swim programs, as well as Golden Town Outreach for the delivery of community cooking classes. This is a positive precedent for the capacity of the Municipality to engage collaboratively with the range of local and regional recreation stakeholders for the delivery of programs. Such partnerships ought to complement the direct program delivery efforts of the Municipality where most efficient.

Recommendation # 32: Continue efforts to expand the range of programs offered to the community with a focus on enhancing opportunities for older youth (13-19 years of age) as well as seniors.

Recommendation # 33: Progressively assess the role of the Municipality in the provision of soccer locally based on developments with the Meaford Amateur Soccer Association.

Recommendation # 34: Contingent on the ability to secure an agreement for

the Municipal management and use of an indoor pool as part of public-private partnership with a local condominium corporation, expand the roster of aquatic programs to include year-round/winter activities to include aqua-fit and public swim options.

Recommendation # 35: With the development of basketball and/or multi-use court facilities, expand youth programming options to include basketball, volleyball and other court-based opportunities.

Recommendation # 36: Continue to implement teen tennis programs for youth (8-18) as well as other court-based programs such as pickleball workshops for older adults.



Meaford Longest Day of Play



Addressing the Rural Area

Recommendation #37: Investigate opportunities to develop outdoor youth recreation program options for soccer in the rural area. This will require a neighbourhood-focused marketing approach to promote programs (i.e. door-to-door mail outs) to engage the rural community.

Addressing the Rural Area

Recommendation # 38: Continue to offer fitness program options at Woodford Hall as a means of servicing the rural community.

Addressing the Rural Area

Recommendation # 39: Continue to assess the feasibility of opportunities to develop and initiate new (and scoped) programming options in the rural area. As part of this exercise, the Community Services Department should employ surveying techniques to canvas the needs/demand of rural residents for activities.

Recommendation #40: Partner with the local trail associations such as the Beaver Valley Trail Club to develop trail/environmental education programs for children and youth. There is opportunity to link this type of programming within school curriculum (e.g. biology classes) and link environmental education to health and wellness.

Recommendation # 41: Develop multi-faceted programs which combine culture, recreation and wellness e.g. Expanding the current cooking/culinary program into a comprehensive healthy lifestyle program for youth, adults and seniors.

9.6. Enhancing Service Delivery

Trends that have emerged in the delivery of recreational and sport programming across Canada include:

- **Effective Partnerships** – Municipalities are increasingly entering into partnership agreements with community groups, the private sector and institutional stakeholders to maximize cost efficiencies in program delivery and facility operations;
- **Volunteerism** – National trends show a decline in the number of persons engaged in volunteerism. However, those who do volunteer are doing so on a more frequent basis;
- **Performance measures** – Performance measures for the recreation sector are increasingly shifting from outputs to outcomes (that is, a shift from output measures such as capital costs and volumes of program registrants to outcome measures such as qualitative assessments of how programs have benefited/met community and health indicators);
- **User and rental fees** – Increased user and rental fees are increasingly raising the cost of participation. This is a particular challenge for communities in terms of the inclusion of target groups and has resulted in the adoption of user fee policies which more heavily subsidize specific categories of users such as low income groups, youth and seniors; and
- **Unstructured Recreation and Sport** – Growing demand for unorganized and drop-in activities which meet the needs of increasingly busy lifestyles – particularly in communities with significant commuting populations.



9.6.1. Maximizing the Role of the Community Services Department

Municipal delivery of recreation falls under the leadership and management of the Director of Community Services. The Director is supported by the following full-time staff positions:

- A Supervisor of Parks & Facility Operations with oversight for all indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure facilities in municipal ownership, including Meaford Harbour. The Supervisor of Parks & Facility Operations reports directly to the Director of Community Services.
- One dedicated Facility Operator for the Memorial Park Campground and another for Parks Maintenance. Facility Operators report directly to the Supervisor of Parks & Facility Operations.
- A Supervisor of Recreation Programs with responsibility for implementing activities within municipal facilities, managing enrollment and program registration procedures. The Supervisor works in partnership with the Supervisor of Parks & Facility Operations and reports directly to the Director of Community Services.

At present, municipal organization for the delivery of recreation facilities and services meets the current needs of the community. However, it is recognized that the current structure will pose challenges in implementing the recommendations and priorities of this Master Plan specifically as it relates to the progressive development of the programming mandate over time. Currently program planning, initiation and administration is largely the responsibility of the Supervisor of Recreation Programs. It is expected that with growth in activities and the need to monitor and track performance and build and maintain local and regional partnerships, additional support roles for program delivery (part-time or otherwise) will be required. The facilitation of an effective organizational structure is necessary to ensure the successful implementation of recommendations.

Additionally, this Master Plan recognizes the potential for the Municipality and other organizations/agencies (local school boards, health service providers and other non- profit partners) to work collaboratively to develop approaches to program and service delivery.

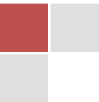
Recommendation # 42: Appoint a Programming Assistant to provide the Recreation Programs Supervisor with planning and support assistance for the development and implementation of new recreation programs and events. The role of this individual should include partnership development and outreach to schools for student participation in volunteerism. This role may commence initially as a part-time function and should develop into a full-time role as programs and events develop over time.

Recommendation # 43: Annually commission a summer student for the role of Research Coordinator with responsibility to design and implement customer service tools (such as community surveys) to annually monitor community satisfaction with recreation facilities, services and programs in the Town.

Recommendation # 44: As part of future municipal organizational reviews, continue to monitor the effectiveness of the staff roles within the Community Services Department, particularly as Master Plan implementation occurs over time.

9.6.2. Policies and Procedures

Enhanced and efficient service delivery is in part achieved through the development of policies and procedures which allow the Municipality to progressively and timely address changes in community demand and access to



recreation over time. This includes the development, institution and implementation of protocols and policies that ensure fair access to facilities by user groups, individual residents, and other community users irrespective of income and ability.

Ice Allocation

The Municipality does not have an official ice allocation policy. The current process to annually book arena ice time is based on historic requests for ice from user groups. Should more or less time be required, this is negotiated with the Facility Booking Manager.

Recommendation # 45: Develop and implement an Ice Allocation Policy for the Municipality of Meaford. The policy should identify priority groups for the allocation of available ice based on 1) group participation numbers and 2) type of group (i.e. hockey or skating association versus other community groups).

- The policy should also ensure that as much as possible, the community has access to a range of public skating hours.
- The policy should be reviewed for effectiveness at regular intervals (E.g. every 2 to 5 years).

Customer Service & Monitoring

Similarly, under current protocols, should individual residents or community groups require the use of ice and or other municipal facilities, bookings must be individually arranged with the Supervisor of Parks and Facility Operations. This process worked well historically but is not the best means of allowing the Municipality to effectively track facility utilization on a monthly, annual or historic basis or the ability. Recommendations for improving monitoring mechanisms are as follows:

Recommendation # 46: Continue with plans to invest in an electronic booking system for facilities and programs as means of operational efficiency for tracking registration volumes and facility utilization as well as associated revenues. This will allow the Municipality to track user demand and changes in utilization and program take-up/interest over time and across various groups of residents. This will be an important tool in addressing market demand for recreation over time.

Recommendation # 47: Undertake annual customer service monitoring (satisfaction surveys etc.) to regularly assess resident/user needs and requisite improvements to the Municipality’s recreation service delivery model. Progressively address methods to improve the system over time. This is to be the role of an annual summer student (see recommendation 41).

Recommendation # 48: Develop an online facility maintenance reporting system (e.g. via an online e-mail/message submission tool on the Municipal website) for real-time staff updates on needed repairs, washroom maintenance etc.

Recommendation # 49: Undertake a review of the Municipality’s Family Youth Subsidy program to assess the extent to which the program meets the needs of residents and, if required, evaluate the need to enhance protocols.



9.6.3. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA)

In 2009, the Municipality of Meaford created its Accessible Customer Service Policy for which all staff has undertaken the necessary training to ensure the service needs of all residents are met.

Building on this work, Meaford’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2014) is the Municipality’s strategy to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07). The Plan outlines a series of barrier removal initiatives over a 5 year period in the areas of:

- Customer Service;
- Information and Communication;
- Employment;
- Transportation; and
- The Built Environment.

As it directly relates to recreation, the Plan outlines priorities to:

- Ensure that all new municipal website’s and related content conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021.
- Ensure that recreational trails and beach access routes have clear widths and signage as well as accessible amenities such as ramps.
- That public eating spaces and play spaces incorporate accessible features and designs.

The continued implementation of the 2009 Accessible Customer Service Policy and 2014 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will serve to enhance the vision for an

inclusive society by providing accessible environments for all its residents irrespective of abilities. The following recommendations provide for the continued implementation and enhancement of municipal efforts to meet Provincial standards/policies for accessibility in Ontario.

Recommendation # 50: Undertake a comprehensive review of all Municipally-owned indoor recreation facilities for compliance with standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) in light of 2013 accessibility amendments (effective in 2015) within the Ontario Building Code.



Recommendation # 51: Continue to implement priorities outlined in the Municipality’s 2014 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in order to ensure barrier-free access to recreation. This includes investment in accessible trail and playground infrastructure.

Recommendation # 52: Continue to regularly update and implement the Municipality’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and address future regulatory changes as established within the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

9.7. Partnerships, Advocacy & Funding

Recognizing that community/user groups represent key partners for program delivery, the Municipality should implement mechanisms to regularly communicate and plan collaboratively with these groups for program development. Creating a regular forum which allows these key parties to work together will help to prevent duplication in the provision of recreation services and allow for the identification of opportunities to develop effective partnerships and resource sharing for program growth and service enhancements.

Recommendation # 53: Host an annual recreation forum with user/community group stakeholders as a means of regularly addressing challenges/opportunities for program and partnership growth and development. The forum should be an arena in which groups and the Municipality have the opportunity to collaborate and identify gaps in and opportunities to better service the recreation needs of the community as well as address matters related to facilities etc.

The development of partnerships is a core principle of this Master Plan. The Municipality should, as best as possible, tap in to those funding, planning and other resources which already exist locally and regionally to assist with the delivery of recreation services, facilities and programming.

Recommendation # 54: Continue to support the Georgian Bay Youth Roots group. Work in partnership with the group’s leadership to evaluate the potential for this organization to transition into a Youth Advisory Council. The Municipality currently has staff presence in the group and offers advisory assistance as required. Building on this existing relationship, the group in future could serve as an advisory group to Meaford Council on youth-related matters and be a medium to ensure the voice of youth is included in all municipal strategic planning exercises.

Partnership for funding may be achieved in a variety of ways. The Municipality has successfully achieved funding assistance for the delivery of recreation programs and activities. In 2015 the Community Services Department was granted funding from ParticipACTION (a national volunteer initiative in support of youth physical activity) in support of developing its summer program roster to include fitness and drop-in basketball programs for youth ages 13-19 years. There are further opportunities to tap into available funding pots for programs and events. Some of these opportunities require partnerships with local community and not-for-profit groups. Opportunities which should be explored progressively over-time are as follows:

Recommendation # 55: Continue to take advantage of ParticipACTION funding and maximize available resources from this organization by:



Initiating ParticipACTION’s ‘Sneak It In Week’ locally: this is a community-based event that promotes physical activity. Hosting this type of event in Meaford will require a range of partnerships, particularly with local promoters of health and wellness (e.g. the hospital, community groups, schools etc.). ParticipACTION provides local event hosters with the marketing tools to facilitate effective promotion and advocacy. The Municipality should take a leadership role in promoting this type of event.

The Municipality has, in the past, operated free evening fitness programs within school gymnasias, namely the facility at the Meaford Community School. Partnerships with local school boards for space use, has in recent years, been on the basis of need. There are currently no Joint Use Agreements (JUAs) between the Municipality and schools for the use of facilities.

In general, JUAs with schools have the benefit of 1) providing greater community access to school facilities; 2) providing a means for the Municipality to work with School Boards to ensure community access to quality spaces; and 3) offer a process for conflict resolution in the event that either party does not maintain formally recognized agreements. Partnerships with schools are critical.

Recommendation # 56: In partnership with local schools/school boards, evaluate the benefits of implementing Joint Use Agreements for community/municipal use of school facilities and vice-versa. JUAs should provide for the establishment of a governance/steering committee with responsibility for implementing the agreement as well as evaluating its effectiveness annually. At a minimum, a JUA should identify:

- 1) Facilities included under the Agreement;**
- 2) The purpose and reciprocal nature of agreement regarding the municipal**

and school board use of facilities;

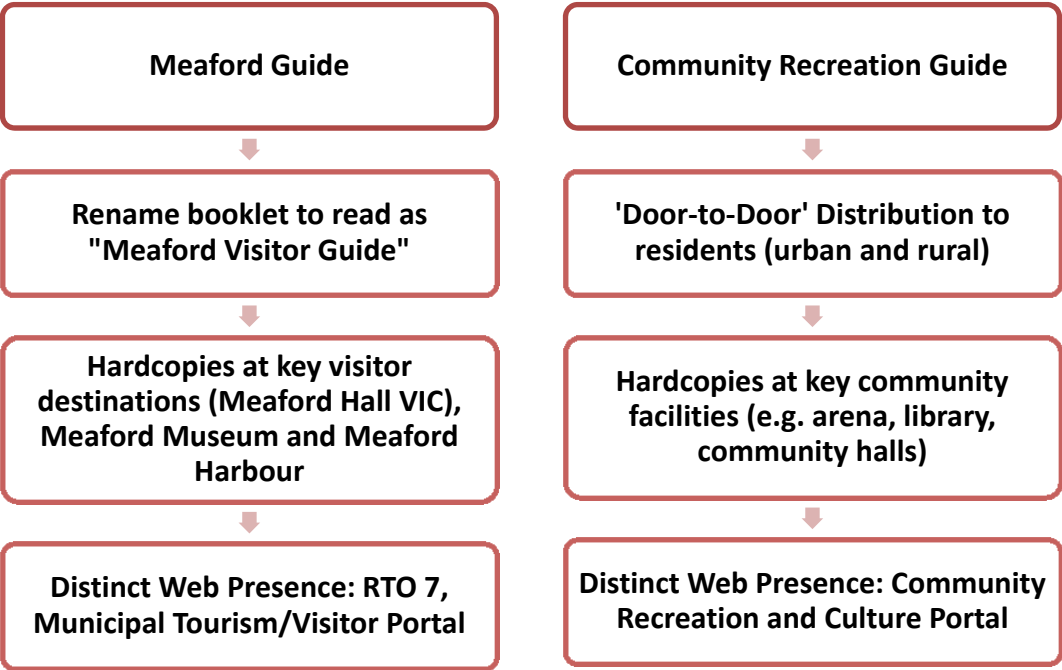
- 3) Those eligible user groups and municipal activities as well as reasons for access to the use of school board space. This applies equally to cultural activities as school art rooms, gyms etc. are important to cultural development opportunities; and**
- 4) Protocols for dispute resolution should this arise.**



9.8. Media & Communication

The Municipality of Meaford recognizes that the development of the programming mandate creates a responsibility to effectively market and promote these program options to the community. The Municipality has embraced its role as a public information provider in this regard and produces a seasonal (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter) Community Recreation Guide which is available to residents at local community facilities. The Municipality has an opportunity to improve the clarity and positioning of this Guide. The need to dually provide local visitor information services has resulted in some confusion among residents as to the differential purpose and function of the Community Recreation Guide versus the Meaford Guide (the latter being for visitors). This clarity can easily be achieved by making a distinction between the marketing channels and branding for the two print products as follows:

Exhibit 32: Distinctive Positioning of the Community Recreation Guide and Meaford Guide



Recommendation # 57: Develop and implement a marketing and positioning strategy for the Community Recreation Guide which differentiates this document from the tourist-focused 'Meaford Guide'. This should include the renaming of the tourist-focused document to be the “Meaford Visitor Guide” and the identification of distinct promotional channels for each target market.

Recommendation # 58: Continue to develop, expand and reorganize the Community Recreation Guide to better promote the range of recreation opportunities available to residents. This should include updating the current format to provide:

- A comprehensive calendar/schedule for all programming offered.
- Distinct ‘tabbed’ sections for Culture and Recreation programming.
- All relevant applications to facilitate program participation including a copy of a registration form for the Family Youth Subsidy program.

Recommendation #59: Establish an easy, workable protocol to collect and regularly update contact and program-related information from community groups and sports groups for publication in the Community Recreation Guide.

Recommendation # 60: Integrate the Recreation & Culture Asset database (developed as part of the Master Plan project) into the Municipality’s GIS System and further develop and translate the database into an Interactive Community Map to be hosted on the Municipality’s website. Mapping should be shared with Grey County and RTO#7 for input to online GIS/visitor



information tools.

Recommendation # 61: Develop a Management Plan for regularly expanding, updating and maintaining the Recreation & Cultural Asset Databases.

Recommendation # 62: As part of the Municipality’s website maintenance protocols, continue to improve the resident-focused ‘Play’ Portal to further enhance recreation information services to include an online facility maintenance reporting system and social media updates directly linked to the Community Services Department’s Facebook page in order to provide real-time alerts on unexpected program cancellations, special events, available ice etc.

10 The Blueprint for Culture

10.1 Cultural Landscape

Meaford is a cultural gem in the regional arts and heritage diaspora of Grey County. The communities of Grey County represent a composite of agricultural, rural and industrial heritage, each with its own historic signature. The County is home to seven museums and a number of designated heritage assets. Meaford Hall is a unique feature in what is a largely rural County. The Hall is the primary historic and cultural flagship for the Municipality and is one in over 150 cultural assets which comprise the municipal culturescape.

10.2. What is Municipal Cultural Planning?

Municipal cultural planning is defined by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as “a municipally-led process for identifying and leveraging a community’s cultural resources and integrating culture across all facets of planning and decision-making.” The development of this Plan for the Municipality of Meaford is part and parcel of the broader Provincial initiative to protect, enhance, leverage and foster cultural and creative activity in Ontario communities as a mechanism to achieve economic prosperity and vitality.



Defining Culture

Culture in Meaford encompasses both the tangible and intangible forms of creative expression and is comprised of shared values, beliefs, social traditions and conventions that help to contribute to a sense of community and sense of place. The production and dissemination cultural products and activities (both non-commercial and commercial) are equally as important as the places/facilities where cultural expression is practised. Local culture is encompassed in both professional and recreational activities and manifests itself through many forms, including: Heritage (Natural, Industrial, Agricultural and Cultural); Performing Arts/Entertainment; Communications Media; Electronic Arts; Literary Arts; Crafts; Design Arts and Visual Arts.

Meaford is as much a reflection of its early homesteaders as it is of its present-day volunteers, artisans and agricultural industries. Culture and heritage in Meaford is integrally part of the local landscape including its natural heritage and vistas, culinary/ agricultural celebrations and other seasonal festivals and events which showcase the cultural attributes of the area. Municipal boundaries are irrelevant to cultural expression, the focus of this plan is Meaford – the implementation of which will only be successful if placed in its context.





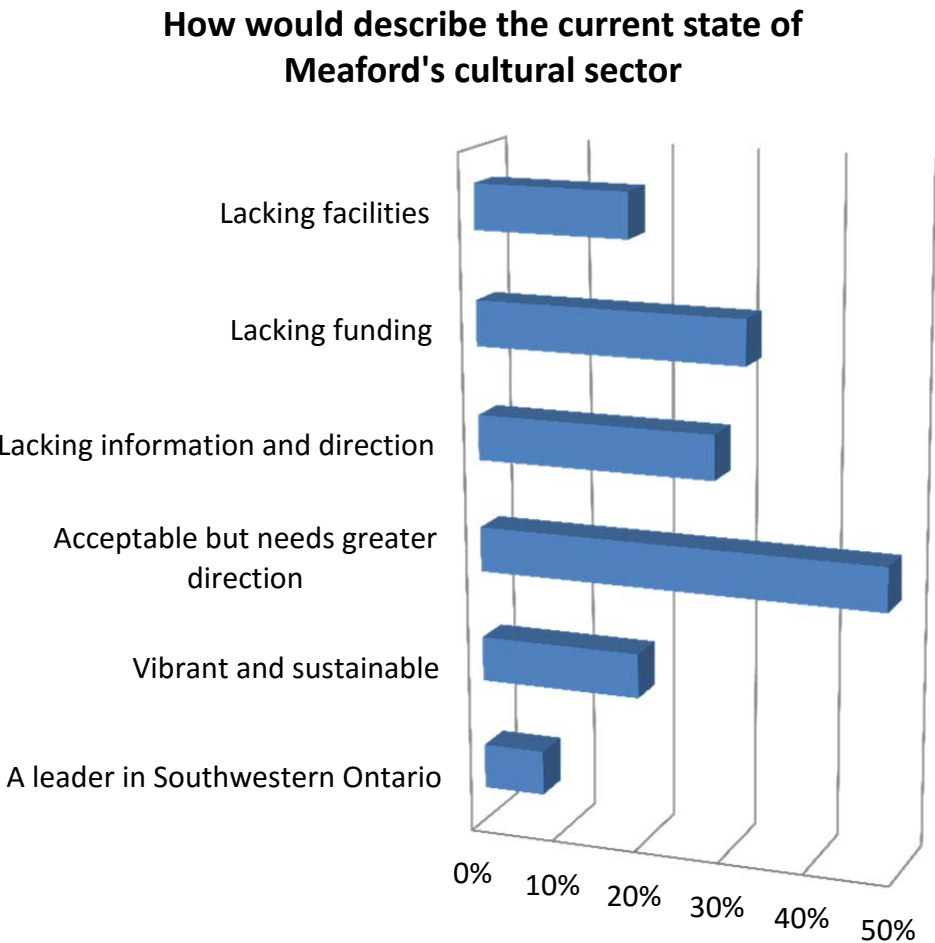
10.3. Challenges to Cultural Development

Around 200 residents gave their input on the present state of the cultural sector in Meaford supported by focus groups with local cultural leaders (program providers, community groups and Municipal staff), participants identified that Meaford’s cultural sector as being:

- The need for better organization, mobilization, information and resources;
- Limited in spaces for cultural expression. This was identified as being both a function of cost and the perceived lack of availability of facilities for use by local groups; and
- The need for better partnerships for events, education and program development.

This was reiterated by public online survey respondents. The majority of online survey respondents described Meaford’s cultural sector as acceptable but lacking direction (48%).

Exhibit 34: Community Input on the State of the Cultural Sector in Meaford based on Online Survey Responses



When asked to identify what in their opinion are the most significant issues facing the future of arts, culture and heritage in Meaford, respondents indicated the following:

- Challenges related to funding (67%)
- Lack of sustainable planning and partnerships for cultural initiatives (42%)
- Competition in cultural activities from other municipalities (41%)



Live at Meaford Hall (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

10.4. Planning for the Future

Much of the above mentioned challenges can be progressively addressed through the development of operational efficiencies in communication, the adoption of a strategic approach to the development of partnerships and the implementation of policies and strategies that bolster effective cultural connections. The Municipality of Meaford has a key role to play as a public information provider, policy and community leader and to a lesser extent funding provider for the development of the sector. The weight of this influence allows the Municipality to better position itself as a key partner in cultural development, one that is able to strategically liaise with community groups and regional and upper levels of government for the development of new opportunities where feasible. This will be important for positioning and marketing Meaford as a destination in Grey County.

The Municipality of Meaford has the ability to enhance its role in this regard. Over the years it has worked with festival and events providers to access RTO-level funding for event hosting and has been integrated into regional events such as the Apple Pie Trail which is managed by the Blue Mountain Village Association. The Municipality offers further support for local cultural groups through its community grant program and is progressively expanding the range of publicly-available cultural programs as delivered through Meaford Hall and the Meaford Museum.

The Municipality already directs significant funds toward culture – primarily through the operations of the Meaford Hall and the Meaford Public Library. In 2014, the Municipality spent \$192.17 per capita on culture. This is higher than some other Ontario communities – and, in the context of a largely rural municipality, is a positive reflection on the importance of culture and heritage in the community.

Exhibit 35: 2012 -2014 Per Capita Spending on Culture in Meaford

Figures are based on the Municipality’s Annual Operating Budgets ¹⁰			
	2012 Actual	*2013 Actual	2014 Budget
Per Capita Spending on Culture	\$167.71	\$129.70	\$192.17
Population	11,367	11,640	11,920
% Change in Per Capita Spending		-23%	48%

The development of this Master Plan is further verification of Municipality’s appetite to enhance its role as a partner for cultural development.

¹⁰ Per capita figures are based on annual operating costs/budgets (including wages, advertising and program delivery costs) across municipal cultural facilities in Meaford and annual population projections based on forecasts outlined in the 2014 Meaford Official Plan.

10.5 Goals & Objectives

Goal: To Enhance Existing Cultural Infrastructure

1

- To create a vibrant public realm and urban environment which enhances, supports and promotes cultural activity and community vibrancy.
- To ensure the efficient use of existing cultural infrastructure for maximized programming and activities.

Goal: To Improve Access to Cultural Opportunities for Residents

2

- To enhance resident access to cultural programs and opportunities.
- To foster community pride through heritage promotion, marketing and positioning Meaford as a cultural gem in Grey County.
- To connect residents to local and regional artisans through events and programming.
- To develop and retain young local talent by facilitating professional development opportunities within the sector.

Goal: To Advocate for Culture and Facilitate the Organization of the Sector

3

- To develop and enhance the policy and planning environment for arts and culture.
- To facilitate organizational efficiencies for effective, long-term municipal planning for culture.
- To facilitate effective partnerships for the development of the cultural sector as a means of ensuring resource efficiency in implementing Master Plan recommendations.
- To foster communication and collaboration between stakeholders in the cultural sector for the development of new programming, services, events and volunteer opportunities in culture.

Goal: To Facilitate and Enhance Community Collaboration for Cultural Prosperity

4

- To facilitate capacity-building among community cultural groups for sustainable cultural program and service development over the long-term.
- To identify champions for investment and cultural development.
- To foster communication and collaboration between stakeholders in the cultural sector for the development of new programming, services, events and volunteer opportunities in culture.

Goal: To Achieve the Maximum Benefit of Cultural Tourism

5

- To diversify and expand tourism products and attractions to include culture and heritage opportunities.
- To develop enhanced visitor information tools to better highlight local heritage and cultural attractions.
- To encourage overnight stays in Meaford through linked and extended festivals, events and attractors.
- To develop a cultural brand/niche for Meaford which distinguishes it from other communities in Brue-Grey-Simcoe.





10.6. Recommendations

The central focus of recommendations of this Plan is to continue to develop capacity within the local cultural sector and to enhance the local environment of culture planning. Out of necessity, this will involve a series of immediate actions as well as a series of actions over the longer term which collectively develops the sector.

The following provides a framework of short-term (1-3 years) medium-term (3-6 years) and long-term (7-10 years) actions to facilitate the development of the cultural sector over time. Actions support the operationalization of strategic goals and objectives in achieving the vision for culture.

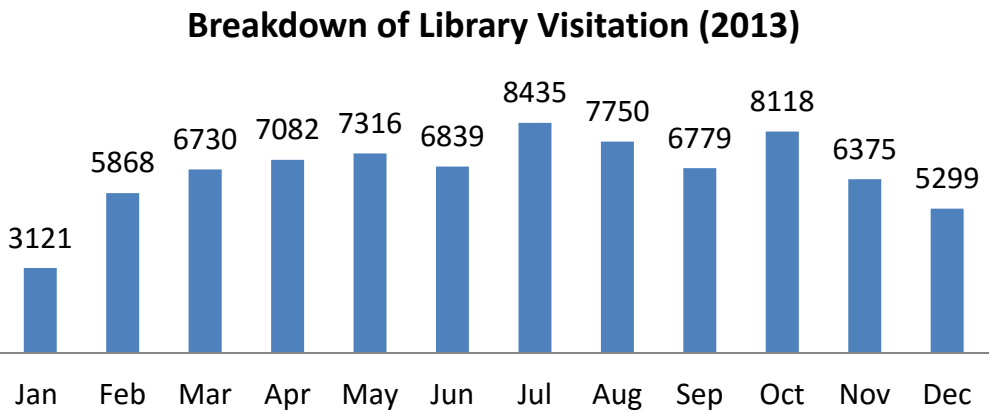
Achieving the long-term vision for culture in the Municipality of Meaford will require the development of a sustainable organizational framework and network of partnerships (local and regional).

10.6.1. Cultural Facilities

10.6.1.1. Meaford Public Library

The Meaford Public Library is a valued community and cultural asset and has been in operation for over 150 years. The Library provides a range of leisure, literary and community services and has observed increased in-person utilization over the years.

Exhibit 36: Annual Trend in Utilization for the Meaford Public Library



The Library maintains a steady membership of around 3,500 members. As of 2013 roughly 95% of the Library’s membership comprised residents of the Municipality of Meaford – 71% of which were from the urban area of Meaford, the other 29% are from rural portions of Meaford. The other 6% of the institution’s membership base comes from surrounding communities such as the Town of Blue Mountains and Grey Highlands. Irrespective of the scale of delivery, it is recognized that Library membership reflects the regional impact of the services and facilities provided in Meaford.

Exhibit 37: Breakdown of the Library’s Membership Base

Year	% Meaford	% BMT	% Grey Highlands	% Other Non-Residents
2011	95%	3%	2%	1%
2012	94%	3%	2%	1%
2013	94%	3%	2%	1%

The current Public Library building is an 80-year-old structure and historic asset located in downtown Meaford. The building is not accessibility compliant. The facility has a net area of 4,700 sq. ft. of space and is limited in its capacity to



accommodate the full breadth of its activities in-house due to existing space constraints (e.g. difficulties hosting multiple activities in the children’s library include hands-on programs conflicting with regular family access and story-telling). A 2015 Library Space Needs Analysis conducted by Lundholm Associates identified options for addressing the Library’s space requirements including an addition and renovation of the existing building; or the possibility of a new building on generic site. This Plan recognizes the importance of the Library facility to the cultural amenities in the Meaford. The Municipality should continue to prioritize investment in this facility – the detailed mechanics of investment in the building are to be determined by the Municipality.

Recommendation # 63: Continue to invest in the Meaford Public Library as it is an important County asset.

10.6.2. Meaford Hall

The building now known as the Meaford Hall Arts and Cultural Centre (commonly referred to as Meaford Hall), was originally built in 1908 to house the Council Chamber/court house and associated jail cells, the public library as well as an opera house on the second floor. The move of the Town Hall, library and local police department to new locations offered an opportunity to breathe new life into the structure. After completing a detailed business plan review and funding assessment for the opera house, the Municipality secured a SuperBuild grant to restore and renovate the building and successfully opened the Hall in the spring of 2006. The building is a designated heritage property.



Live at Meaford Hall (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

Meaford Hall is in good structural condition. There are still some aspects of renovation to be completed and are planned to be accomplished incrementally over the period of this Master Plan.

The Hall continues to progressively address its mandate to increase utilization and visitation to the facility. The more recent housing of the Visitor Information Centre at this location has brought additional traffic to the building. In 2014, the Hall had approximately 65,000 turnstiles.

The Hall offers 5 primary meeting/gathering spaces namely the main opera house, gallery area, the Terrace Room for mid-sized to small group use, a small board room and conference room. Across these spaces, the Hall has an estimated utilization rate of 51% (this includes performance times). Since its reopening in 2007, the Hall has seen an increase in its annual sell-out average for performances (57% in 2013) and draws patrons from around the region as well as Toronto, Brampton and Kitchener-Waterloo.



Exhibit 38: Meaford Hall - Breakdown of Annual Ticket Sales by Parton Place of Residence

% Tickets Sold by Year and Postal Code						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Mun of Mfd	57.2%	58.1%	53.2%	51.1%	49.2%	46.1%
TOBM/ Colld/ Stayner/ Wasaga	17.1%	16.2%	17.6%	18.8%	18.3%	25.1%
Owen Sound	3.0%	5.1%	6.5%	7.8%	8.8%	4.4%
Other (e.g. City of Toronto)	22.7%	20.6%	22.8%	22.3%	23.7%	24.4%



Live at Meaford Hall (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department)

There is room to increase the utilization of the Hall and to improve the sell-out rate for performances. Upon its opening, the central focus for the Hall was to achieve operational efficiencies; this mandate has since been expanded to encapsulate a community development model. It is the priority of the Hall’s administration to ensure optimal community access to the facility through collaborative program hosting with local organizations and other community stakeholders. The Hall is progressively expanding its roster of activities to accomplish this. More immediate priorities include expansion of the summer programs and activities to include the initiation of weekly concerts in the summer in association with the Brookside Music Association and Wednesday ‘film nights’ for families. Expansion to the fall line-up of activities includes youth drama classes and classic film showings. The Hall is also working more closely with the Municipality’s Program Coordinator to develop more public programming around the facility.

The Municipality of Meaford should continue in this good stride with respect to the operation of the Hall. In continuing in its efforts to expand the range of public programming on-site, the Municipality will continue to facilitate greater operational efficiencies for the facility. The Hall is one of the largest revenue generators for the Municipality. Between 2012 and 2013, the Hall has reduced its operating deficit by 15% to around \$260,000. Encouraging greater community use and programming in this facility will further serve to improve the financial performance of the Hall.

This Plan recognizes the importance of maximizing the potential associated with this building and the related site.

Recommendation # 64: Proceed with planned capital improvements to Meaford Hall. Major investments to be prioritized include the renovation of the balcony area and related seating.



Recommendation # 65: Invest in a facility booking system for Hall to better track and monitor shifts in annual utilization over time.



Meaford Hall (Source: Municipality of Meaford Community Services Department & Eve Traetto Photography)



10.6.3. Meaford Museum

Around the 1960’s, the building and property in which the Museum now resides was known as the Meaford Pump House. The structure today is a representation of the community’s marine and cultural heritage. The Museum has been undergoing significant changes in programming and consequently visitation. As of mid-2014 the Museum had roughly 7,000 visitors (double the total figure for 2013 (of 3,624 visitors)). This increase in visitation coincides with an increase in staff’s programming and marketing activities to include mobile museum programming as a partnership with the local schools (Little Green Apples), a variety of book launch hostings and Living Library cafes.

Considering the heritage status of the building, the Museum is in good condition. Latest available PSAB data indicates that based on expected useful life, some work will need to be done in terms of roof replacement and upgrades to the interior finishes and equipment. The Municipality has annually allocated \$10,000 towards upgrades to the Museum over the next 8 years in order to progressively address these needs.

The facility meets the current demand and use of the community. It is expected that as the harbour area is developed, this facility will receive more public attention and visitation. The continued ability to attract, lure and accommodate visitor volumes will be important in future.

Recommendation # 66: Proceed with planned capital improvements to the Meaford Museum and continue efforts to optimize storage capacity at the facility.

Recommendation #67: Implement landscape and streetscape enhancements to the museum site per the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan.

10.7. Service Delivery

10.7.1. Municipal Organization for the Delivery of Culture

Meaford Hall is a central feature and asset around which the future development of the cultural sector should occur. The Municipality of Meaford has worked to preserve its cultural and community heritage through the longevity of the Meaford Hall as well as other municipally-owned cultural assets. Municipal delivery of culture falls under the leadership and management of the Director of Community Services. Other full-time staff support for the municipal provision of culture consists of:

- Manager of Arts & Cultural Services with responsibility for the daily management and operations of Meaford Hall. The Manager further functions as a supervisor to the Museum Services Coordinator and reports to the Director of Community Services.
- Co-ordinator of Communications & Cultural Programming for Meaford Hall with responsibility for social media, website and other communications related to promoting programming, events and activities at the Hall.
- Museum Services Coordinator dedicated to the daily management and operations of the Meaford Museum. The Coordinator is assisted by volunteer staff.

The Meaford Library functions as an adjunct board of council with a full-time staff complement comprising the Library Chief Executive Officer assisted by coordinators for Technical Services, Children & Youth, Community Outreach, and Public Services.



The Municipality of Meaford’s staff person for marketing and graphic design further has responsibility for the development of advertising and promotional materials across the municipal corporation.

A challenge with the current municipal structure has been that the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services largely functions as a business manager for the Hall. To a large extent, much of the efforts related to managing the facility centre on rental management, performance scheduling, marketing and promotions. This is an important ongoing requirement for the facility. The role of the Manager should ideally also include the development of programs within the Hall as well as continuing to ensure a diversity of uses is accommodated within in the Hall. The role of the Director of Community Services should include the development of the vision, resources and implementation of Council policy on cultural development. We recommend this role is firmly established.

Recognizing this gap in to meet the need to expand the [cultural] programming mandate of the Municipality, the Municipality of Meaford has sought to better utilize its staffing

resources to allow for greater gains in program development and delivery. In so doing, it has broken down historic silos between recreation planning and cultural service delivery within the Community Services Department. The result has been ongoing and strengthened collaboration between the Supervisor of Recreation Programs, the Museum Services Coordinator and the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services for the development of new arts and cultural programs and activities. This effort has facilitated an increased recognition of the culture as part of the recreation and leisure offer to the community, one that has the ability to diversify the local offer for residents.

Recommendation # 68: The Supervisor of Recreation Programs, the Museum Services Coordinator and the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services should continue to work collaboratively to develop arts and cultural programming

offer in Meaford. The Supervisor of Recreation Programs will need to play an increasing role in the development of new non-competing cultural program options, especially where such activities have the ability to enhance the use of existing municipal facilities. The future addition of staff assistance for the role of Program Coordinator will allow for the latter to enhance its role in this regard.

In 2015, the Municipality of Meaford passed a by-law to establish a Heritage Advisory Committee. The establishment of the Committee was a direct recommendation of the 2014 Heritage Conservation District Plan and will be important to in ensuring effective planning and implementation for the designation and preservation of built heritage assets in the municipality.

The mandate of the Committee “is to advise and assist Council on matters relating to Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act, 1990, and such other heritage matters as Council may specify by by-law or as specified in the Official Plan and Downtown Meaford Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines.” In so doing, the Committee will “review applications under the Ontario Heritage Act, 1990. The advisory committee may also recommend to Council opportunities for protection of heritage properties or areas.” comprised of one (1) Member of Council and four (4) citizen members with built heritage, local history, architecture, and planning. The Museum Services Coordinator is an important staff resource that should play and advisory role in the operation of this Committee.

Recommendation #69: Review the composition of the Heritage Advisory Committee to include the Museum Services Coordinator in the capacity of a staff advisory role to the Committee.



10.7.1. Policies and Procedures

Building on the vision and goals outlined in this Master Plan, Council should adopt a Cultural Policy for the Municipality of Meaford delineating role and scope of Council involvement and commitment to supporting the sector. The Policy should outline principles which will guide Council decision-making and serve as Council’s charter of commitment to support the sector. The policy will function as a terms of reference for present and future Council, ensuring longevity of the cultural mandate on Council’s agenda (even beyond the timeframe of this Plan).

Recommendation # 70: Develop and adopt a Municipal Cultural Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.

Building on the assets identified in the Cultural Resource Database, the Heritage Advisory Committee should establish a Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest in the Municipality of Meaford (as per Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA)). As per policies of the OHA, the register shall detail all properties identified as being of cultural heritage value or interest (by the Municipality or Province) to include:

- A legal description of the property;
- The name and address of the owner; and
- A statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the property and a description of the heritage attributes of the property.

The establishment of this Register is a first step toward the designation of properties under Part V of the OHA and will be a key tool in ensuring the preservation of significant structures over the long-term.

Recommendation # 71: Develop a Municipal Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the Municipality of Meaford.

Enhance Support for Local Community Groups & Events

In allocating resources from the Community Grant Fund the Municipality should seek to prioritize support for cultural initiatives in a manner which gives consideration to the economic importance of events to the municipality.

Recommendation #72: Prioritize support for cultural initiatives in determining the annual allocation of resources from Community Grant Fund.

Recommendation #73: Develop a formal criteria-based approval process and reporting requirements for the Community Grant Fund. With respect to cultural programs and events, funding should be allocated on annual basis with a conditional requirement that each successful application must produce a brief on the financial performance of the program and/or event (revenues and expenses) inclusive of figures of attendance (these may be based on ticket sales, registrations) as a means of ensuring accountability on the use of public funds.

With respect to event hosting in Meaford, the Municipality’s Corporate Policy and Procedure Manual outlines a Policy for Special Events. The policy is specifically geared to those smaller community-serving activities, while the Municipality’s Entertainment Events By-law 61-2005 addresses larger festivals and events (i.e. generally activities generating a daily attendance of less than 1,500 persons per day). The Municipality has plans to review and update both of these documents. The Municipality may seek to reduce or eliminate event-



related costs (including insurance) via the Cultural Grant Fund, specifically for those events with a solid business case and which serve to promote/enhance the community’s image and offer economic benefits to the community.

Recommendation #74: Revise and update the Municipality of Meaford’s Special Events Policy. The policy should provide direction and guidance on the Municipality’s role in supporting special events, specifically as it relates to staff’s decisions on those activities which are priority candidates for assistance under the Community Grant Fund.

10.7.2. Collaboration, Communications and Promotions

Throughout the project process, cultural leaders and stakeholders expressed the need to develop and implement processes and mechanisms that allow for cyclical planning and the collaboration between the Municipality and other cultural providers in the municipality on a progressive basis. Developing the proper channels for communication and information-sharing for event planning and program development are a prerequisite for effective service delivery, planning and monitoring of cultural development. The Municipality has the opportunity to build on the stakeholder engagement activities implemented as part of this Master Plan process and should lead the development and hosting of an annual/seasonal cultural forum with community groups as a means of facilitating open discussions and the development of partnerships for the enhancement of cultural opportunities and services in the community.

Recommendation #75: Plan and initiate an annual/seasonal Cultural Forum with cultural groups/leaders as a means of fostering consistent dialogue and collaboration for the development of new cultural initiatives for the community.

The Municipality of Meaford within its role as a public information provider has led the development of a Community Recreation Guide. This seasonal publication offers the opportunity to showcase cultural activities, groups and events and is an avenue to promote and help facilitate resident participation in culture. At present, culture has a limited profile in the Guide which is currently mostly recreation focused. The Guide is a recent investment by the Municipality should seek to improve the breadth of information on community cultural activities/opportunities as part of its efforts to progressively enhance this marketing tool.

Recommendation # 76: Develop a system to allow community groups to contribute seasonally to the Community Recreation Guide (see related recommendation 57).

Recommendation #77: As part of the Municipality’s efforts to progressively enhance the Community Recreation Guide, explore the modest restructuring of the booklet to provide a designated section for culture, complete with a list of facilities and rental information as well as seasonal roster of activities and programs hosted at these facilities. The booklet should provide tools for program registration (hard copy and/or website links to application forms) where these are offered by municipal entities.

Branding Culture

The Municipality of Meaford recently launched its new website. The new site provides for greater clarity of information and services for residents and visitors and will be important in presenting the leisure offer and profile of the community. The new website links to a stand-alone tourism website ‘Set Your Sights on Meaford’ which will better allow the Municipality to position itself as a tourism destination in the region. As part of this positioning and marketing



exercise, the Municipality should seek to carve out a niche for culture to help promote tourism and work with RTO 7 as part of its marketing activities. Other tourism information tools including the Meaford [Visitor] Guide should seek to promote a consistent brand for culture. Programming that is primarily resident-focused should not be featured in this booklet.

Recommendation # 78: Work progressively to develop the ‘cultural brand’ of Meaford. This should involve effective positioning within the Meaford [Visitor] Guide as well as the exploring the potential to incorporate the brand within community wayfinding signage. The Guide should continue to focus on those major events, festivals, attractions and opportunities which offer the best opportunity to raise of the profile of community to the visitor/tourist market.

Recommendation # 79: Ensure a digital version of the Meaford [Visitor] Guide is provided within the visitor portal of the municipal website to allow for the maximum profile of this tool.

The following recommendations may be addressed progressively as the Municipality actively works to evolve and improve the new website over time and build on what is already a vibrant and useful promotional tool.



Recommendation # 80: In the short to medium-term, seek to progressively enhance the tourism portal of the Municipal website (‘Set Your Sights on Meaford’) to improve the showcase the thematic tourist offer of the municipality. Information and site pages should focus on tourism strengths of the municipality, including: ‘The Outdoors’ as well as ‘Arts and Culture’ and ‘Culinary Escapes & Adventures’ (wineries, agri-tourism etc.). Future site enhancements should include the addition of a photo gallery for each of these thematic offers and the addition of an interactive visitor information map.

Recommendation # 81: Utilize existing municipal databases on local tourism assets including those identified in the Culture and Recreation asset databases developed for this project to develop a Visitor Information Map to be hosted on the Municipal tourism website (‘Set Your Sights on Meaford’).



10.8. Programming

Resident Participation in Cultural Activities

The majority of online respondents to the culture survey indicated that they participated in activities such as music (50%), theatre and the performing arts (48%) followed by digital media (33%) including cinema /videography, and graphic design. Approximately 68% of respondents participate in these activities in an unstructured format (i.e. at home or with friends) while another 28% respondents conduct these activities as part of a community group (non-profit organization, social/service club etc.).

Percieved Gaps in Cultural Programming

Respondents were relatively split in their feelings about the cultural programming offer (municipal or otherwise) in Meaford. Around 50% were satisfied with the general quality and quantity of available cultural programming in Meaford, while the other 50% felt there were improvements to be made. Respondents highlighted a range of issues which, in their view, were limitations to present the programming offer for culture. These included:

- Limited introductory cultural programs (e.g. amateur drama/theatre) particularly as it relates to facilitating and encouraging youth participation in culture.
- The relatively high expense associated with program participation locally compared to other surrounding communities; and
- Perceived limited opportunities to engage in culture outside of Meaford Hall.

It is a principle of this Master Plan that the Municipality’s role in the direct delivery of cultural programs not be a duplication of existing services and opportunities provided by local cultural community and that, wherever feasible,

the Municipality should engage in the development of partnerships with community groups for the delivery of new program opportunities. This is a principle that the Municipality of Meaford has already put into action. An example of this includes the current efforts by Meaford Hall to partner with a client for the development of mini drama classes for youth during the summer and fall of 2015. Continuous staff engagement in grassroots opportunities such as this will allow the Municipality to creatively respond to the community’s needs over time.

Recommendation # 82: Continue to progressively explore partnership opportunities with community and regional groups for the development cultural programming in Meaford as an on-going requirement through the annual implementation of the Cultural Forum.

Within the last two years, Meaford Hall and Museum staff, as well as the Supervisor of Recreation Programs have worked together to develop and implement arts-focused summer activities such as the History Bus Camp and dance programs. In 2014 arts camps registered between 60-80 participants. Staff continues to build and expand on these initiatives and are seeking to promote local cultural camps and opportunities within Grey County and adjacent communities.

Recommendation # 83: Continue plans to expand local summer camps and program options for children and older youth to include dance, theatre, craft and other cultural activities.

Recommendation #84: Develop year-round introductory cultural programs for youth, adults and seniors. The Municipality should seek to develop partnerships with local artists and/or groups to implement these programs

specifically where skills are required for instructional teaching.

Recommendation #85: Meaford Museum should continue to work with local health care providers to develop historic scrapbooking programs for Alzheimer’s patients. The Municipality should seek to build on this momentum and explore the development of therapeutic arts programs for seniors and persons with mental disabilities as part of the Municipality’s community wellness mandate.

Recommendation #86: Explore the opportunity to develop an Artist-in-Residence program at Meaford Hall in partnership with the Meaford Creative Arts Association. This may include short-term artist-run community programs, presentations, workshops and other special projects. The Municipality will need to consider available funding opportunities for the development of this kind of program.

Recommendation # 87: Explore the opportunity to develop mobile library programming for the rural area. Seek to partner with local Hall Associations to offer mobile book exchanges and community book clubs at select (i.e. 2) locations in Service District 2. Programs may otherwise be piloted at local community parks simultaneous with existing community activities (e.g. community fairs, barbeques, baseball tournaments). Programs should be promoted at the neighbourhood-level using community flyers etc.

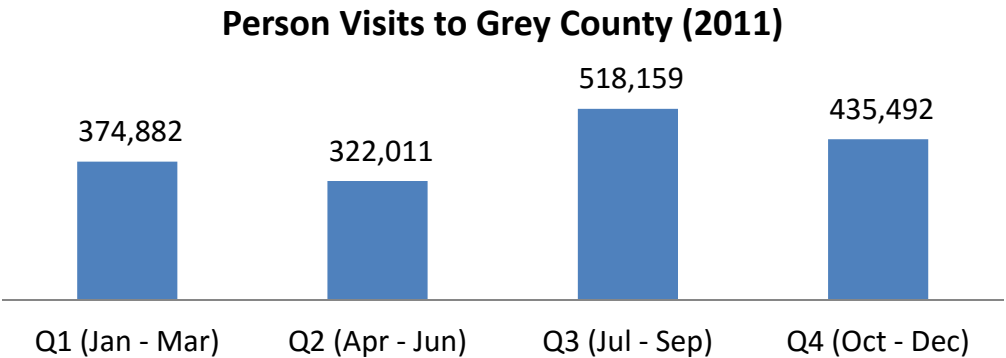
10.9. Events, Festivals and Tourism

The Municipality of Meaford is located within Regional Tourism Organization 7 which includes the geographic areas of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe County. The region received almost 13 million person visits in 2011, 40% of which were

overnight stays. Visitation to Grey County accounted for 13% of annual visitation (season-to-season) to the region, mostly consisting of persons ‘Visiting Friends and Relatives’. Approximately 55% of person visits to the County were same-day visits.

The summer and fall periods are times of peak visitation to the County. Travellers to the area largely participate in a variety of events including festivals and fairs, cultural performances, and sporting events. Festivals and events are key drivers for leisure tourism visits to the region accounting for a little over 850,000 person visits in 2011.

Exhibit 39: Seasonal Person Visits to Grey County in 2011



As a share of total visitation, roughly 15% of visitors to Grey County participated in culture-related activities (festivals/fairs, cultural performances, museums/art galleries, natural heritage experiences such as National/Provincial nature parks and botanical gardens as well as visits to historic sites) versus around 13% of visitors to RTO7.

Participation in sporting events and activities in the County represented the lion share of visitor activities (30%) and is comparable to RTO7 (31%).



Exhibit 40: 2011 Tourism Volumes to RTO 13A and Cochrane District by Cultural Activities on Trip

	Grey County		RTO 7	
Total Person Visits	1,650,544	100%	12,852,103	100%
Festivals and Attractors	92,815	5.6%	859,291	6.7%
Festivals/Fairs	8,391	0.5%	219,070	1.7%
Cultural Performances	15,237	0.9%	387,004	3.0%
Museums/Art Galleries	32,416	2.0%	121,867	0.9%
Zoos/Aquariums/Botanical Gardens	36,771	2.2%	131,350	1.0%
Natural Heritage	93,402	5.7%	528,161	4.1%
National/Provincial Nature Parks	93,402	5.7%	528,161	4.1%
Built Heritage	54,983	3.3%	319,169	2.5%
Historic Sites	54,983	3.3%	319,169	2.5%
Sports	496,133	30.1%	4,082,276	31.8%
Sports Events	56,954	3.5%	270,886	2.1%
Any Outdoor/Sports Activity	439,179	26.6%	3,811,390	29.7%
Other	19,479	1.2%	340,467	2.6%
Casinos	5,435	0.3%	246,045	1.9%
Theme Parks	14,044	0.9%	94,422	0.7%

Source: Ontario Ministry Tourism, Culture and Sport

The 2014 Regional Strategic Plan for Festivals and Events for RTO7 identified that cultural tourism – specifically festivals and events – plays a significant role in increasing net visitation and spending in the region. Priorities of the Plan include the need for these activities to (a) be more effectively included within RTO7’s marketing activities, and (b) have sufficient capacity to attract and host growing visitation from out of the region. As a regional body, strategic priorities for the development of the sector involve capacity building through a range of industry resources including financial assistance and methodologies to help improve the practice of collecting and analyzing visitation data by local/regional event organizers. This will be important in understanding which festivals and events are growing and have greater potential to attract out-of-region visitation. Understanding where events are in the growth cycle of development will be necessary for RTO7 to identify those best-best initiatives which should be the focus of funding support.

The 2014 Festivals and Events Strategy identifies that best-bet opportunities for festival and event development will likely be a combination of mature/well-established festivals and events with significant ‘pull’ to the region as well as those emerging festivals and events with potential to grow and become signature events for Bruce-Grey-Simcoe. The study identified 523 festivals and events in the region, the vast majority of which were local in scale (approximately 80%). The Apple Pie Trail which is organized by the Blue Mountain Village Association (BMVA) and includes Meaford was classified as a key large event in the Region. The Town of Blue Mountains is currently one of the largest event development players in the area surrounding Meaford. As much as possible, the Municipality should seek to develop partnerships with the Town (as well as other neighbouring communities) to collaborate for the development of events and improve Meaford’s profile on the regional event scene. The following table categorizes select event hosted locally in Meaford within RTO7’s event classification framework.



Exhibit 41: Classification for Events in Meaford based on RTO7’s 2014 Regional Strategic Plan for Festivals and Events

RTO7 Classification ¹¹	Event(s)	Implications
	Apple Harvest Craft Show	- Attracts significant out-of-town visitation. - Prime event for regional resource support.
	- Georgian Bay Regatta - The Beaver Valley Climbing Festival - Fall Colours Touring Weekend - Meaford International Film Festival	- Draws attendees primarily from the RTO7 region. - Event has significant growth potential. - Prime events for regional resource support.
	- Meaford Salmon and Trout Derby - Meaford Scarecrow Invasion - Golden Town Cruisers Cruise Nights	- Primarily service the local community. - Opportunities for event growth vary on a case-by-case basis.

¹¹ RTO7’s 2014 Regional Strategic Plan for Festivals and Events categorizes events into three broad groups:

- Large/Well-Established: Festivals and/or events that attract a significant proportion of out-of-town visitors. These need not necessarily be large in terms of the number of participants, but they do attract a high percentage of tourists. Examples include the Willie Warton Festival, or Blue Mountain’s Salsa Fest. These events can generate significant media attention and have the potential to provide the community with a solid building block upon which to grow their event tourism profile.
- Regional/Emerging: Festivals and/or events whose attendees reside primarily within the communities of Bruce, Grey and Simcoe counties but not necessarily within the host community.
- Local: Festivals and/or events whose attendees are primarily from the host community.

RTO7 Classification ¹¹	Event(s)	Implications
	- Soap Box Derby - Electric Eclectic Music Festival	

The 2014 Festivals and Events Strategy recommends RTO7 adopt a product life-cycle portfolio approach to the festivals and events sector. This has implications for the development and support of mature events as well as for events that are emerging and generating growth. In the context on Meaford:

- The Sailing Georgian Bay Regatta is an anchoring sporting event in the BGS Region. Other important sporting events include the Beaver Valley Climbing Festival and offer opportunities to showcase Meaford’s scenic landscapes.
- The Meaford International Film Festival and Fall Colours Touring Weekend has burgeoning potential to pull greater visitation from outside of the region. Investment in marketing and positioning these activities is warranted.
- More local emerging events such as Electric Eclectic Music Festival and Meaford Salmon and Trout Derby have growth potential and should be a focus of development and regional promotion.

Recommendation # 88: Utilize the Cultural Forum to regularly engage local event organizers in discussions on planned activities and opportunities for greater collaboration and assistance for event hosting, development and marketing.

Recommendation # 89: Annually assess the events in Meaford based on a



product life cycle approach and identify those ones which have the potential to grow to facilitate a greater regional or out-of-region draw. Progressively investigate and partner for the development and marketing of these events.

Recommendation # 90: Investigate and promote the use of event tracking resources and funding available from RTO7 for events in Meaford; working with event organizers to identify and implement affordable methodologies in keeping with their fiscal and operating capacity.

Recommendation # 91: Continue to diversify and strengthen existing major festivals and events.

Recommendation # 92: Over the long-term, seek to develop linked local events as a means of packaging experiences for the tourist market. This may involve coordinating and promoting local activities with seasonal sporting events/tournaments in Collingwood and the Town of the Blue Mountains.

Recommendation # 93: Collaboratively expand and develop public cultural education events such as Culture Days and Doors Open in Meaford. In the long-term this may evolve into the development of a regional Cultural Passport program encourages residents from other communities to participate in multiple Culture Day events hosted across Grey County.

Recommendation # 94: Assess the economic impact of Meaford’s cultural sector as growth and investment occur over time.



11 A Integrated Framework for Implementation

The following section outlines the short, medium to long-term initiatives associated with the implementation of Master Plan recommendations. The capacity of the Municipality to invest in infrastructure can be expected to vary over time in response to economic conditions and competing demands for other infrastructure. The purpose of the Master Plan is to create the guidelines and strategy around when those investment decisions can be made.

This Master Plan recognizes that the implementation of facility, programming and service related recommendations will be contingent on future economic and municipal corporate demands and needs. Accordingly, the following table identifies alternative timelines for the implementation of individual

recommendations where appropriate. **Items highlighted in green reflect overlapping priorities across both recreation and culture.**

Legend	
Commencement/Initiation	
Alternative timeframe for implementation	
Ongoing implementation, progress and development	
Recommendation addresses both recreation & culture	

11.1. Summary of Recommendations and Timing

		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
Recommendation(s)				
Recreation Facilities				
1	Continue to invest in necessary repairs the arena facility. Undertake a feasibility study for the renovation of the facility to include larger dressing room facilities, efficient storage areas, new seating and a required accessibility upgrade.			
2	Effectively link the arena, curling club and adjacent fairgrounds through landscaping/hardscaping as part of a campus master planning exercise to take advantage of the logistic adjacencies of these assets to help spur more efficient community use of these spaces.			
3	Continue to investigate the option for the Municipality to operate and program an indoor pool facility as part of a Public Private Partnership with a local condominium corporation.			
4	Review existing agreements with the Hall Associations to ensure these allow the Municipality to meet its obligations to provide programs and maximize access to the facilities for the public and residents.			



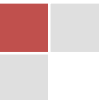
		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
5	Continue with plans to replace the existing Blue Dolphin Pool in situ in the long-term. Designs for a new outdoor pool facility should include larger washrooms/showers, a designated ticket area and lobby and be part of a broader campus master planning exercise to include the skatepark and ball diamonds.			
6	Fix the drainage issues at the William Croft site as an immediate priority. Budget capital funds for this based on determining the precise engineering solution required.			
7	Contingent on the successful implementation of a drainage solution for the Croft Diamonds, implement plans to resurface the diamonds and improve the concession and washroom facilities as well as undertake lighting replacement etc.			
8	Maintain the Annan Ball Diamond per the Capital Plan (lighting, fencing etc.).			
9	Should the demand for ball diamonds increase, continue to invest in and maintain the Bognor Ball Diamond (line painting, fencing) etc.			
10	Work with the Thornbury Soccer Club to determine the validity of using Municipally-owned soccer fields in Meaford should investment occur in the urban area. The Municipality should seek to retain local user group use of soccer fields in the municipality.			
11	Contingent on the ability to retain the soccer club locally, invest in (2) multi-use fields for soccer on municipally-owned Fairgrounds land. The fields should be developed as part of a broader recreation campus to include the arena and Curling Club.			
12	Maintain the existing Bognor Soccer Field in SD#2 – South and invest in improvements (line markings and nets).			
13	Maintain the Meaford Tennis Court and invest in lighting.			
14	Continue to maintain existing basketball facilities at Peter Cameron Park and Bognor Park.			
15	Continue the practice of utilizing movable nets for pickleball in the Meaford and St. Vincent Community Centre Hall to facilitate indoor racquet sport.			
16	Continue to maintain the Beach Volleyball court at Coast Guard Beach in Service District #1			
17	Investigate opportunities to develop beach volleyball courts at other beach locations in the Municipality should community demand for these facilities increase.			
18	Contingent on the acquisition of vacant land adjacent the Annan Ball Diamond, develop (1) new multi-use court			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
	facility at Annan Park.			
19	Confirm that Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols (as outlined in the Municipality’s existing Official Plan) will be used where available for improvements to existing parks where new residential subdivisions are within the standard of 1 park/playground within 500-800 metres of all built up residential areas. Where the recommended standard is not met, the Municipality may enforce Parkland Dedication and/or Cash-in Lieu of Parkland protocols provided by the Official Plan to have new parkland dedicated.			
20	Develop a park design strategy in partnership with the community – specifically engaging youth			
21	Invest in new playground infrastructure at William Croft Park in order to address the playground service gap in the mid-urban core area.			
22	Evaluate the opportunity to develop a new playground to address the north area service gap based on available and appropriate municipal lands in this zone.			
23	Prioritize playground replacement based on a 20-year trigger date.			
24	Continue plans to maintain and upgrade the existing skate park near the Blue Dolphin Pool; making improvements based on community consultation.			
25	Continue to support the development of an Active Transportation Plan and Cycling Plan for Grey County.			
26	Participate in the development of any County commissioned Trails Master Plan as a comprehensive tool and long-term framework for local trail development in the community.			
27	The Municipality of Meaford should seek to encourage the appropriate development in active transportation linkages between planned recreation nodes as investment occurs over time. This should generally align with the County’s priorities to develop an Interim Active Transportation Master Plan and a Cycling Plan in the short-term.			
28	Consider the potential to extend the waterfront trail network to other recreation assets in the urban area.			
29	Commission a Design Strategy for the campground to include options for enhancements to the site. The Strategy should include a framework for the phased development of the site and associated order of magnitude capital costs. The Strategy should be accompanied by a business plan outlining mechanisms to improve revenue generation related to the campsite development.			
30	Revisit and revise the Capital Plan for the campground, taking into account recommendations of the Design Strategy.			



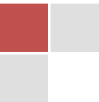
		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
31	This Master Plan supports the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan including plans to develop a Harbour village concept for the area as well as investment in cultural infrastructure on-site (i.e. outdoor pavilion for events and festivals). In keeping recommendations, establish a capital reserve for the future development of recreation facilities to include the Harbour.			
Recreation Programs and Services				
32	Continue efforts to expand the range of programs offered to the community with a focus on enhancing opportunities for older youth (13-19 years of age) as well as seniors.			
33	Progressively assess the role of the Municipality in the provision of soccer locally based on developments with the Meaford Amateur Soccer Association.			
34	Contingent on the ability to secure an agreement for the Municipal management and use of an indoor pool as part of public-private partnership with a local condominium corporation, expand the roster of aquatic programs to include year-round/winter activities to include aqua-fit and public swim options.			
35	With the development of basketball and/or multi-use court facilities, expand youth programming options to include basketball, volleyball and other court-based opportunities.			
36	Continue to implement teen tennis programs for youth (8-18) as well as other court-based programs such as pickleball workshops for older adults.			
37	Investigate opportunities to develop outdoor youth recreation program options for soccer in the rural area.			
38	Continue to offer fitness program options at Woodford Hall as a means of servicing the rural community			
39	Continue to assess the feasibility of opportunities to develop and initiate new (and scoped) programming options in the rural area.			
40	Partner with the local trail associations such as the Beaver Valley Trail Club to develop trail/environmental education programs for children and youth.			
41	Develop multi-faceted programs which combine culture, recreation and wellness			
42	Appoint a Programming Assistant to provide the Recreation Programs Supervisor with planning and support assistance for the development and implementation of new recreation programs and events			
43	Annually commission a summer student for the role of Research Coordinator with responsibility to design and implement customer service tools (such as community surveys) to annually monitor community satisfaction with			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
	Recommendation(s)			
	recreation facilities, services and programs in the Town.			
44	As part of future municipal organizational reviews, continue to monitor the effectiveness of the staff roles within the Community Services Department, particularly as Master Plan implementation occurs over time.			
45	Develop and implement an Ice Allocation Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.			
46	Continue with plans to invest in an electronic booking system for facilities and programs as means of operational efficiency for tracking registration volumes and facility utilization as well as associated revenues.			
47	Undertake annual customer service monitoring (satisfaction surveys etc.) to regularly assess resident/user needs and requisite improvements to the Municipality’s recreation service delivery model.			
48	Develop an online facility maintenance reporting system (e.g. via an online e-mail/message submission tool on the Municipal website) for real-time staff updates on needed repairs, washroom maintenance etc.			
49	Undertake a review of the Municipality’s Family Youth Subsidy program to assess the extent to which the program meets the needs of residents and, if required, evaluate the need to enhance protocols.			
50	Undertake a comprehensive review of all Municipally-owned indoor recreation facilities for compliance with standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) in light of 2013 accessibility amendments (effective in 2015) within the Ontario Building Code.			
51	Continue to implement priorities outlined in the Municipality’s 2014 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan in order to ensure barrier-free access to recreation. This includes investment in accessible trail and playground infrastructure.			
52	Continue to regularly update and implement the Municipality’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and address future regulatory changes as established within the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).			
53	Host an annual recreation forum with user/community group stakeholders as a means of regularly addressing challenges/opportunities for program and partnership growth and development.			
54	Continue to support the Georgian Bay Youth Roots group. Work in partnership with the group’s leadership to evaluate the potential for this organization to transition into a Youth Advisory Council.			
55	Continue to take advantage of ParticipACTION funding and maximize available resources from this organization.			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
56	In partnership with local schools/school boards, evaluate the benefits of implementing Joint Use Agreements for community/municipal use of school facilities and vice-versa.			
57	Develop and implement a marketing and positioning strategy for the Community Recreation Guide which differentiates this document from the tourist-focused ‘Meaford Guide’.			
58	Continue to develop, expand and reorganize the Community Recreation Guide to better promote the range of recreation opportunities available to residents.			
59	Establish an easy, workable protocol to collect and regularly update contact and program-related information from community groups and sports groups for publication in the Community Recreation Guide.			
60	Integrate the Recreation & Culture Asset database (developed as part of the Master Plan project) into the Municipality’s GIS System and further develop and translate the database into an Interactive Community Map to be hosted on the Municipality’s website.			
61	Develop a Management Plan for regularly expanding, updating and maintaining the Recreation & Cultural Asset Databases.			
62	As part of the Municipality’s website maintenance protocols, continue to improve the resident-focused ‘Play’ Portal to further enhance recreation information services to include an online facility maintenance reporting system and social media updates directly linked to the Community Services Department’s Facebook page in order to provide real-time alerts on unexpected program cancellations, special events, available ice etc.			



		Implementation Timeframe		
		Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
		2015-2016	2017-2021	2022-2025
Recommendation(s)				
Cultural Facilities				
63	Continue to invest in the Meaford Public Library as it is an important County asset.			
64	Proceed with planned capital improvements to Meaford Hall. Major investments to be prioritized include the renovation of the balcony area and related seating.			
65	Invest in a facility booking system for Meaford Hall to better track and monitor shifts in annual utilization over time.			
66	Proceed with planned capital improvements to the Meaford Museum and continue efforts to optimize storage capacity at the facility.			
67	Implement landscape and streetscape enhancements to the museum site per the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Strategy and Master Plan.			
Cultural Programs and Services				
68	The Supervisor of Recreation Programs, the Museum Services Coordinator and the Manager of Arts & Cultural Services should continue to work collaboratively to develop arts and cultural programming offer in Meaford.			
69	Review the composition of the Heritage Advisory Committee to include the Museum Services Coordinator in the capacity of a staff advisory role to the Committee.			
70	Develop and adopt a Municipal Cultural Policy for the Municipality of Meaford.			
71	Develop a Municipal Register of Properties of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest for the Municipality of Meaford.			
72	Redirect a dedicated portion of municipal funding for the Community Grant Fund to establish a Cultural Grant funding stream.			
73	Develop a formal grant application and criteria-based approval process for the Cultural Grant Fund.			
74	Revise and update the Municipality of Meaford’s Special Events Policy.			
75	Plan and initiate an annual/seasonal Cultural Forum with cultural groups/leaders as a means of fostering			



	consistent dialogue and collaboration for the development of new cultural initiatives for the community.			
76	Develop a system to allow community groups to contribute seasonally to the Community Recreation Guide (see related recommendation 57).			
77	As part of the Municipality's efforts to progressively enhance the Community Recreation Guide, explore the modest restructuring of the booklet to provide a designated section for culture, complete with a list of facilities and rental information as well as seasonal roster of activities and programs hosted at these facilities.			
78	Work progressively to develop the 'cultural brand' of Meaford. This should involve effective positioning within the Meaford [Visitor] Guide as well as the exploring the potential to incorporate the brand within community wayfinding signage.			
79	Ensure a digital version of the Meaford [Visitor] Guide is provided within the visitor portal of the municipal website to allow for the maximum profile of this tool.			
80	In the short to medium-term, seek to progressively enhance the tourism portal of the Municipal website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford') to improve the showcase the thematic tourist offer of the municipality. Information and site pages should focus on tourism strengths of the municipality, including: 'The Outdoors' as well as 'Arts and Culture' and 'Culinary Escapes & Adventures' (wineries, agri-tourism etc.).			
81	Utilize existing municipal databases on local tourism assets including those identified in the Culture and Recreation asset databases developed for this project to develop a Visitor Information Map to be hosted on the Municipal tourism website ('Set Your Sights on Meaford').			
82	Continue to progressively explore partnership opportunities with community and regional groups for the development cultural programming in Meaford as an on-going requirement through the annual implementation of the Cultural Forum.			
83	Continue plans to expand local summer camps and program options for children and older youth to include dance, theatre, craft and other cultural activities.			
84	Develop year-round introductory cultural programs for youth, adults and seniors. The Municipality should seek to develop partnerships with local artists and/or groups to implement these programs specifically where skills are required for instructional teaching.			
85	Meaford Museum should continue to work with local health care providers to develop historic scrapbooking programs for Alzheimer's patients.			



86	Explore the opportunity to develop an Artist-in-Residence program at Meaford Hall in partnership with Grey County Artists. This may include short-term artist-run community programs, presentations, workshops and other special projects. The Municipality will need to consider available funding opportunities for the development of this kind of program.			
87	Explore the opportunity to develop mobile library programming for the rural area.			
88	Utilize the Cultural Forum to regularly engage local event organizers in discussions on planned activities and opportunities for greater collaboration and assistance for event hosting, development and marketing.			
89	Annually assess the events in Meaford based on a product life cycle approach and identify those ones which have the potential to grow to facilitate a greater regional or out-of-region draw. Progressively investigate and partner for the development and marketing of these events.			
90	Investigate and promote the use of event tracking resources and funding available from RTO7 for events in Meaford; working with event organizers to identify and implement affordable methodologies in keeping with their fiscal and operating capacity.			
91	Continue to diversify and strengthen existing major festivals and events.			
92	Over the long-term, seek to develop linked local events as a means of packaging experiences for the tourist market. This may involve coordinating and promoting local activities with seasonal sporting events/tournaments in Collingwood and the Town of the Blue Mountains.			
93	Collaboratively expand and develop public cultural education events such as Culture Days and Doors Open in Meaford. In the long-term this may evolve into the development of a regional Cultural Passport program encourages residents from other communities to participate in multiple Culture Day events hosted across Grey County.			
94	Assess the economic impact of Meaford’s cultural sector as growth and investment occur over time.			

PREPARED BY SIERRA PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

