

Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study

July 2024
DRAFT



THE MUNICIPALITY OF
LAMBTON SHORES

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Monteith ♦ Brown
planning consultants



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Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study**

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July 17, 2024



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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those who contributed to the development of the Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study. Our sincere gratitude is expressed to all residents and community partners who have provided input and whose insights have helped to shape this Study. We are grateful for the guidance provided by the Grand Bend Community Centre Ad Hoc Committee, Lambton Shores Council and Staff that have supported the planning process.

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Councillor Glen Baillie, Ward 1
Councillor Dave Maguire, Ward 2
Councillor Lorie Scott, Ward 3
Councillor Ronn E Dodge, Ward 4
Councillor Scott Ferguson, Ward 5
Councillor Dave Marsh, Ward 6
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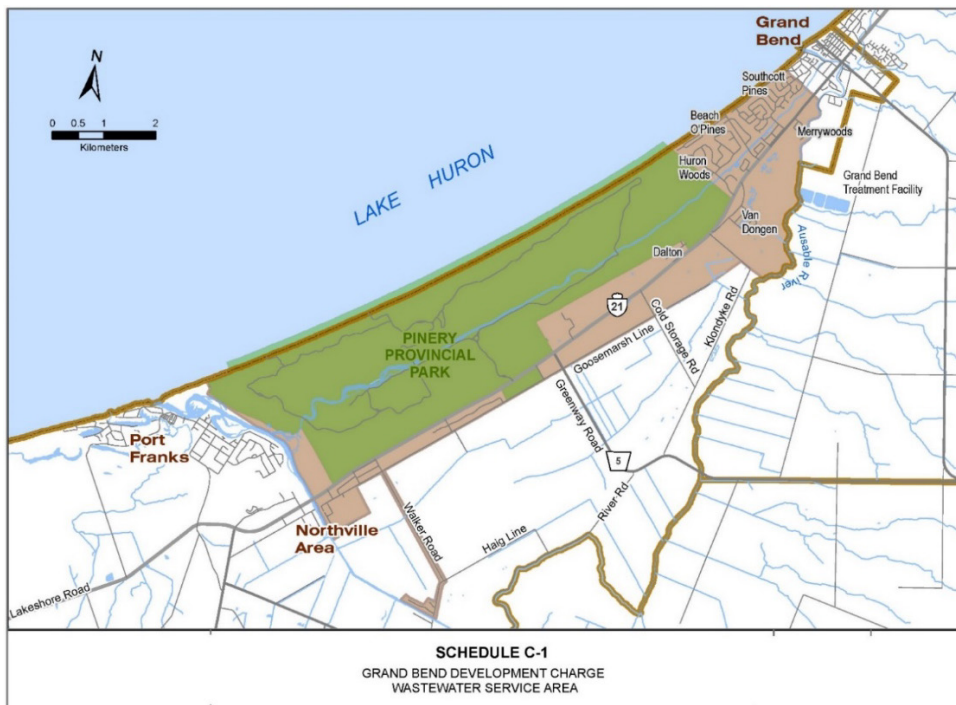
Project Consultant

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

Executive Summary

The Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study has been prepared in response to historical and forecasted population growth trends in the Grand Bend settlement, along with a stated desire for community space. The Terms of Reference for this Feasibility Study requires “a needs assessment to determine the types of recreational infrastructure required to meet community needs.”

The most recent population estimates for Grand Bend are contained in the Municipality of Lambton Shores Development Charges Background Study which project the number of people living within the “Grand Bend wastewater service area” shown below. The population is estimated at approximately 3,700 persons and is projected to grow to 6,000 persons by the year 2041.



Source: Development Charges Background Study & By-law, 2022

Community engagement activities carried out in support of this Feasibility Study have consisted of one public open house (another is planned in Summer 2024), a community feedback form, roundtables with representatives of local community stakeholders, interviews with Municipal Council and other agency/institutional opinion leaders, and opportunities to provide written submissions. Consultations express a desire for a municipally-owned community centre to be provided in Grand Bend that is flexible to accommodate a wide range of community programs and events, can serve a wide range of ages and interests, employs an environmentally-friendly design, and can become a hub of year-round community activity in the settlement. There is support for partnerships with other service providers and a stated willingness among a number of residents to contribute funds towards the construction and ongoing use of a community centre to increase its operational viability.

This Feasibility Study finds that there is a case to be made to provide a community centre based on community needs in relation to historical and forecasted growth. Such a facility should be scaled in size to reflect the projected build-out population of 6,000 persons and employ a baseline design standard that is reflective of what other municipalities provide. A community centre also has the potential to draw from 'Secondary Markets' located approximately 30 minutes from Grand Bend although acknowledging that there are 20 community centres collectively available throughout Lambton Shores, South Huron, Bluewater and North Middlesex.

The Feasibility Study's assessments support the following components to be included as part of a future community centre in Grand Bend:

- A large and flexible multi-purpose space designed with a sufficient floor area, high ceilings and kitchen/storage amenities so that community events and leisure/sports activities can be offered.
- A minimum of one multi-purpose program room that is oriented to meetings and selected programs, designed to allow for meetings, group fitness classes and active living programs, arts and cultural programs, general interest programs, etc.
- An intergenerational space that can be shared by different age groups at different times of the day throughout the week.
- An indoor walking track, potentially encircling the large hall.

In addition, the following optional components or enhancements to the above noted amenities may be considered provided that the Municipality can find funding and/or operating partners along with alternative revenue streams that can bolster the budget allocated towards the project:

- A Lambton County Library branch contingent on continued engagement of both the Grand Bend Public School and Lambton County Library. A library branch has the potential to serve as a very strong anchor amenity as modern libraries have the ability to deliver a wide breadth of programs, services and events to their communities.
- Building the aforementioned flexible multi-purpose space to be larger and of a higher quality that exceeds a typical municipal design standard, provided that the project budget can support this action.
- Given the availability of private sector fitness in the area, a dedicated group fitness studio and/or equipment based-fitness centre only in the event the Municipality can negotiate an agreement with a third party or parties who would operate, commit to long use and/or contribute capital to such spaces.

- Space for other agency, institutional and/or private sector partners including, but not limited to, childcare, employment and social services providers.
- Space conducive to arts and cultural programs and events.

This Feasibility Study represents a point of departure from which the Municipality of Lambton Shores will decide if it will pursue a community centre contingent on carrying the following studies prior to construction:

- Conceptualize a building program and site plan using the recommended components identified in this Feasibility Study and/or feedback received through additional community engagement opportunities;
- Identify any outdoor amenities and/or other facility components that may be accommodated based on the site and available budget;
- Evaluate prospective sites and/or acquire a property that has a size and configuration that would allow for a community centre, parking and other services as required; and
- Develop capital cost estimates, operating cost estimates, identify partnership and funding opportunities through business planning.

The Municipality of Lambton Shores Development Charges Background Study identifies a \$10,000,000 gross project cost for a community centre in Grand Bend, however, less than 8% of this cost is considered recoverable through growth-related charges. As such, there will be a significant amount of capital that will need to be secured through other funding sources which will need to be defined through a more fulsome financial analysis after site acquisition/development and construction costs are identified. It bears noting that the \$10 million project cost was developed near the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and construction costs have since escalated significantly due to inflationary and other global economic conditions.

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Appendix A: Feedback Form Results

Standard Limitations

This Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study was prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Limited (Monteith Brown) for the Municipality of Lambton Shores (the client). This study is based on information provided to Monteith Brown which has not been independently verified.

The disclosure of any information contained in this study is the sole responsibility of the client. The material in this report and all information relating to this activity reflect Monteith Brown's judgment in light of the information available to us at the time of preparation of this report. It is solely attributable to work conducted as part of the client's Request For Proposal and its findings should not constitute final recommendations since subsequent phases may be undertaken by the client.

Any use which a third party makes of this Feasibility Study, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Monteith Brown accepts no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by a third party as a result of decisions made or actions based on this report.

Section 1.0

Introduction

1.1 Geographic Context

The Municipality of Lambton Shores was formed in 2001 by the amalgamation of five former municipalities including the Town of Forest, the Township of Bosanquet and the Villages of Grand Bend, Thedford and Arkona. Lambton Shores is a geographically large municipality occupying a total land area of 330.5 square kilometres.

Grand Bend is a settlement area located within the Municipality of Lambton Shores, situated along the northern municipal border where the settlement is bounded by Lake Huron to the west and the Municipality of South Huron to the north and east.

1.2 Purpose of the Feasibility Study

The Municipality of Lambton Shores provides recreation facilities to support year-round leisure services and social activities that are delivered by community-based providers such as minor sports associations, service clubs, event organizers, youth and seniors groups, and other volunteers. The Municipality owns and operates several community centres and two arenas across Lambton Shores.

The Municipality's priorities and decision-making for its parks and recreation system is guided by its Recreation & Leisure Services Master Plan (RLSMP). First prepared in 2011 and updated in 2018, the RLSMP is a Council-approved document that was created with the input of Lambton Shores' residents and user groups. It identifies the types of facilities and services required in Lambton Shores over a 10-year period to reinforce principles of physical activity, social connection, inclusion, and year-round opportunities. In the 2011 and 2018 RLSMPs, certain feedback was received from members in the community that has expressed the desire for a community centre located within the Grand Bend settlement.

In the time since the 2018 RLSMP was approved, Lambton Shores has experienced population growth and diversification, driven in part by a growing base of retirees but also younger households that have moved to the community with emergence of remote work opportunities and lifestyle opportunities. Growth has been particularly pronounced in Grand Bend with the last Census showing that the settlement is home to one out of every four permanent residents of Lambton Shores (25%) while there are a number of residential and commercial developments that are planned or under construction. The Municipality does not presently own or operate indoor recreation facilities in the Grand Bend settlement apart from a small structure at Grand Bend Lions Park that is currently leased to the Grand Bend Arts Centre (and formerly was a YMCA youth centre) which has renewed requests to examine the need for a Municipal community centre.

In 2023, the Municipality of Lambton Shores appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to specifically oversee the study process for a potential community centre in Grand Bend. A Request For Proposal was issued containing a Terms of Reference that “requires a feasibility study for a new community centre in Grand Bend” and “Conduct a needs assessment to determine the types of recreational infrastructure required to meet community needs.” The Ad Hoc Committee is responsible for overseeing the Terms of Reference and providing a recommendation to Municipal Council at the conclusion of the study process.

Study Scope & Exclusions

The scope of the Grand Bend Community Centre Feasibility Study focuses on indoor recreational infrastructure. Key components of the project methodology included an extensive community engagement process consisting of open houses, feedback forms, workshops with community user groups, and insights of the Ad Hoc Committee and members of Council. Research tasks included a demographic scan of the Grand Bend settlement and the Municipality of Lambton Shores as a whole, along with population characteristics of neighbouring municipalities given Grand Bend’s location adjacent to the Municipal border. A review of trends and best practices along with consideration of service standards contained in the RLSMP informs the needs assessments.

Items under scope of this Feasibility Study exclude outdoor recreational assessments, site selection analysis, partnership negotiations, architectural and engineering works, nor are capital and operating costs quantified. Findings contained in this Feasibility Study may be used by the Municipality of Lambton Shores to inform separate and subsequent studies to evaluate prospective sites for a community centre, architectural concepts and facility fit plans, parks and outdoor recreation amenities, and accompanying business plans that articulate costs based on facility components to be assessed.

1.3 Recreation & Leisure Services Master Plan

As previously noted, the RLSMP is the Council-approved blueprint guiding how parks, recreation and culture facilities and services are delivered to the year 2027. The RLSMP establishes the following vision statement based on a comprehensive community engagement that were carried out at the time:

“Lambton Shores’ natural beauty and agricultural heritage lead us to active, healthy culturally vibrant and community-driven lifestyles.”

The RLSMP contains 50 recommendations, the following of which are relevant to community centre needs and in the context of this Feasibility Study:

- R1** The primary role of the Municipality should continue to be as a facilitator of leisure opportunities through the provision of space and other appropriate supports to the community sector.
- R9** Continue to support the volunteer sector in Lambton Shores through appropriate community development and capacity building initiatives.
- R13** Engage the Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) and St. Clair Catholic District School Board (SCCDSB) in the planning and provision of joint campuses for schools, parks and municipal facilities.
- R14** Requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Municipality’s core mandate should be evaluated based on anticipated municipal role, quantifiable measures of demand and costs to the Municipality, and other long-term implications prior to decision whether or not to partner in the public interest.
- R19** The Municipality, through Council and staff, should assume a leadership role in building the capacity of the local community to deliver recreation and leisure services by facilitating access to space, coordinating the delivery of municipal and community-based programs, and providing financial supports as necessary.
- R24** Regular consultation and engagement of the community is recommended during strategic planning and other key initiatives being undertaken by the municipality, in order to ensure that groups have the opportunity to contribute ideas and/or resources in achieving a holistic, yet pragmatic approach to community development.
- R31** Work with community partners (e.g., Community Health Centres, YMCA of Western Ontario) to increase access and availability, and address gaps in youth and seniors’ programming throughout Lambton Shores.

The RLSMP found that the Municipality’s supply of indoor recreation facilities was well positioned, albeit population growth trends have accelerated beyond what was forecasted at that time due in part to greater migration from urban areas resulting from the COVID-

19 pandemic and emergence of remote work opportunities. The RLSMP population basis was derived from a 2017 Development Charges Background Study which projected 11,400 permanent residents by the year 2027; the updated Development Charges Background now projects 13,600 permanent residents by 2027.¹

1.4 Selected Community Centre Provision & Design Trends

Community Hubs: A community hub is a central access point for a range of needed health and social services, along with cultural, recreational, and green spaces to nourish community life. A community hub can be a school, neighbourhood centre, early learning centre, library, seniors' centre, community health centre, a place of worship, or another public space. This hub concept is gaining traction across Ontario as it engages all ages and abilities, offers social benefits, strengthens community cohesion, and fosters enhanced quality of life by providing a central location to deliver a range of services.

Multi-Use & Multi-Generational Facilities: There are a range of benefits for multi-use facilities including creating a destination where all household members can gather and engage in recreation activities while contributing to sport development, tourism, and generating operational efficiencies. By providing a convenient "one-stop shop" experience, multi-use recreation facilities have the potential to generate substantial economic, social, and environmental gains for municipalities.

Multi-Dimensional & Comfortable Spaces: Best practices in facility design consider safety, comfort, and opportunities for community gathering and socialization. This may include strategic placement of seating areas, proximity to washroom facilities, and open concept design features. Many communities further support convenience in public spaces through the provision of wireless internet access.

Leveraging Partnership Opportunities: Collaborations between municipalities and private or non-profit organizations are becoming increasingly common in Ontario. Partnerships help to share costs of construction and operation, as well as generating benefits from economies of scale and shared expertise.

¹ Municipality of Lambton Shores. 2022 Development Charges Background Study & By-law. Appendix B. Prepared by DFA Infrastructure International Inc. and dated December 8, 2022.

Embracing Green Design: Environmental concerns are a top-of-mind issue among many Canadians. Municipalities are increasingly conscious of the environment when designing new facilities, sometimes adopting LEED, Net Zero or similar standards to mitigate effects of global climate change and extreme weather events.

Serving All Ages, Abilities & Backgrounds: Inclusion and access are key goals for recreation. To ensure access for all, a number of barriers to participation should be recognized including those related to income, lack of awareness, geographic distance and ability to travel, ethnocultural backgrounds, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and more.

Health & Wellness: A holistic and multi-faceted approach to health and wellness (including health promotion, socialization, mindfulness and management of stress and anxiety) is significantly influencing active living.

Physical Inactivity is Increasing: Research finds consistently high levels of physical inactivity across Canada over the past number of years due to increasingly busy lifestyles, the rise of sedentary behaviours, and reliance on motorized forms of transportation. To combat declines in physical activity, encourage participation and support healthy and active lifestyles, municipalities have employed several strategies to combat these factors such as providing facilities, extending hours of operation, increasing communications, modifying programs and service levels, amongst other strategies.

Increased Demand for Unstructured Activities: Participation is gradually shifting away from structured programs and set participation schedules as people are demonstrating a desire for more drop-in, unstructured, and self-scheduled times to participate. Participation in adult activities is also growing and youth engagement is being embraced in many communities.

Section 2.0

Market Catchment

2.1 Primary & Secondary Market Catchment Areas

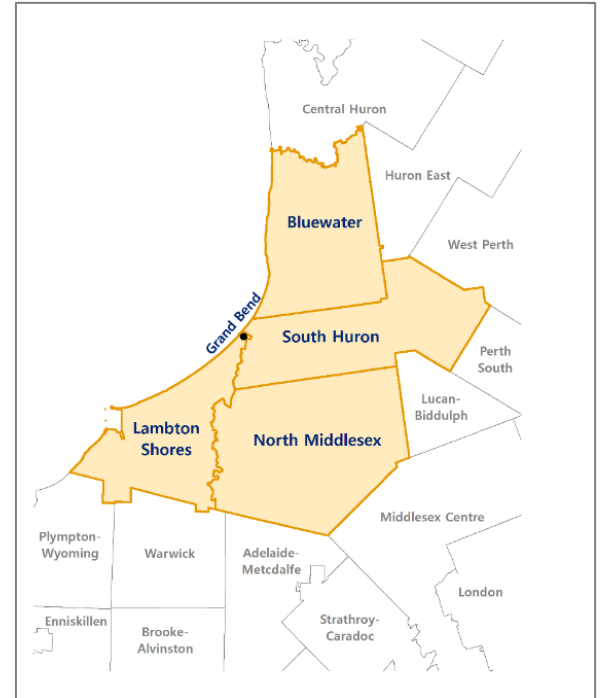
Multi-use community centre catchments consist of 'primary' and 'secondary' markets, depending on the offered mix of facility components and services. For the purposes of this Feasibility Study, the Primary Market is represented by lands designated as the Grand Bend settlement in Schedule A1 of the Municipality of Lambton Shores Official Plan (see Figure 1 in the pages that follow). The Primary Market is generally bound by the Municipality of Lambton Shores border to the north, Pinery Provincial Park and Klondyke Road to the south, and selected areas to the east of Highway 21.

The Grand Bend settlement is identified as the Primary Market for this Feasibility Study on the basis that:

- a) If developed, it is assumed that a community centre would be located within the designated Grand Bend settlement area.
- b) That other settlements in Lambton Shores have indoor recreation facilities to serve localized indoor recreational needs in those respective communities such as the Port Franks Community Centre, the Legacy Centre in Thedford, and The Shores Recreation Centre in Forest.

The Secondary Market for a community centre in Grand Bend consists of:

- a) Areas in the Municipality of Lambton Shores, excluding the Primary Market but including designated settlements such as Thedford, Forest, Arkona, Port Franks and the various rural communities. Residents and businesses of Lambton Shores have a vested interest in all community centres operated by the Municipality though their ability to access them and their contributions to the Municipality's tax base that sustain municipal services.
- b) The Municipalities of Bluewater, North Middlesex, and South Huron which have substantial portion of their populations concentrated within a 30-minute drive of Grand Bend. While non-residents do not contribute taxes to the construction and annual operation of Lambton Shores facilities, there is a degree of regional participation in recreation activities among people living in Lambton Shores and its neighbouring municipalities.



The collective number of people residing in the Primary and Secondary Markets – effectively the combined populations of Lambton Shores, South Huron and Bluewater – amounts to approximately 36,300 persons.² As in Grand Bend, certain areas in the Secondary Market have a seasonal population base as well. Demographic information attributable to the Primary and Secondary Markets is derived from the Statistics Canada Census and selected municipal reports where available. It is recognized that the most recent Census is three years old at time of writing and that the next Census in 2026 will provide further insights into population and socio-demographic trends.

As will be discussed in the pages that follow, population forecasts for Grand Bend are only available by its wastewater service area boundary which differs from the Official Plan boundary.

2.2 Primary Market – Grand Bend Settlement

The 2021 Census recorded a permanent population of 3,031 persons living in Grand Bend, representing growth of this full-time population by 44% (1,300 persons) compared to the 2011 Census. Population growth forecasts are not available specifically for the Grand Bend settlement; however, the Development Charges Background Study contains population forecasts for the entire Municipality of Lambton Shores and projects that a total of 4,608 new residents will be added by the year 2041. The Development Charges Study also states that “approximately 64% of total residential and employment growth will occur in the wastewater service area of Grand Bend.”³ This infers that Grand Bend’s population will grow by 2,950 persons to reach a total of nearly 6,000 persons. Figure 3 on the following page illustrates the historical and forecasted population. For the purposes of this Feasibility Study, it is assumed that the population of Grand Bend is currently 3,700 for the year 2024 based on the proportional growth allocation identified in the Development Charges Background Study.

It bears noting, however, that the Development Charges Background Study defines the Grand Bend wastewater service area (see Figure 2 on the page that follows) as extending further west than identified in Schedule C-1 of the Lambton Shores Official Plan. In fact, the western limits of the wastewater service area border Port Franks and extend into Northville which are presently serviced by the Port Franks Community Centre, thus residents in the west end of the wastewater service area may in fact constitute a portion of the Secondary Market. **Direct comparisons between Census populations and forecasts derived from Development Charge Background Study assumptions should be interpreted with caution, as should any associations of the defined wastewater service area and the Primary Market.**

For the purposes of this Feasibility Study, the population of Grand Bend is estimated at 3,700 for the year 2024.

The population is projected to grow to nearly 6,000 persons by the year 2041 based on the proportional growth allocation identified in the Development Charges Background Study.

² Statistics Canada Census, 2021

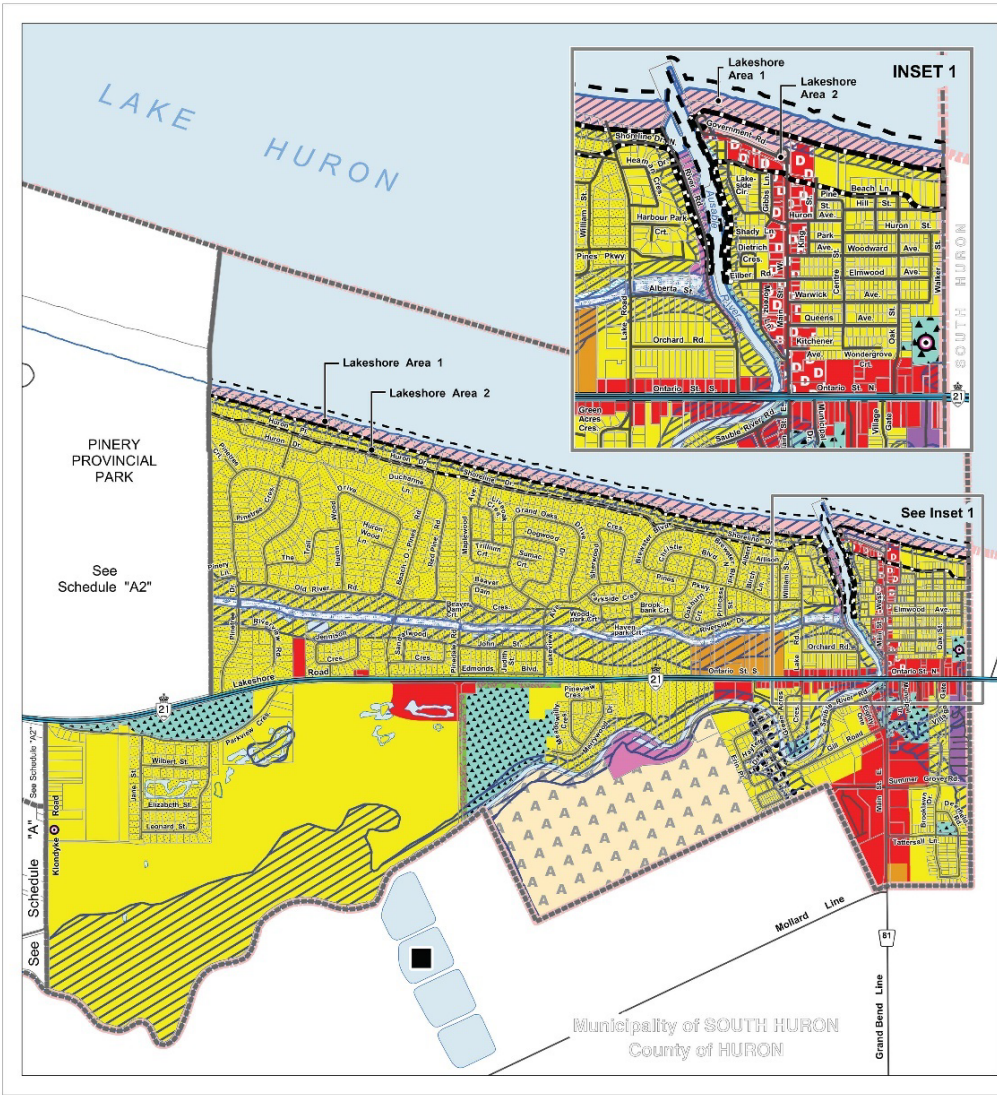
³ Ibid. 2022 Development Charges Background Study & By-law, pp. 19-21

In 2021, permanent residents living in the Grand Bend settlement represented 25.5% of the Municipality of Lambton Shores' population though that percentage would be slightly higher if applying the Grand Bend wastewater service area (this is not possible, however, due to difference in Statistics Canada dissemination area boundaries). Based on the growth forecast assumptions for Grand Bend and Lambton Shores as a whole, the 6,000 persons estimated in the Grand Bend wastewater service area would represent 36% of all residents living in Lambton Shores by the year 2041.

Census data does not fully capture the total number of people living in Grand Bend during the year as there is a sizeable seasonal population that may report their primary place of residence in a municipality other than Lambton Shores. The Municipality of Lambton Shores Official Plan indicates that the mix of permanent and seasonal residents in Grand Bend is equally split between 50% permanent and 50% seasonal, and the Official Plan goes on to state that the mix is anticipated to change to 60% permanent and 40% seasonal over the next 20 years.⁴

While seasonal residents may generate a degree of need for indoor recreation services, the majority of Grand Bend's seasonal residents arrive for the summer months when outdoor activities are more popular whereas use of indoor recreation facilities and related programming tends to peak between the mid-fall and early spring seasons. That said, observed and anticipated changes towards a greater proportion of seasonal population becoming permanent residents - i.e. more people living in Lambton Shores throughout the year - could increase demands for indoor recreational services.

⁴ Municipality of Lambton Shores Official Plan. 2015. August 2022 consolidation. Section 2.3.2. p.14



The Municipality of Lambton Shores OFFICIAL PLAN SCHEDULE "A1" (Grand Bend)

LEGEND

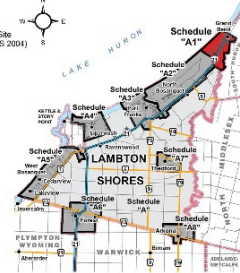
- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Assessment Parcels | Waterbodies |
| Rivers - Steep - Drainage | Sewage Treatment Works |
| Roads - County Road | Active or Former Waste Disposal Site (Anderson Dataset - Lambton CWS 2004) |
| Provincial Highway | Municipal Boundary |
| Railroad | Schedule Inset Boundary |
| Cemetery | |
-
- ### Official Plan - Designations
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Agriculture | Wetland (MNR - OWES) |
| Residential | General Regulation Area |
| Residential - Grand Bend | Hazard Area |
| Residential - Special Policy Area | Lakeshore Area 1 |
| Downtown Commercial | Lakeshore Area 2 |
| Commercial | |
| Campgrounds & Trailer Parks | |
| Mixed Uses | |
| Harbour & Marina | |
| Open Space | |
| Lakeshore | |
| Natural Environment | |

Reference

Disclaimer: These digital mapping products have been produced on the County of Lambton's Geographic Information System. Data provided herein is derived from sources with varying levels of accuracy and currency. This is not a survey product. The County of Lambton disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of information contained herein. The County of Lambton assumes no responsibility for errors arising from use of these digital mapping products.

The Official Plan information contained herein is current as of the last recorded amendment noted under "Official Plan Amendments".
 - Cadastre database is current to June 2013.
 - Variance database is current to June 2014 (SNR).
 General Regulation and Hazard Areas are determined by local Conservation Authorities and are Subject to Change (Dec 2013).
 Projection: UTM NAD 83 Zone 17
 COUNTY OF LAMBTON
 Planning and Development Services, January 2019
 www.lambtononline.ca

Area Estimator
 Note: Area Estimator generalised blocks (shown at left) are scaled to represent typical area measure.
 Area Estimator is roughly scaled for 1:25,000 ONLY.
 Area area measures can be converted to accuracy (m) by dividing by (2.47).



The Municipality of Lambton Shores OFFICIAL PLAN SCHEDULE "A1" (Grand Bend)

to By-law No. 106 of 2015
 Passed this 24 day of Nov 2015

Bill Weber, Mayor
 Carol McKenzie, Clerk

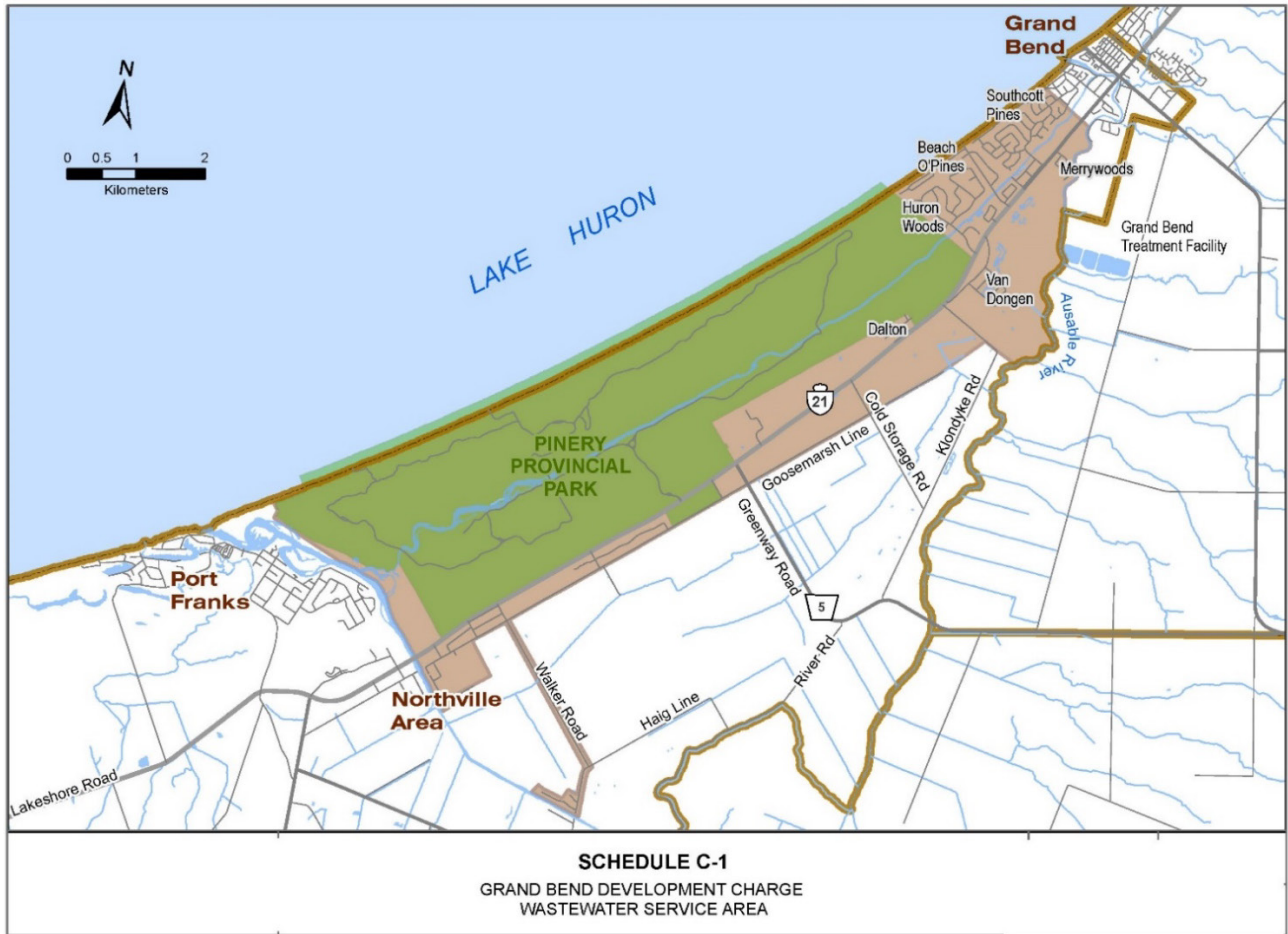
Official Plan Amendments

OPA #2, June 23, 2020
 OPA #5, July 19, 2022



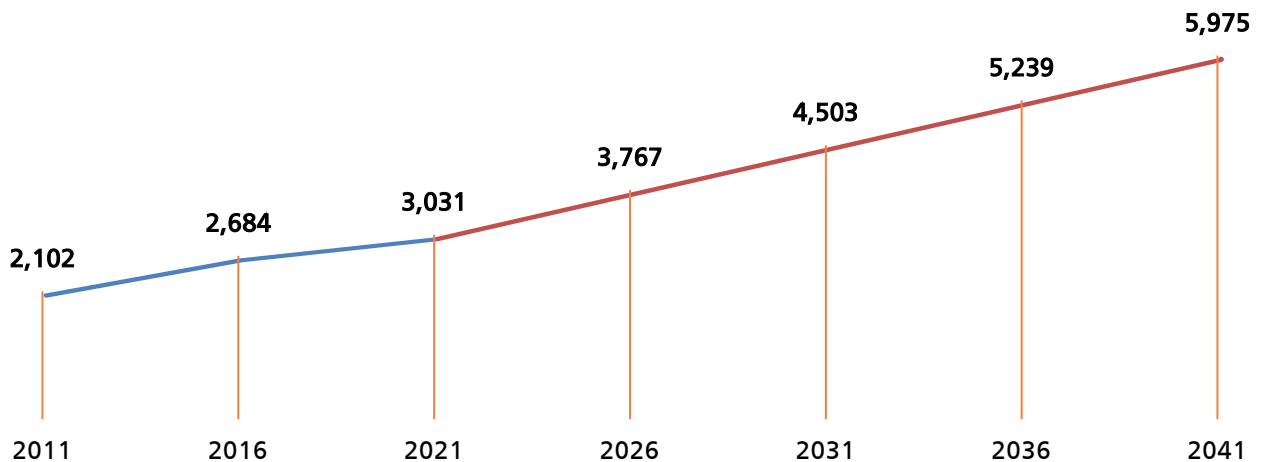
Figure 1 : Designated Grand Bend Settlement Area

Figure 2: Grand Bend Wastewater Service Area Boundary



Source: Development Charges Background Study & By-law, 2022

Figure 3: Grand Bend Historical and Forecasted Population, 2011-2041

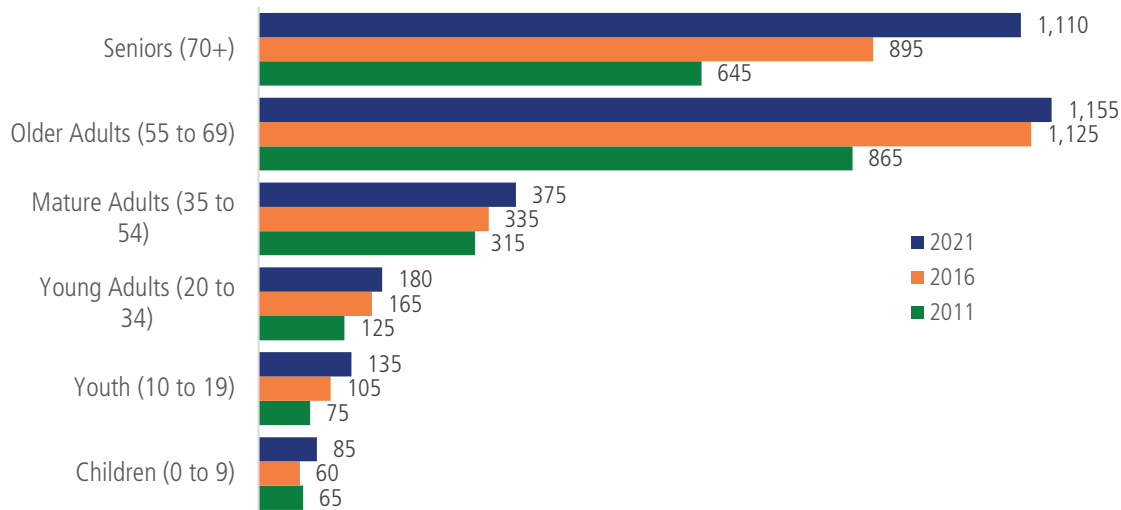


Note: Historical and future populations should be compared with caution due to boundary differences between the Statistics Canada Census 2011-2021 and the Grand Bend wastewater service area defined in the Development Charges Study. Year 2026 to 2041 populations are based on 64% of total future growth in Lambton Shores being allocated to the Grand Bend wastewater service area which encompasses a slightly larger boundary than used by Statistics Canada for the Grand Bend population centre.

Sources: Statistics Canada Census 2011-2021; Municipality of Lambton Shores Development Charges Background Study, 2022.

Older adults and seniors 55 years of age and above represent three out of every four permanent residents of Grand Bend (75%), which is considerably higher than the proportion of Lambton Shores as a whole (53%) and the County of Lambton (40%). The older age structure is reflected in Grand Bend’s median age of 66.5 years compared to the median ages of Lambton Shores (57 years) and County of Lambton (46 years). The median age is also over 10 years older than median ages in the secondary market municipalities of Bluewater (52 years), North Middlesex (44 years), and South Huron (50 years)⁵. Driving the aging population trend is a more than a 72% increase of seniors ages 70 years and above, with over 465 more residents – between 2011 and 2021.

Figure 4 : Grand Bend Age Structure, 2011-2021



The 2021 Census records more than four out of five permanent residents of Grand Bend as being Canadians by birth (84%). The vast majority of the foreign-born population are from European countries and with persons born in the United Kingdom representing the largest group. Less than 3% of Grand Bend’s population is racialized whereas 34% of Ontario’s population represented racialized groups. As such, it can be expected that most Grand Bend residents would be familiar with and/or participate in recreational activities traditionally associated with Canadian pastimes.

Community centre participation and support for spending are often correlated to employment and income. Grand Bend’s 32% employment rate is strongly influenced by its high representation of retirees. Additionally, just over half (54%) of Grand Bend’s employed fulltime residents hold a permanent position. Sales and services (32%) are the leading occupations in Grand Bend. Grand Bend’s \$77,000 median household income and 9.2% low-income measure are both lower than the province.

⁵ Statistics Canada Census, 2011, 2016, & 2021

2.3 Secondary Market – Lambton Shores

As noted earlier in this section, the Secondary Market for this Feasibility Study consists of areas located outside of Grand Bend but generally within a 30 minute drive of the settlement. The Secondary Market includes all areas of Lambton Shores excluding Grand Bend along with the municipalities of Bluewater, North Middlesex and South Huron that are discussed separately since they are separate from the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

The Municipality of Lambton Shores had a recorded 2021 Census population of 11,876 persons. Excluding the Grand Bend population leaves 8,845 persons living in the rest of the Municipality and defines the Lambton Shores portion of the Secondary Market. Whereas there are approximately 3,000 permanent residents living in in the Grand Bend settlement, by comparison, there are approximately 2,400 persons residing in the Forest settlement and 840 persons in the Thedford settlement where the Municipality’s two other major multi-use community centres are situated. Thedford and Forest experienced 6% and 12% growth rates, respectively, between 2016 and 2021 compared to the 13% growth rate in Grand Bend.

Figure 5 illustrates the Lambton Shores portion of the Secondary Market along with the Grand Bend settlement (i.e. the Primary Market). By the year 2041, the Municipality’s total population is projected to reach 16,822 persons⁶ of which an estimated 6,000 persons would be living within the Grand Bend wastewater service area.

Other communities in Lambton Shores have an immigrant population of 580 residents, representing 7% of the population. The Municipality of Lambton Shores had a median household income of \$80,000 and a 10% low-income measure, both greater than Grand Bend.⁷

⁶ Ibid. 2022 Development Charges Background Study, Appendix B: Growth Projections

⁷ Statistics Canada 2011, 2016 and 2021 Census

Figure 5 : Historical and Projected Population Growth of Lambton Shores, 2011-2041

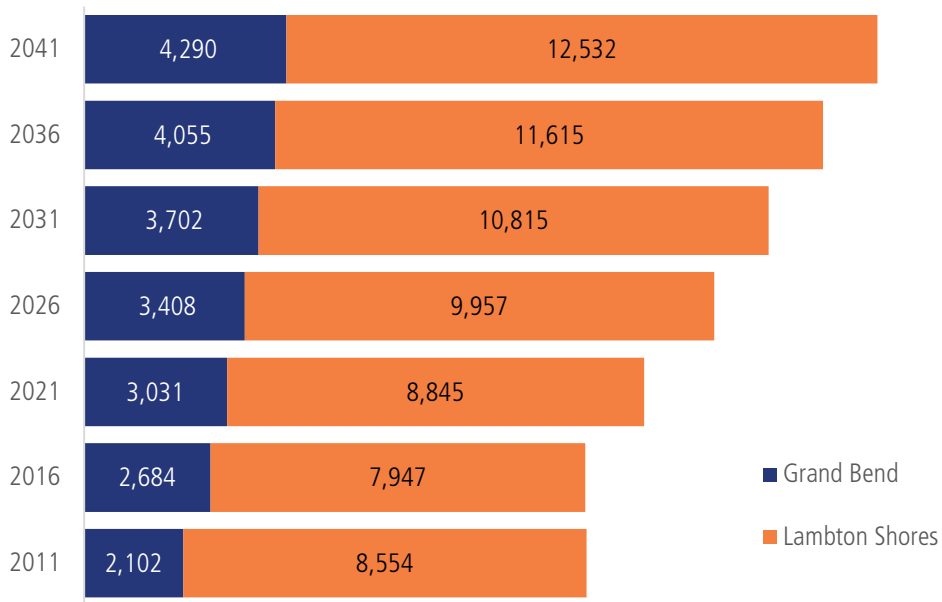
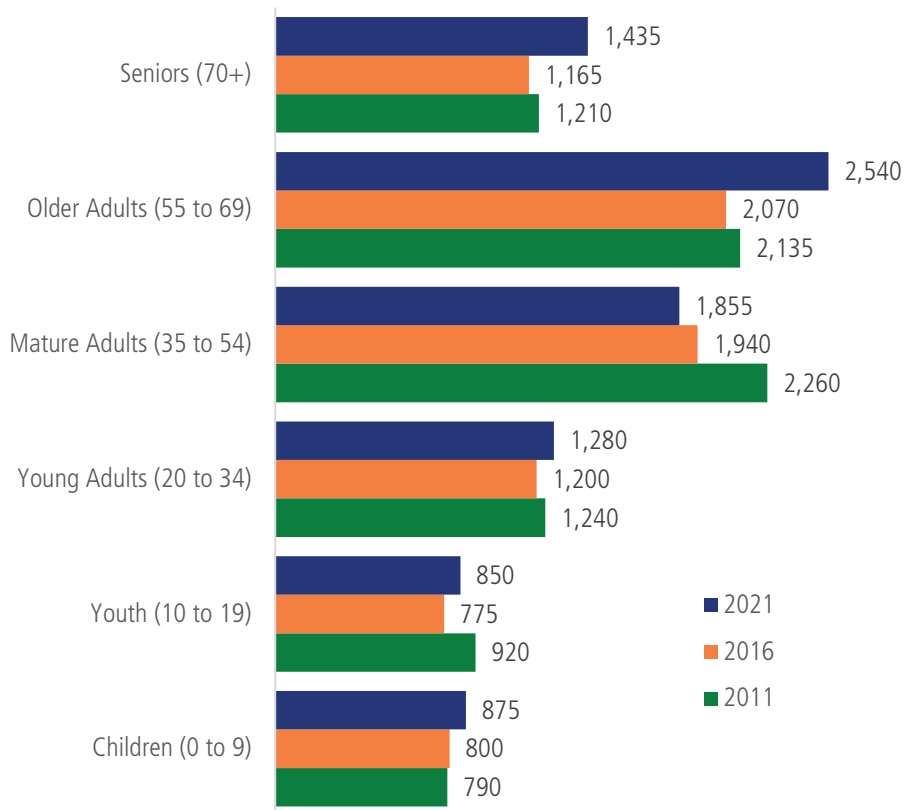


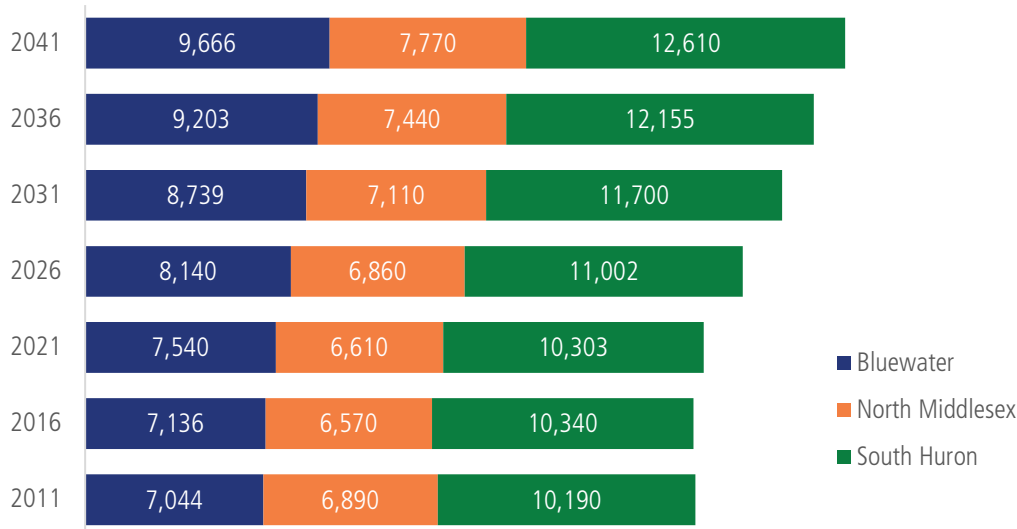
Figure 6 : Lambton Shores Age Structure (excluding Primary Market)



2.4 Secondary Market - Bluewater, North Middlesex & South Huron

Bluewater, North Middlesex, and South Huron are within a 30-minute drive of Grand Bend. Collectively, these municipalities are aging and have a lower immigrant population (7%), a higher median household income (\$83,667), and a lesser low income measure (9%) than Grand Bend⁸. The figure below illustrates the historic and projected population growth of these municipalities, and the table below illustrates the population changes between 2016 and 2021.

Figure 7 : Historical and Projected Population Growth of Area Municipalities



Sources: Bluewater Development Charges 2022; North Middlesex Development Charges 2022; South Huron Development Charges 2020

Table 1: Population Growth in Bluewater, North Middlesex, and South Huron between 2016 and 2021

Age Group	Bluewater	North Middlesex	South Huron
Children (0 to 9)	-560 residents (-74%)	785 residents (+51%)	-50 residents (-5%)
Youth (10 to 19)	5 residents (+1%)	-90 residents (-12%)	-15 residents (-5%)
Young Adults (20 to 34)	0 residents (0%)	-45 residents (-4%)	-15 residents (-1%)
Mature Adults (35 to 54)	100 residents (+7%)	-160 residents (-11%)	-290 residents (-14%)
Older Adults (55 to 69)	225 residents (+11%)	45 residents (+3%)	70 residents (+3%)
Seniors (70+)	250 residents (+18%)	170 residents (+17%)	240 residents (+11%)

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

⁸ Statistics Canada 2011, 2016 and 2021 Census

2.5 Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Catchment Area

The Grand Bend Recreation Centre is the only indoor recreation facility in the Primary Market that the Municipality of Lambton Shores has a vested operating responsibility. The Grand Bend Recreation Centre is physically contained within the Grand Bend Public School and constitutes a shared-space whereby the Municipality and Lambton Kent District School Board have an agreement in place that enables public access to the gymnasium and a classroom outside of school hours; the County of Lambton also operates a library branch within the structural envelope of the school.

Table 2: Major Indoor Recreation Facilities in Grand Bend

Grand Bend – Municipally-Owned

Grand Bend Recreation Centre is part of Grand Bend Public School where the Municipality has a shared-use agreement with the School Board granting public access to the gymnasium (200-person capacity) and a community room (40-person capacity) with kitchen amenities during specified times. Lambton County Library operates a branch at this location as well.

It bears noting that there has been some confusion expressed during this Feasibility Study’s consultations with respect to the Grand Bend Recreation Centre’s name, with some people suggesting the name does not clearly reflect the nature of public access allowed relative to the other community centres operated by the Municipality.

Grand Bend – Non-Municipal

Grand Bend Place / Centre for the Living Arts is co-located with Huron Shores United Church that can seat between 160 and 180 persons on its upper-level and contains a small hall with kitchen on the lower-level.

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 498 is a privately owned and operated community hall situated adjacent to Municipally-owned lands and co-located with indoor and outdoor amenities along with an emergency services building and former bank now owned by the Municipality contained within the Municipal Drive area.

Lambton County Heritage Museum is owned and operated by the County of Lambton, and contains a multi-purpose room that can be used by the public for programs and meetings. The Museum is physically located within the Grand Bend wastewater service area but is situated 4 kilometres (roughly a 4 minute drive per Google Maps) from the western settlement boundary identified in the Lambton Shores Official Plan.

Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre is not-for-profit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors (Board) made up of members from the local community. The Centre has a community room used mainly for the organization’s programs and services.

Outside of Grand Bend, the Municipality of Lambton Shores operates six municipal facilities, each with community hall spaces and two of which contain arenas.

Table 3: Major Indoor Recreation Facilities in Lambton Shores

Municipality of Lambton Shores

Arkona Community Centre is a former elementary school that has a meeting room (30-person capacity) and program room (50-person capacity), and a Lambton County Library Branch.

Arkona Seniors Centre has a multi-purpose room (60-person capacity) and is connected to Arkona Fire Hall.

The Shores Recreation Centre in Forest contains a single-pad arena with a 700-spectator seating capacity and a meeting room. The Municipality operates the gymnasium and walking track, whereas the fitness centre is operated by the YMCA.

Port Franks Community Centre contains the Optimist Hall (240-person capacity) and West Wing (149-person capacity) both have kitchen facilities. A meeting room on the upper-level is leased to the Ausable Port Franks Optimist Club while Lambton County Library operates at branch at this location.

The Legacy Recreation Centre in Thedford has a single-pad arena with a combined seating and standing capacity for 600 spectators along with a community hall with a 450-person capacity. A Lambton County Library Branch and nursery school exists at this location.

Thedford Village Complex has a multi-purpose room (70-person capacity) with kitchen amenities and is connected to the Thedford Fire Hall.

The Municipalities of Bluewater, North Middlesex and South Huron collectively operate 15 municipal facilities including six arenas and a number of community halls or meeting spaces. The size and amenities found within municipal facilities varies.

Table 4 : Municipally-Owned Indoor Recreation Facilities in the Secondary Market

Municipality of Bluewater

Bayfield Arena is a single pad arena and community hall with kitchen operated by the Bayfield Facilities Initiative Team.

Hensall Arena has a single ice pad and a community hall with a kitchen.

Stanley Community Centre in Varna has a community hall with a kitchen.

Zurich Arena has a single ice pad and a community hall with a kitchen.

North Middlesex

Ailsa Craig Recreation Centre has a community hall and a meeting room.

North Middlesex Arena & YMCA Fitness Centre in Parkhill has a single pad arena, fitness space and a community hall (172-person capacity) with a bar.

North Middlesex Community Centre in Parkhill contains a community hall.

Parkhill Leisure Club has a community hall and a dedicated age space for seniors.

West Williams Community Centre in Parkhill is a community hall.

Ye Olde Towne Hall in Ailsa Craig is municipally-owned community hall with a kitchen that is operated by a third party.

South Huron

Crediton Community Centre has a community hall with a kitchen and bar.

Dashwood Community Centre has a community hall with a kitchen and bar.

Kirkton-Woodham Community Centre is a community hall with a kitchen and bar, while the Huron County Library Kirkton Branch operates out of this location.

South Huron Recreation Centre recently underwent a major renovation and contains a single pad arena along with a multi-purpose banquet hall with kitchen.

Stephen Arena (Huron Park) has one ice pad.

Section 3.0

Community Engagement

Several community engagement tactics were used to gather meaningful input from residents. Each tactic was designed to maximize input and participation from residents to identify needs that could be provided by a community centre in Grand Bend.

Opportunities for public and stakeholder input included:

- 1) **Community Open House #1:** approximately 150 attendees
- 2) **Feedback Form:** 893 responses
- 3) **Community Group Workshops:** 18 organizations
- 4) **Opinion Leaders** 12 total interviews
- 5) **Community Open House #2 & Commenting Period** *(to be scheduled upon release of the Draft Feasibility Study)*

3.1 Community Open House

An Open House was held on December 14, 2023 at Grand Bend Place to introduce the planning process and engage individuals in conversations about the need for a community centre. Over 145 people attended the Open House, many of whom engaged in discussions with members of the Consulting Team, Municipal Council and staff while also providing written comments for consideration in the Feasibility Study. Notable and comment themes emerging from the Open House are as follows.

- **Support for a Community Centre:** People attending the open house overwhelmingly expressed support for a municipally-owned and operated community centre to be provided in Grand Bend.
- **Growth & Diversification of Grand Bend:** Open House attendees spoke of the rapid residential and commercial growth occurring in Grand Bend, and how increasing residential base is creating the need for recreational space. A number of people indicated that they are seeing people representing a greater diversity of age and cultural groups living in Grand Bend compared to the past which also is contributing to needs for spaces and programs.
- **Limited Indoor Community Space in Grand Bend:** People emphasized that there is no dedicated municipal community centre in Grand Bend, and a number of attendees believed that the shared gymnasium and meetings rooms between the Municipality and the Grand Bend Public School had limited public access during the school year. There is a reliance on the Grand Bend Legion, Grand Bend Place and places of worship for community gatherings but that these facilities are not sufficiently sized or configured for certain community programs nor are they able to accommodate larger-scale events.

- **Flexible Space:** A desire for a large space capable of being used for floor sports (e.g. pickleball, basketball, etc.), group fitness, indoor walking, arts and exhibitions, banquets, community events and other activities was articulated so that a community centre could be used for a broad range of things.
- **Desire for Year-Round Activities:** The need for a community centre was reinforced by observations that more people are living in Grand Bend throughout the year. As a seasonal community, people indicated that most activities occur during the summer months but there are significantly fewer opportunities for recreation and socialization during the off-season, again due in part by a limited number of places to gather directly in Grand Bend.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** A few comments were received that if a new community centre were to be developed, it should be constructed in a way that promotes environmental sustainability and climate change resilience through green building standards and operating practices. Others also spoke to a community centre supporting active transportation objectives by providing bicycle parking along with proximity to sidewalks and trails.
- **Community Hub Potential:** A number of conversations centred around creating a new facility with multiple services delivered by the Municipality and potential partners. The notion of a community hub suggested that there may be an opportunity to combine recreational activities with amenities that could support the Grand Bend Legion, the library, arts and culture groups, affordable housing, youth and seniors services, health and social services, and more.
- **Willingness to Contribute:** A number of Open House attendees spoke to how the community could help with capital and operating resources for a facility. People spoke of the fact that Grand Bend is a community that has demonstrated willingness to fundraise for facilities in the past and indicated that there could be a role for the community to contribute towards operations.
- **For Future Study:** A number of individuals identified sites that they believed would be optimal for a community centre while some provided ideas for outdoor amenities. It was noted to them that site selection, architectural exercises and outdoor space assessments would be carried out as separate studies should the Municipality decide to pursue exploration of a community centre pending the results of this Feasibility Study.

3.2 Community Feedback Form

A Feedback Form was available between December 2023 and February 2024 to collect public input regarding recreational preferences and the need for indoor community space in Grand Bend. The Feedback Form was available online as well as in hard copy format with a total of 893 responses received. As a self-directed and voluntary nature of the feedback form, results cannot be assigned a level of statistical significance or margin of error. The pages that follow summarize results of the Feedback Form.

Participation in Recreational Activities

In the past 12 months, at least one of five respondents have attended a festival / special event (51%), aerobics, yoga, fitness, or weight-training (50%), indoor swimming (27%), public / recreational skating (26%), and performing arts (e.g., dance, music, drama) (21%). Figure 8 displays the full list of activities and household participation.

At least one of five respondents identified lack of desired programs or facilities (55%), lack of information / unaware of opportunities (28%) and program not offered at convenient time (21%) as a reason that prevented them from being able to participate in recreation activities as often as they would like. Figure 9 the full list of reasons and their rates.

Figure 8 : Participation in Recreation Activities (n=893)

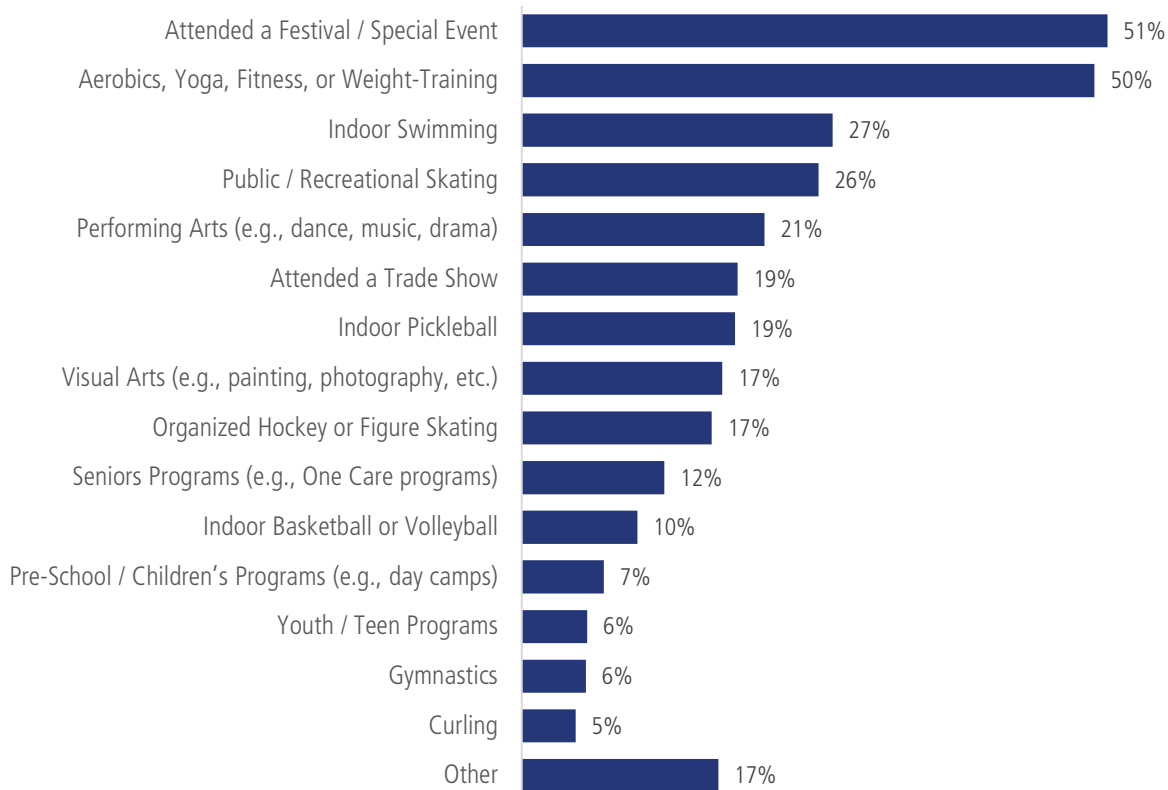
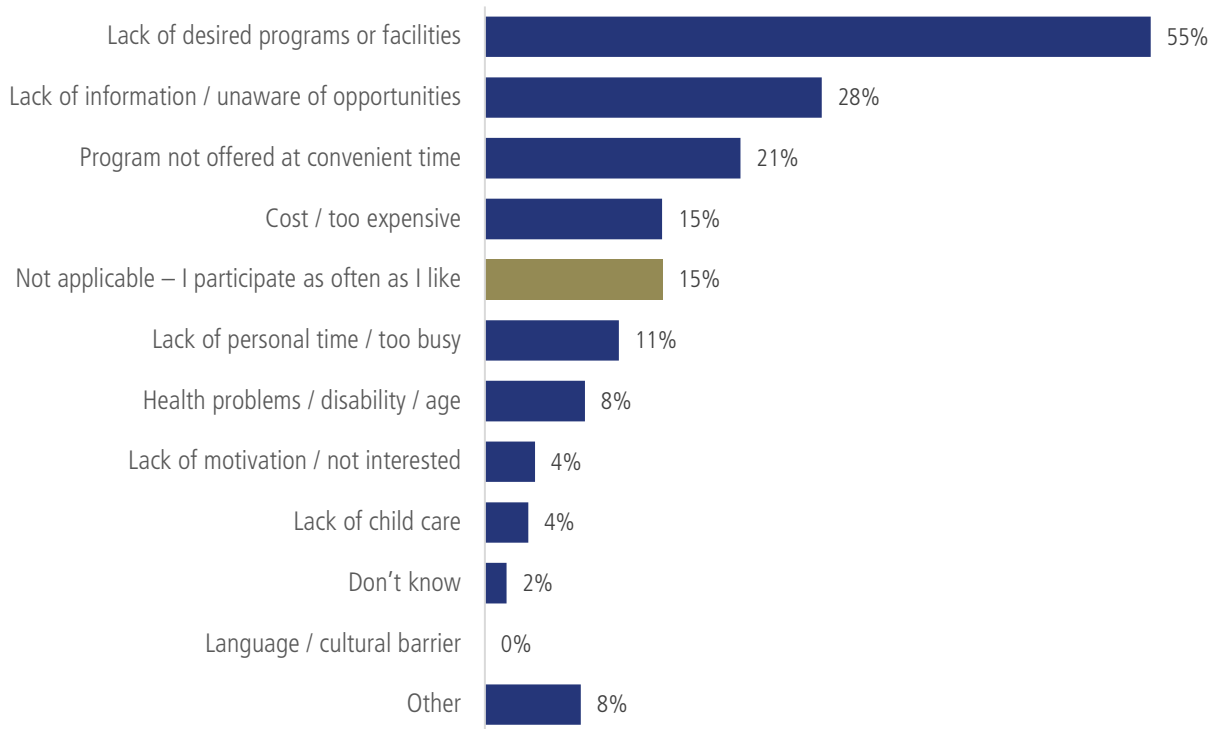


Figure 9 : Barriers to Participation (n=893)



40% of Feedback Form respondents indicated that none of their indoor recreation needs are met within Grand Bend, implying that they have to travel outside of the settlement to access indoor recreational services. Nearly half (47%) reported that either some or half of their indoor needs were met in Grand Bend while 13% stated that all or most of their needs are met in the settlement. Among people that travelling outside of the settlement for indoor recreation, 35% participated in another part of Lambton Shores while the remaining 65% went to another municipality. Respondents reported most frequently leaving Grand Bend to swim, play pickleball, skate or access fitness programs and reported doing so primarily because the facilities or programs are not available in Grand Bend.

Figure 10: Percentage of Indoor Recreation Needs being met in Grand Bend (n=873)

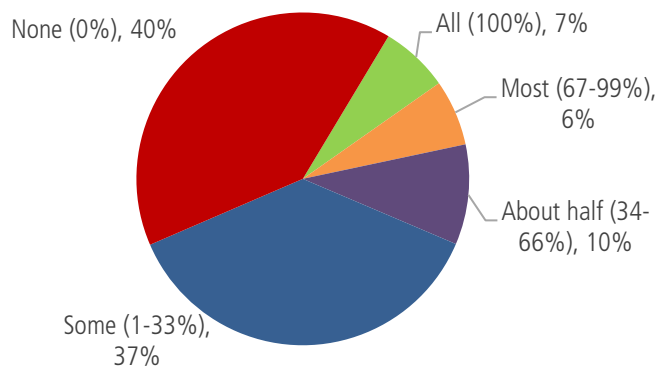


Figure 11 : Location of Participation (n=809)

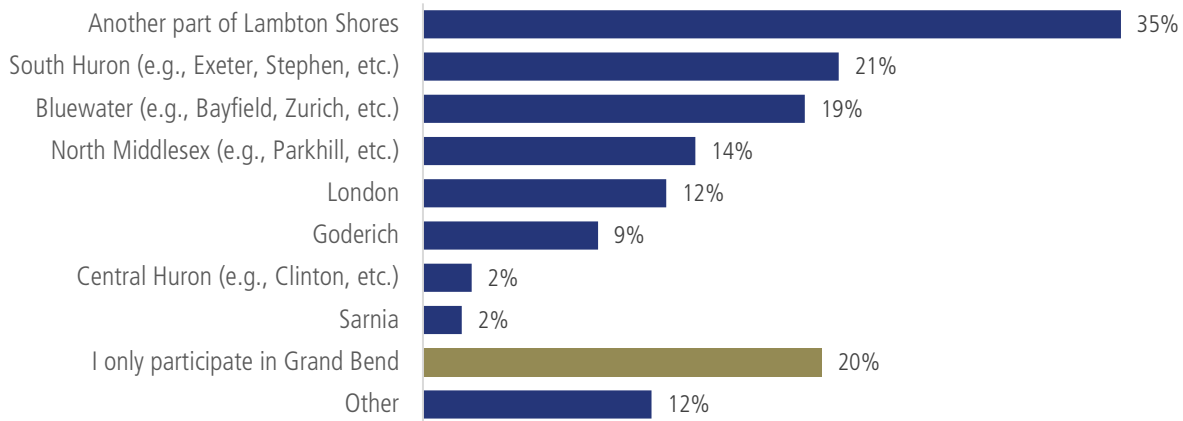


Figure 12 : Most Common Activities Pursued Outside of Grand Bend (n=511)

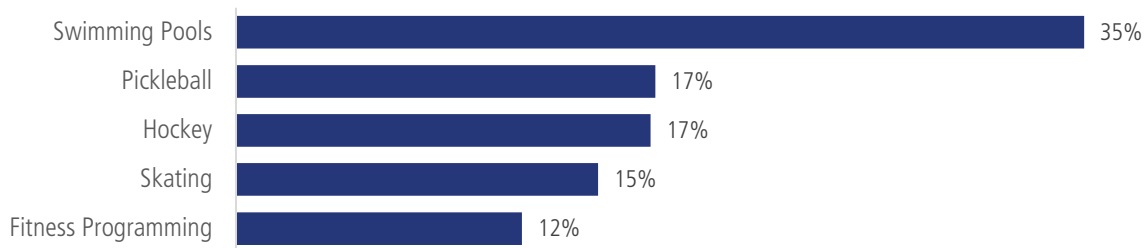


Figure 13: Reasons Why People Participate Outside of Grand Bend (n=752)

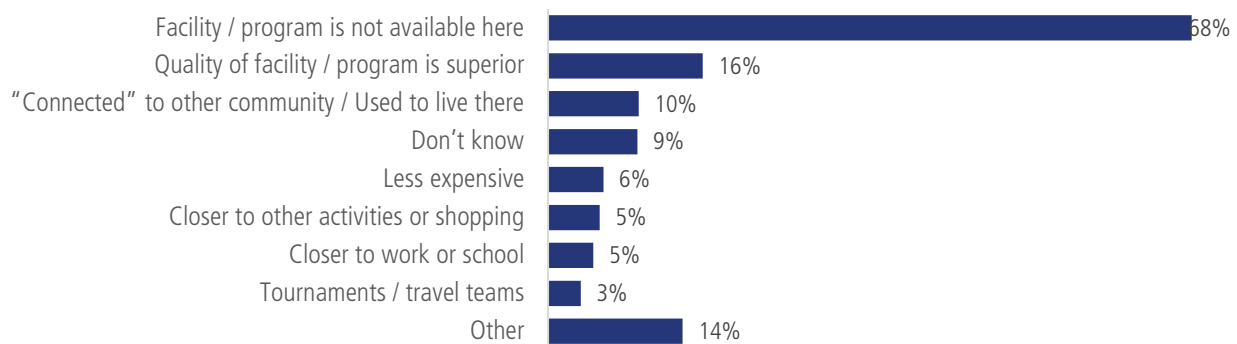
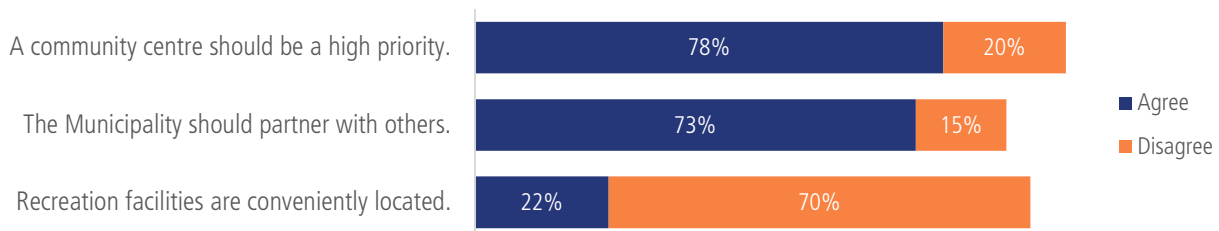


Figure 14: Level of Agreement with Selected Statements (n=785 to 793)



Facility Importance

Among Feedback Form responses:

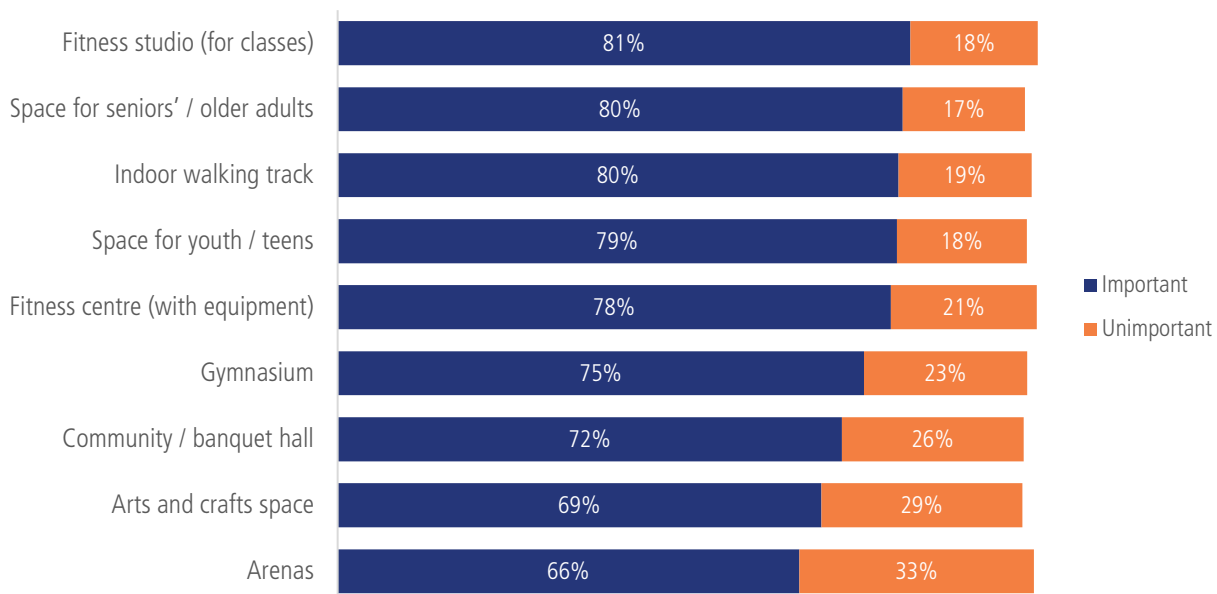
- 78% agree that developing a community centre in Grand Bend should be a high priority for Municipal Council.
- 73% agree that the Municipality should partner with other agencies to help provide a community centre in Grand Bend.
- 22% agree (that recreation facilities are conveniently located across Lambton Shores while 70% disagree).

When asked how important selected indoor recreation facilities in Grand Bend would be to their household, at least three out of four respondents indicated:

- Fitness studio (for classes) would be important (81%).
- Spaces for seniors' / older adults would be important (80%).
- Indoor walking track would be important (80%).
- Space for youth / teens would be important (79%).
- Fitness centre (with equipment) would be important (78%).
- Gymnasium would be important (75%).

Two of three respondents (66%) indicated they and members of their household would very likely use a community centre in Grand Bend on a regular basis (once a month or more). When asked how willing their household would be to consider select option to help financially support the development and operation of a community centre in Grand Bend, willing and not willing response rates were nearly similar for paying increased user fees for recreation programs and sport registrations and donating to a capital fundraising campaign.

Figure 15: Grand Bend Facility Importance: (n=726 to 778)



Nearly twice as many respondents (39%) indicated they are not willing to pay higher property taxes, than those who indicated they are willing (19%). When mentioned that the average household will pay about \$43.84 per \$100,000 of assessment in taxes for the operation and maintenance of the Municipality’s community centres, respondents on average indicated they would be willing to pay \$59.38 each year for improved indoor recreation facilities in Grand Bend.

Figure 16: Likelihood to use a community centre on a regular basis: (n=794)

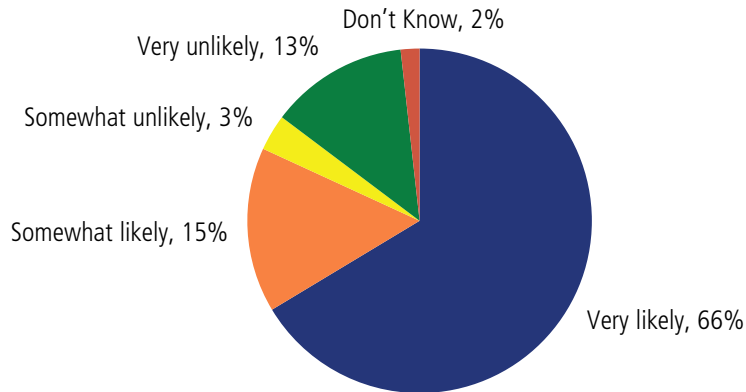


Figure 17 : Willingness to financially support a community centre in Grand Bend: (n=760 to 772)

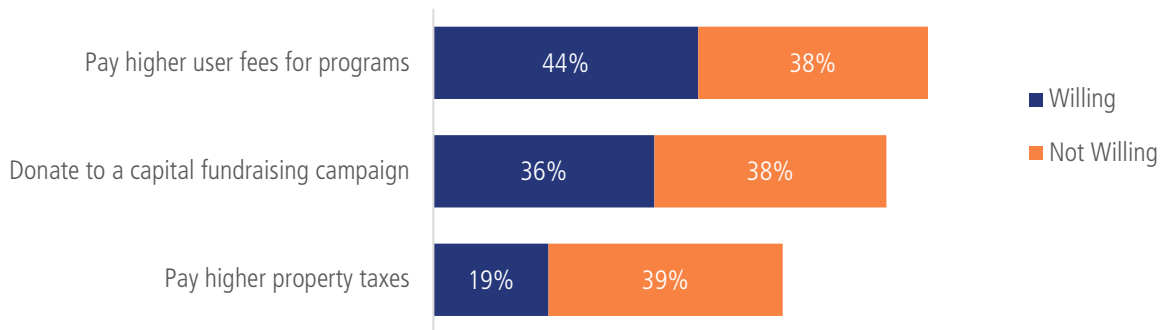
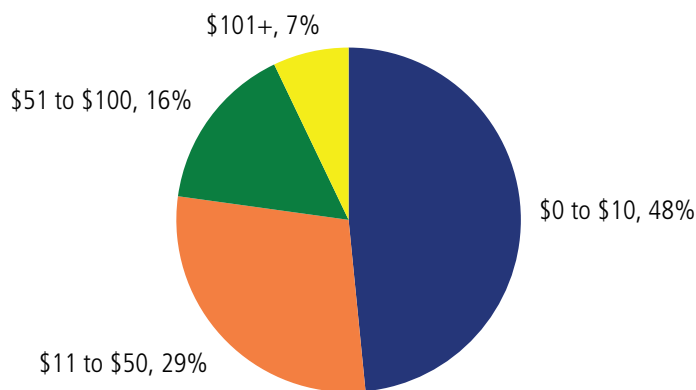


Figure 18: How much more would you be willing to pay each year? (n=438)



Household Information

The following demographic data was reported by those completing the feedback form:

- The average age of feedback form respondents is 60 years.
- Nearly four of five respondents were a resident of Lambton Shores (79%), with the majority indicating they live closest to Grand Bend (82%). Two of five respondents (42%) have lived in Lambton Shores for 20 years or more.
- Over half of non-resident responses were received from residents of South Huron and Bluewater.
- The average household size was 2.8 persons. This is higher than Lambton Shores' average of 2.2 persons per private household (2021 Census), indicating that family's were slightly over-represented in the feedback form.
- Over half of respondents described their household as a couple with no children / empty nesters (51%).

Figure 19: Residency Status (n=745)

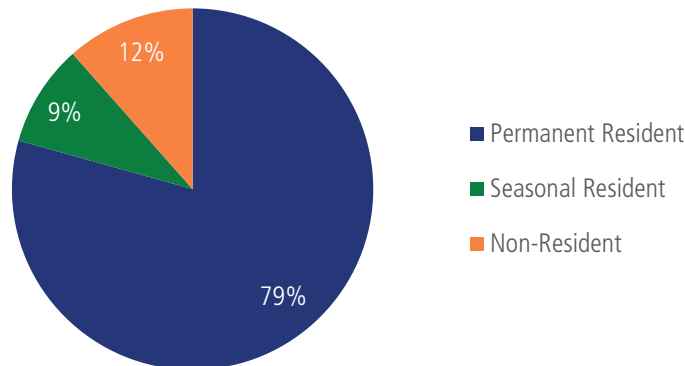


Figure 20: Place of Residence among Lambton Shores Residents (n=658)



3.3 Community Group Roundtables

Two Roundtables with community groups operating in Grand Bend and other parts of Lambton Shores were held in February 2024 to gain insights into the specific needs of local organizations. A total of 31 representatives from the following 18 organizations contributed input for consideration in the Feasibility Study:

- Canada Day Celebrations Committee
- Forest Ringette Association
- Grand Bend Arts Centre
- Grand Bend & Area Horticultural Society
- Grand Bend Community Health Centre
- Grand Bend Optimist Club
- Grand Bend Place
- Grand Bend Rotary Club
- Grand Bend School Parent Council
- Lakeshore Eco Network
- Lambton Shores Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Lambton Shores Minor Hockey
- Partners in Learning
- Pickleball Representative
- PROBUS Club
- Sunset Cinema
- Sunset Community Foundation
- West Coast Lions Club
- YMCA of Southwestern Ontario

The conversations were robust and insightful, providing perspectives of some of the challenges faced by certain organizations along with opportunities to discuss them. Discussions echoed many sentiments that were expressed at the Community Open House and Feedback Form. The following themes from the Roundtables are summarized noting that other feedback provided by groups was also considered in the needs assessments for this Study.

- **A Need for Space:** Most community groups in attendance indicated that they do not have space that is conducive to their meeting, programming and service delivery needs in Grand Bend. Groups reiterated that a flexible, multi-functional community centre would allow for a broad range of activities and events to be offered for the growing residential base that is characterized by both younger households and retirees.
- **A Place to Gather:** A number of groups indicated that they cannot access facilities of sufficient size or quality for larger-scale events and community gatherings. Service clubs and event organizers suggested a space that is large enough for banquets and fundraisers would assist them with their community service mandates. Inclusion of a kitchen and potentially a library were identified as important components to complement community-oriented gathering spaces.
- **A Place to be Active & Creative:** Groups interested in physical activities are seeking a gymnasium or multi-use hall that can be divisible and used for large events. People envisioned group fitness, indoor walking, swimming, and dryland training as recreational activities that could take place. Local arts groups in attendance indicated that they do not have space for programs, exhibitions, and live events, particularly during the winter months. Certain groups indicated that they could deliver community

programs in Grand Bend, including organizations that have specific expertise in recreation and cultural program delivery.

- **Inclusive & Environmentally-Friendly:** Organizations emphasized that there is a need for a place that meets barrier-free accessibility standards, is culturally sensitive, non-denominational, and inclusive. Groups also would like to see a 'green' building design to minimize environmental impacts.
- **Future-Proofing:** Building a community centre in a manner that would allow it to be expanded in the future was advanced as an idea to prepare for continued growth or respond to changing trends.
- **Organized Arena Users are Satisfied:** Minor hockey indicated that their registration levels have significantly increased in recent years while ringette registrations are still recovering from the pandemic. The arena users reported that they are able to fulfill their ice time needs at existing arenas in Lambton Shores.
- **A Collaborative Mindset:** organizations pointed to successes of past fundraising campaigns that have resulted in positive benefits in Grand Bend and a similar campaign could contribute to building costs. Groups see opportunities to collaborate with community providers as well as partnerships with other institutions and area municipalities.

3.4 Opinion Leader Interviews

The Feasibility Study sought feedback from Opinion Leaders that were identified in consultation with the Grand Bend Community Centre Ad Hoc Committee. Opinion Leaders consisted of:

- Lambton Shores Mayor and Councillors
- Lambton County Library and Social Services
- Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce
- Grand Bend Public School
- Municipality of Bluewater
- Municipality of North Middlesex
- Municipality of South Huron

Common and notable themes from these discussions are as follows:

- **Flexibility:** If a community centre were to be provided in Grand Bend, it should have space that is flexible enough to accommodate multiple uses throughout the day. A large hall or gymnasium was commonly identified along with other recreational spaces such as meeting rooms, fitness program space, and a kitchen.
- **Partnerships:** Support for partnerships and community hub approach that could allow multiple services to be offered in addition to recreation. Common examples cited were for library space, childcare, room to deliver health and social services, and arts and cultural space. It was noted by some

that the YMCA has been a strong partner to the Municipality of Lambton Shores in Forest and previously at the former Grand Bend Youth Centre.

- **Year-Round Activity:** Suggestions that a community centre could provide year-round opportunities for physical activity and social connection along with potentially generating economic activity in Grand Bend during the off-season, particularly with a growing residential population but also through more tourist accommodations (e.g. hotel and short-term rentals).
- **Grand Bend Public School / Grand Bend Recreation Centre:** Identification by multiple opinion leaders – and confirmed by a review of School Board Accommodation Reports – that Grand Bend Public School is at capacity and has submitted a request to the Ministry of Education for expansion (status pending at time of writing), providing additional evidence that child and youth populations in Grand Bend and area are growing.
- **Broadening the Library’s Reach:** Lambton County Library noted certain benefits with co-locating with the school but also challenges that were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic including lack of a dedicated entrance and re-allocation of a community room into a classroom due to growing enrollment pressures. The existing library branch is characteristic of traditional templates focused on books whereas a new library designed to modern standards could generate a new audience, contribute affordable programs and services, and complement other recreation and cultural service providers in the area. Furthermore, modern libraries help to support social services through referrals, partnerships and selected services.
- **Filling Space & Program Gaps:** Preference to provide facilities that address gaps in regional availability and where possible to avoid duplicating services offered by other municipalities and private sector providers within the Grand Bend catchment.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Opinion leaders are cognisant that a community centre would incur sizeable capital costs for construction but also ongoing operational costs and staffing needs. A fiscally-responsible business plan is required but also the past commitment of Grand Bend residents to fundraise towards local improvements is something that could help fund the facility. The Municipality of Lambton Shores has previously contributed to facility developments in area municipalities and vice-versa, thus engaging area municipalities to discuss contributions towards Grand Bend should be pursued recognizing the regional nature of participation in recreation and other community activities across Lambton, Huron and Middlesex Counties.
- **Measuring Success:** Most opinion leaders define the measure of success for a potential community centre as being the number of people that would ultimately use the facility and its ability to deliver quality programs and services.

3.5 Written Submissions

The Feasibility Study consultations allowed for written submissions via mail and email for individuals to provide feedback for consideration. A total of 19 written submissions have been received to date that have spoken to topics including:

- A need to provide a community centre in Grand Bend due to population growth along with a desire to access programs and services throughout the year.
- Support for a multi-purpose facility capable of providing a broad range of community programs and services. Facility components requested through comments received included a large hall (some comments identified a desired capacity for 300 to 400 persons), gymnasium, indoor walking track, fitness centre, dance studio, kitchen, lounge, seniors and youth areas, arts and cultural space, and carpet bowling.
- A preference for a community centre to avoiding direct competition with private sector businesses.
- A desire to preserve the ball diamond at Grand Bend Lions Park due its history and volunteer contributions and requests for an outdoor ice rink. It is noted that the scope of this Feasibility Study does not delve into location or outdoor amenities as these would be determined through future site selection and facility fit studies if pursued by the Municipality.
- Concerns about the capital and operating cost of a community centre, and how such costs would influence user fees (particularly if they are not affordable) and municipal tax rates. Other comments suggested that a business plan should be prepared with citizen engagement.
- The recently expanded Watford Community Centre in the Township of Warwick was cited as a potential template to consider for Grand Bend.
- Incorporating principles of inclusion, accessibility and aesthetically-pleasing design into a community centre.

Section 4.0

Recreation Facility Needs Assessment

An assessment of recreational facility needs has been undertaken based on the types of indoor facilities that are currently part of the Municipality of Lambton Shores' core mandate, consideration of facilities explored in the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (RLSMP), and those facilities that are typically operated by municipalities in Ontario. Where applicable, this Feasibility Study uses service level standards established in the Council-approved RLSMP while considering input received during consultations, best practices in community centre planning in the province, and the professional opinion of the Consultant.

4.1 Multi-Purpose Community Space & Gymnasiums

There are currently no multi-purpose meeting and program spaces in Grand Bend that are owned or exclusively operated by the Municipality of Lambton Shores. The Primary Market is served by a gymnasium and classroom that can be used for meetings and certain programs at the Grand Bend Public School, spaces that are referred to as the Grand Bend Recreation Centre. These shared facilities are subject to a joint-use agreement with the Lambton Kent District School Board whereby the general public and community groups are largely relegated to after-school hours for use, meaning that there is limited daytime availability and certain evenings depending on school events/uses. In addition to floor sports, the gymnasium at Grand Bend Recreation Centre / Grand Bend Public School can accommodate gatherings for up to 200 persons.

In total, the Municipality operates 12 multi-purpose rooms of varying size and amenities ranging from hall-type spaces to meeting rooms; five of these multipurpose spaces have onsite kitchens. Municipal halls, gymnasiums and multi-purpose rooms consist of:

- The Legacy Centre in Thedford has capacity for 450 persons and can be divisible into two smaller rooms for concurrent uses. The Legacy Centre is located approximately 20 kilometres from Grand Bend (20 minutes drive per Google Maps) and underwent a major renovation in 2011.
- Port Franks Community Centre has two halls with capacities for 240 and 150 persons, respectively. It is located approximately 18 kilometres from Grand Bend or a 15 minute drive.
- The Shores Recreation Centre in Forest contains a full-size gymnasium, and is the only municipally-owned gymnasium in Lambton Shores, South Huron, and Bluewater. It is located approximately 35 kilometres or a 25 minute drive from Grand Bend. The Municipality operates the gymnasium, walking track and a small meeting room/multi-purpose room. The fitness centre is operated by the YMCA, who also provide programming in the gymnasium.

- Community centres in Arkona and Thedford contain meeting rooms that are less suited for large gatherings.

The Lambton Heritage Museum is another publicly-funded facility that has multi-purpose rooms available for community rental, and is located just outside of the Grand Bend settlement area. The privately-owned and operated Royal Canadian Legion Branch 498 and Grand Bend Place also are used for certain gatherings in the settlement area. There are a number of golf courses, wineries, cultural clubs and other private venues in the Primary and Secondary Markets that can be used for gathering functions.

The need for a large and multi-purpose community gathering space was the most common request received at the Community Open House and Community Group Workshops, generally in the form of a community hall or gymnasium capable of hosting banquets, fundraisers, trade shows, and certain sports. This was different than revealed through community feedback form results which prioritized a gymnasium as the sixth-most requested amenity and a community hall as the seventh-highest priority behind amenities such as fitness areas, seniors and youth spaces, and indoor walk track.

Gymnasiums are highly flexible spaces due to their inherent design specifications for size, ceiling heights, flooring systems, etc. They can be programmed for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, badminton, floor hockey, group fitness and more. This makes them conducive to serving children to seniors, differing interests, and for programs such as day camps and drop-in activities. Depending on the type of flooring system, a gymnasium can also be used for community gatherings noting that the type of surface needs to be selected carefully as many people seek low impact or forgiving surfaces such as sprung-wood for recreational activities; these softer surfaces are prone to damage from setup/take down of furniture and 'street shoes'. If used for gatherings, gymnasiums tend to draw from a highly localized base or are oriented to people seeking affordable rentals for events since a gymnasium may not be as attractive to some people for receptions or trade shows compared to private venues.

The design, size and configuration of community halls and multi-purpose rooms can vary widely depending on the intended use. Halls operated by municipalities occupy a larger gross floor area to accommodate higher occupant capacities, and tend to be used for banquets, receptions, family gatherings and reunions, etc. These types of halls often contain kitchens that range in size and level amenity from simple warming kitchens to teaching kitchens that can support culinary programs and act as local food incubators, and in certain instances can be scaled similarly to a commercial kitchen. Halls also typically have a storage component for tables, chairs and other equipment. Some large halls have also been designed with high ceilings to enable gymnasium sports such as pickleball, badminton, or even basketball and volleyball though flooring materials need to be carefully considered as mentioned above.

The Audley Recreation Centre in Ajax, Ontario is an excellent example of a hall that is oriented to high quality gatherings and receptions. It is a 7,000 square foot hall that can accommodate up to 500 persons in an aesthetically pleasing environment supported by audio-visual equipment, a warming kitchen and bar, a retractable stage, coat room and dedicated washrooms and more. More locally, the Township of Lucan Biddulph opened a new hall at its community centre in 2023 that enables community gatherings for up to 300 persons, meetings but also selected active living programs. The East Lambton Community Centre in Watford, Ontario was also recently expanded and includes a combined hall and gymnasium capable of accommodating 400 people for events, and contains kitchen and bar, walking track, changerooms and washrooms; the East Lambton Community Centre hall/gym is operated by the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario under agreement with the Township.

In addition, smaller multi-purpose rooms are often integrated into community centres for meetings, general interest programs, and sometimes active living and arts and crafts programs depending on amenities included (e.g. sinks, multi-media, storage, etc.). Due to the small size of these types of rooms, construction and operations costs are significantly lower than amenities that anchor a community centre (e.g. arena, gymnasium or library). Most community centres will include at least one multi-purpose meeting/program room simply due to the economies of scale attained in construction.

Within the Primary and Secondary Market catchments, municipalities collectively own and/or operate 22 community centers and indoor recreation facilities. There is substantial choice to access multi-purpose rooms within Lambton Shores, South Huron and Bluewater though these are all geographically large municipalities while the quality and configuration of indoor facilities varies significantly. However, floor sports in Lambton Shores, South Huron and Bluewater are largely relegated to the Grand Bend Recreation Centre / Grand Bend Public School (which is well utilized and has limited ability to accommodate additional use) along with certain community halls where size and configuration permits, schools and places of worship.

With an estimated population of 3,700 persons, Grand Bend is the largest settlement in Lambton Shores and will continue to be over the next 20 years as nearly two-thirds of future growth in Lambton Shores is being directed to Grand Bend. Combined with the Municipality of Lambton Shores' model of providing dedicated community facilities in its major settlements and the fact that large multi-purpose spaces can serve as an 'anchor' amenity for new community centre construction, there is merit in providing an indoor community centre built around such a space.

The pressing question that will need to be addressed through continued consultations and analysis will be which types of uses are to be intended for the large multi-use space. Community consultations support gatherings, floor sports, active living, exhibitions and performances, and trade shows. This is a wide-ranging set of desired uses but could require considerably different design considerations and amenities.

It is recommended that the Municipality provide a flexible multi-purpose space designed with a sufficient floor area, high ceilings and kitchen/storage amenities so that community events and leisure/sports activities can be offered. There are a number of examples of such spaces – including aforementioned facilities in Watford and Lucan Biddulph – that reflect the baseline for municipal investment. In the event that ongoing community engagement activities held to inform future design and business planning studies express desire for a larger size or greater level of amenity than typically found in municipal settings (the aforementioned example in Ajax goes above and beyond what most municipalities are providing), the Municipality of Lambton Shores should examine if its allocated project budget could support such a direction and/or seek other forms of funding to support a higher capital cost.

The large multi-purpose space should also be designed in a manner that allows it to be divisible into two or even three smaller rooms in order to maximize the amount of concurrent use that can take place on a given day.

There is merit in creating a minimum of one multi-purpose program room that is oriented to meetings and selected programs (e.g. room capacity between 25 and 50 persons). There is also merit in creating an intergenerational shared space that is flexible enough for use by youth, teens and older adults. Certain municipalities have been able to achieve intergenerational spaces by providing common elements such as a lounge with seating, technology stations, certain games, study space, etc. though public libraries are also developing such spaces; as discussed in Section 4.5, engaging Lambton County Library in discussions is strongly encouraged to determine if a library branch could be co-located and potentially deliver multi-purpose and/or intergenerational spaces as well.

Of note, provision of a large hall and a separate gymnasium is not recommended on the basis of the size of the market catchment, the need to find a substantially large parcel of land to accommodate the additional gross floor area, and the fact that community consultations emphasized flexibility and financial sustainability for a multi-purpose space. A traditional gymnasium template may not be conducive to the vision being expressed through community consultations, particularly for fundraisers and other higher-order events.

4.2 Fitness Facilities & Indoor Walking Track

There are no municipally-operated facilities in the Primary Market designed specifically for fitness training using weights, exercise machines or for group fitness programs. There is presently one private sector fitness club operating in Grand Bend along with a small fitness centre associated with a trailer park in the settlement, while the Grand Bend Health Centre delivers post-rehabilitative fitness programs as part of its health services mandate.

Physical fitness and individual wellness are top of mind issues among many Canadians, resulting in a greater emphasis being placed on personal health. This has translated into increasing use of private and public sector fitness services, including active living programming centred on general health and wellness, weight-training, cardiovascular training and stretching activities (e.g., yoga, Pilates, etc.). As a result, group fitness programming has become one of the fastest growing segments of the fitness sector, more so than traditional weight-training, as these programs are designed to be fun and social activities. Municipalities are also keeping pace with fitness trends such as virtual programming and functional training (e.g., Cross-Fit, etc.).

Some municipalities provide fitness/conditioning rooms and/or equipment-based fitness centres. Most municipal fitness centres are not intended to be direct competitors with the private sector as they are provided as an affordable fitness alternative. Municipally provided fitness centres also align with overall community health goals as well as a holistic wellness experience given that municipalities have historically operated gymnasiums, indoor pools and more recently indoor walking tracks, which are all complements of fitness centres. A number of municipalities in Lambton, Huron and Middlesex County have entered into agreements with the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario to jointly fund and/or operate community centres with fitness services. The Municipality of Lambton Shores has an indoor walking track at The Shores Recreation Centre while the fitness centre there is operated by the YMCA. The Municipality of North Middlesex has also partnered with the YMCA to operate a fitness centre in Parkhill. As with certain gymnasium sports previously discussed, selected fitness program can and are delivered out of municipal halls and multi-purpose rooms (e.g. yoga, Zumba, tai chi, etc.).

According to community wellness and recreation surveys across the province, walking is typically identified as the most popular recreation pursuit given that it is a self-structured activity that residents can engage in at one's leisure. This is one reason, among many, that has resulted in the growing popularity of indoor walking tracks as they offer several benefits such as year-round training for sport organizations and providing a safe and controlled environment for walking. Canada's varied climate conditions provide further support for walking tracks within community centres and arenas. Intangible benefits are also achieved as walking tracks promote physical activity and encourage users to remain active during the winter months.

Inclusion of a multi-purpose space that is capable of accommodating group fitness classes and programs would be a logical component if constructing a municipal community centre. While a fitness program space should not be the driving factor that justifies construction of the broader community centre, it would be a strong complement to reinforce a holistic wellness experience for facility users as well as provide a venue for selected post-rehabilitative programming offered by local health services providers.

At a minimum, a community centre should contemplate designing the multi-purpose meeting room recommended in Section 4.1 in a manner that allows group fitness programs in addition to meetings and other general interest programs. The multi-purpose room would require storage space for exercise mats, aerobic steps, small free-weights, etc. typically used for group fitness classes. The larger community hall could also be designed with this flexible functionality. A dedicated group fitness studio with higher quality finishings (e.g. sprung wood flooring, mirrors, instructor platforms, AV hookups, etc.) could be rationalized if the project budget allows and/or if the Municipality can obtain commitments for consistent rentals or operating agreements from local healthcare providers, community-based instructors, or others.

It is not recommended that an equipment-based fitness centre be included in a community centre unless it is directly operated by a third party partner; any such agreement should also explore whether a partner should contribute towards capital construction subject to terms including, but not limited to, length of an agreement in relation to investment and ongoing contributions to asset replacement for a fitness centre portion of the facility. As noted earlier, a number of municipalities work with the YMCA who operate fitness centres in community centres while some municipalities have negotiated agreements with private sector operators.

In addition to space for group fitness and other active living programming, there is merit in exploring an indoor walking track. Indoor tracks can be integrated into common circulation routes of single-level community centres depending on design and adjacent functional spaces, but in multi-level facilities can also be suspended above a large space such as a gymnasium, community hall or arena. Track surfaces can be made of a rubber composite that lessens the effects of high impact walking (e.g., stress on knee and ankle joints) and may have designated lanes for walking and jogging. An indoor walking track can be a low cost facility option in terms of capital and operating costs (although it is not likely to be revenue-generating).

4.3 Indoor Arenas

The Municipality of Lambton Shores operates two single-pad arenas that are located in the Forest and Thedford settlement areas. There are no arenas in Grand Bend and thus users travel into the Secondary Market where there are 8 indoor ice rinks, including those in Lambton Shores, each of which employ a single pad arena design template. Regional participation and willingness to drive are characteristics of a number of urban and rural ice sport players.

The 2018 RLSMP documented a trend of declining ice sport registrations, particularly at the minor levels. Recent information supplied by Hockey Canada continues to highlight the challenges faced by that sport through a continued erosion of minor hockey players in affiliated sport associations. Discussions with arena users that participated in this Feasibility Study indicate that they have sufficient ice rental opportunities in Lambton Shores and that participation rates have declined since 2018 which was made worse due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A review of Lambton Shores arena usage suggests that outside of the most desirable rental blocks, capacity exists to accommodate more rentals during time slots that were previously attractive to ice sport users 10 to 15 years ago.

Combined with availability of prime and shoulder hour ice times at many of the arenas across the Secondary Market and the fact that any future additions to ice in Lambton Shores would best explore twinning an existing facility due to operational efficiencies, there is no basis in which to recommend an arena as part of a new community centre. This Feasibility Study also concurs with the RLSMP in that the Municipality does not need to construct a curling facility in Lambton Shores, consistent with direction of many municipalities across Ontario based on provincial trending.

4.4 Indoor Aquatic Centres

There are no municipally owned or operated indoor pools in the Primary or Secondary Markets. The nearest municipal indoor aquatic centres are found 40 minutes away in the Town of Goderich, whose pool is co-located in a municipal community centre operated by the YMCA, and the Town of St. Marys. A private trailer park in the Grand Bend settlement has recently opened a new indoor pool and has pool and fitness memberships available to the entire community for purchase.

Municipalities across Ontario generally consider indoor aquatic centres to serve population thresholds between 35,000 and 50,000 though there are certain exceptions where smaller municipalities have chosen to provide indoor aquatic services. The Municipality of Lambton Shores does not meet this threshold and while the collective populations in Lambton Shores, South Huron and Bluewater are at the minimum range of this threshold, the cost of building and operating an indoor pool is such that it is difficult to rationalize such an investment to service non-residents.

Consistent with the Municipality's RLSMP, this Feasibility Study cannot rationalize provision of an indoor aquatic centre due to the significant cost involved with construction and operation relative to the small and dispersed population base, as well as competition with indoor pools at private properties.

4.5 Library Branch

Through the community engagement process, Grand Bend Public School and the County of Lambton's Library and Social Services Departments were consulted separately. Given that Lambton County Library operates out of the Grand Bend Public School, there were certain inter-related themes.

Enrollment has been steadily increasing in recent years and the School Board's Indicators and Observations Report states that Grand Bend Public School is at 110% capacity with enrolment having steadily increased in recent years. That same Report indicates that the School Board has submitted a funding request for a building expansion to add four classrooms and a resource room to increase capacity by 104 pupils, with a desired timeline for 2025 construction.⁹

LKDSB has alleviated some of its current pressures by reclaiming a multi-purpose room physically located within the library branch, making it no longer available for community use to the same extent as in the past. It bears noting that the current funding request is not an approved process and requires the support of the Ontario Ministry of Education which is balancing hundreds of similar funding requests. In the event that enrolment pressures continue to escalate in Grand Bend, there remains a possibility that additional space may need to be reclaimed although the Grand Bend Public School does not have any information to suggest this would be the course of action; for example, many schools that are not successful in applications for physical expansions add portable classrooms provided sufficient space exists on the school site.

Pupil capacity pressures have the potential to create longer-term uncertainty for library services in Grand Bend, particularly in the absence of Ministerial approval for an expansion and the recent reclamation of the multi-purpose room. A report prepared by Lambton County indicates that the Grand Bend library is the second busiest library in the county measured by in-person visits and has the third-highest circulation. However, that same report suggests that there may be other library branches in Lambton Shores where there are stronger priorities for reinvestment, although Lambton County is trying to build its total Gross Floor Area and modernize all of its branches.¹⁰

The Grand Bend library has one of the more aesthetically-pleasing interior spaces in the Lambton County Library system but its functionality is limited given its floor area is nearly exclusively devoted to books and shelving. Conversely, modern libraries have areas for individual and group study, technology workstations, meeting rooms, makerspace equipment, dedicated entrances, and more. Conversations with County staff and other community groups through this Feasibility Study also indicate that there is a growing need for social services in the Grand Bend area and the Library has meeting rooms that support social service appointments in other locations such as Forest and Thedford; no such space exists

⁹ Lambton Kent District School Board. 2024. 2024 Indicators and Observations Report.

¹⁰ Lambton County Library. 2023. Joint Library Facilities Review. p.141

at the Grand Bend Library as there is currently nowhere to have a private conversation in the branch.

There is strong merit in continuing to engage both the Grand Bend Public School and Lambton County Library should the Municipality decide to pursue subsequent design and business planning studies for a new community centre. Library branches are considered to be an 'anchor' facility that community centres can be built around; co-location of leisure and library services under one roof is a common example of recent community hub models involving multiple partners. If the school is not successful in its capital expansion request or if the Library is looking to modernize its service offerings in Grand Bend, then the Library could be a potential operating partner in a community centre.

The Library's Facility Standards Policy, approved by County Council in 2023, recognizes that the Library leases its branches from municipal and institutional property owners. This implies that the Library's role in a community centre would be as a tenant whose responsibilities are largely relegated to delivering library services. Unless otherwise negotiated, the Municipality is likely to bear greater responsibility for costs of construction and maintenance focused on keeping a library branch in a state of good repair (i.e. asset management and renewal). That said, certainty of service delivery and involvement from an upper level of government can provide security and long-term operational sustainability to support the case for a small-market municipal community centre.

4.6 Other Spaces

The Feasibility Study's consultation revealed interest exists in a few non-recreational facilities that were not part of the scope set out in the Terms of Reference for this project. That being said, these requests were commonly communicated and could be explored further as part of subsequent design and business planning exercise that may be carried out in the future. Integration of arts and culture space along with an outdoor ice rink were most commonly expressed. There were also a few requests to consider opportunities to integrate affordable housing as part of a mixed-use development along with social services such as support for Ontario Works clients, employment services and daycare/childcare that may be able to leverage funding from upper-levels of government.

Section 5.0

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

This Feasibility Study finds that there is planning justification to provide a community centre based on local needs. The core recreational components being recommended within a community centre in Grand Bend are summarized below, followed by optional considerations if rationalized through subsequent design and business planning exercises.

Core Amenities

The Feasibility Study recommends that the following amenities form the core components of a community centre in Grand Bend.

- A large and flexible multi-purpose space designed with a sufficient floor area, high ceilings and kitchen/storage amenities so that community events and leisure/sports activities can be offered.
- A minimum of one multi-purpose program room that is oriented to meetings and selected programs, designed to allow for meetings, group fitness classes and active living programs, arts and cultural programs, general interest programs, etc.
- An intergenerational space that can be shared by different age groups at different times of the day throughout the week.
- An indoor walking track, potentially encircling the large hall.

Optional Amenities

In the event that the Municipality can find funding and/or operating partners along with alternative revenue streams to support added amenities, the Feasibility Study identifies the following optional components that could add value to a community centre or reinforce it as a community hub.

- A Lambton County Library branch contingent on continued engagement of both the Grand Bend Public School and Lambton County Library. A library branch has the potential to serve as a very strong anchor amenity as modern libraries have the ability to deliver a wide breadth of programs, services and events to their communities.
- Building the aforementioned flexible multi-purpose space to be larger and of a higher quality that exceeds a typical municipal design standard, provided that the project budget can support this action.

- Given the availability of private sector fitness in the area, a dedicated group fitness studio and/or equipment based fitness centre only in the event the Municipality can negotiate an agreement with a third party or parties who would operate, commit to long use and/or contribute capital to such spaces.
- Space for other agency, institutional and/or private sector partners including, but not limited to, childcare, employment and social services providers.
- Space conducive to arts and cultural programs and events.

Future Studies & Confirmation

While this Feasibility Study finds planning justification for the above noted facility components, additional analyses will need to be carried out prior to confirm whether to pursue construction of a community centre. Further study will be required to:

- Conceptualize a building program and site plan using the recommended components identified in this Feasibility Study and/or feedback received through additional community engagement opportunities;
- Identify any outdoor amenities and/or other facility components that may be accommodated based on the site and available budget;
- Evaluate prospective sites and/or acquire a property that has a size and configuration that would allow for a community centre, parking and other services as required; and
- Develop capital cost estimates, operating cost estimates, identify partnership and funding opportunities through business planning.

Lambton Shores' Development Charges Background Study identifies a \$10,000,000 gross project cost for a community centre in Grand Bend. However, the DC Study calculates the costs recoverable through development at less than 8% (\$780,000) due to benefit provided to existing developments and half of the project cost being funded by grants, subsidies and other contributions. The DC Study identifies timing for a community centre in the year 2027.¹¹

It bears noting that the \$10 million project cost was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic and construction costs have since escalated due to inflationary and other global economic conditions. An architectural study will provide the Municipality with a more refined capital cost estimate while the associated funding strategy will inform the Municipality of the degree to which Development Charges and other potential funding sources influence the Municipality's prevailing fiscal objectives and operational sustainability.

¹¹ Ibid. 2022 Development Charges Background Study, Appendix D-3.

Alternative Investment Scenario

As an alternative to new facility construction based on future studies and/or decision-making, the Municipality also has the option to consider reinvestment in an existing facility located in the Secondary Market. As noted in Section 2.0 of this Feasibility Study, a portion of the Grand Bend wastewater service area – where a projected 6,000 persons are forecasted to reside – abuts the Port Franks and Northville settlements. While the majority of the current population base within the Grand Bend wastewater service area lives within a 15 minute drive of Port Franks, it is not known what proportional share of future growth is being directed to those areas to the west of Grand Bend settlement boundary (i.e. within 5 to 10 minutes of Port Franks) as designated in the Lambton Shores Official Plan.

The Municipality could explore enhancing multi-purpose space and even adding new spaces to the Port Franks Community Centre. The Lambton County Library has identified a need to reconfigure the Port Franks library which could attain some cost sharing benefits and economies of scale if combined with a broader community centre redevelopment or renewal. The Municipality has upgraded outdoor components to the adjacent park and room exists for expansion to the rear of the community centre albeit this would require removal of the soccer field.

Since it is not in the scope of this Feasibility Study to delve into the specific needs of the Port Franks settlement, further analysis would be required should the Municipality contemplate such an action.

5.2 Next Steps

This Feasibility Study represents a point of departure from which the Municipality of Lambton Shores will decide if it will pursue the aforementioned studies described in Section 5.1 for further information regarding site, building, and costs.

Appendix A: Feedback Form Results

Q1. In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in the following indoor activities in Lambton Shores or elsewhere? By participation, we mean situations where a person actively participates (which does not include watching others) either at home or in public. Select all that apply.

	#	%
Aerobics, Yoga, Fitness, or Weight-Training	446	50%
Curling	42	5%
Gymnastics	50	6%
Organized Hockey or Figure Skating	148	17%
Public / Recreational Skating	231	26%
Seniors Programs (e.g., One Care programs)	111	12%
Youth / Teen Programs	51	6%
Pre-School / Children's Programs (e.g., day camps)	64	7%
Indoor Swimming	242	27%
Indoor Pickleball	166	19%
Indoor Basketball or Volleyball	90	10%
Performing Arts (e.g., dance, music, drama)	189	21%
Visual Arts (e.g., painting, photography, etc.)	156	17%
Attended a Festival / Special Event	456	51%
Attended a Trade Show	168	19%
Other (please specify)	153	17%
Total Respondents	893	100%
Skipped Question	0	

Q2. Please tell us up to three reasons that prevented you from being able to participate in recreation activities as often as you would like.

	#	%
Not applicable – I participate as often as I like	131	15%
Lack of motivation / not interested	37	4%
Lack of personal time / too busy	99	11%
Lack of desired programs or facilities	492	55%
Program not offered at convenient time	189	21%
Cost / too expensive	131	15%
Lack of information / unaware of opportunities	249	28%
Lack of transportation / facility too far away	198	22%
Health problems / disability / age	74	8%
Language / cultural barrier	0	0%
Lack of childcare	32	4%
Don't know	16	2%
Other (please specify)	71	8%
Total Respondents	893	100%
Skipped Question	0	

Q3. Please indicate what percentage of your household’s indoor recreation needs are met in Grand Bend.

	#	%
None (0%)	350	40%
Some (1-33%)	324	37%
About half (34-66%)	85	10%
Most (67-99%)	56	6%
All (100%)	58	7%
Total Respondents	873	100%
Skipped Question	20	

Q4. If you or members of your household regularly participate in indoor recreation activities outside of Grand Bend, please tell us where. Select all that apply.

	#	%
Not applicable - I only participate in Grand Bend	164	20%
Another part of Lambton Shores (e.g. Forest, Thedford, Port Franks, etc.)	287	35%
Bluewater (e.g., Bayfield, Zurich, etc.)	157	19%
Central Huron (e.g., Clinton, etc.)	20	2%
Goderich	72	9%
North Middlesex (e.g., Parkhill, etc.)	112	14%
South Huron (e.g., Exeter, Stephen, etc.)	171	21%
Other (please specify)	210	26%
Total Respondents	809	
Skipped Question	84	

Q5. Please list indoor recreation activities that you or members of your household regularly participate in outside of Grand Bend. Leave this blank if this does not apply to you.

	#	%
Total Respondents	511	57%
Skipped Question	382	43%

Q6. Tell us up to three reasons why you participate in these recreation activities outside of Grand Bend.

	#	%
Closer to work or school	36	5%
Closer to other activities or shopping	41	5%
Facility / program is not available here	512	68%
Less expensive	44	6%
“Connected” to other community / Used to live there	72	10%
Quality of facility / program is superior	123	16%
Tournaments / travel teams	26	3%
Don’t know	71	9%
Other (please specify)	107	14%
Total Respondents	752	84%
Skipped Question	141	16%

Q7. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Don't Know		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Developing a community centre in Grand Bend should be a high priority for Municipal Council.	473	60%	143	18%	46	6%	115	15%	16	2%	793	100%
Recreation facilities are conveniently located across Lambton Shores.	54	7%	120	15%	328	42%	221	28%	62	8%	785	100%
The Municipality should partner with others to help provide a community centre in Grand Bend (e.g., Health Centre, YMCA, etc.).	337	43%	242	31%	58	7%	61	8%	94	12%	792	100%

Q8. How important would the following indoor recreation facilities be to your household in Grand Bend?

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Unimportant		Not Important at All		Don't Know		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Arenas	278	37%	212	28%	95	13%	154	21%	9	1%	748	100%
Arts and crafts space	202	28%	301	41%	95	13%	114	16%	21	3%	733	100%
Community / banquet hall	257	34%	278	37%	98	13%	95	13%	20	3%	748	100%
Fitness centre (with equipment)	413	54%	185	24%	53	7%	105	14%	6	1%	762	100%
Fitness studio (for classes)	409	54%	207	27%	49	6%	88	12%	5	1%	758	100%
Gymnasium	326	45%	220	30%	70	10%	99	14%	16	2%	731	100%
Indoor walking track	427	55%	192	25%	55	7%	92	12%	12	2%	778	100%
Space for seniors' / older adults	411	54%	203	27%	54	7%	79	10%	19	2%	766	100%
Space for youth / teens	367	51%	209	29%	58	8%	76	10%	16	2%	726	100%

Other (please specify)	#	%
Total Respondents	138	15%
Skipped Question	755	85%

Q9. If the Municipality of Lambton Shores were to develop a community centre in Grand Bend, how likely would you or members of your household use it on a regular basis (once a month or more)?

	#	%
Very likely	527	66%
Somewhat likely	123	15%
Somewhat unlikely	27	3%
Very unlikely	103	13%
Don't Know	14	2%
Total Respondents	794	100%
Skipped Question	99	

Q10. How willing would your household be to consider the following options to help financially support the development and operation of a community centre in Grand Bend? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Not willing" and 5 means "Very Willing".

	Very Willing		Willing		Somewhat Willing		Somewhat Not Willing		Not Willing		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pay increased user fees for recreation programs and sport registrations	85	11%	248	32%	245	32%	44	6%	142	19%	764	100%
Donate to a capital fundraising campaign	68	9%	213	28%	237	31%	58	8%	196	25%	772	100%
Pay higher property taxes	43	6%	101	13%	180	24%	113	15%	323	43%	760	100%

Q11. This year, the average household will pay about \$43.84 per \$100,000 of assessment in taxes for the operation and maintenance of the Municipality's community centres. How much more, if anything, would you be willing to pay each year for improved indoor recreation facilities in Grand Bend? Please use a round number.

	#	%
\$0 to \$10	293	48%
\$11 to \$50	174	29%
\$51 to \$100	95	16%
\$101+	43	7%
Total Respondents	605	100%
Skipped Question	288	
Average Amount		\$59.38

Q12. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions you may have regarding indoor recreation facilities in the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

	#	%
Total Respondents	444	50%
Skipped Question	449	50%

Note: detailed open-ended responses were considered in the development of this Feasibility Study but verbatim comments have not been included in this summary.

Household Information

Q13. Are you a resident of Lambton Shores?

	#	%
Permanent Resident	591	79%
Seasonal Resident	68	9%
Non-Resident	86	12%
Total Respondents	745	100%
Skipped Question	148	

Q14. Which part of Lambton Shores do you live in or closest to?

	#	%
Grand Bend	538	82%
Port Franks	46	7%
Forest	24	4%
Northville	16	2%
Ipperwash	12	2%
Thedford	11	2%
Arkona	9	1%
West Bosanquet	2	0%
Total Respondents	658	74%
Skipped Question	235	26%

Q15. How long have you lived in Lambton Shores?

	#	%
Less than 5 years	130	20%
5 to 9 years	139	21%
10 to 19 years	110	17%
20 years or more	279	42%
Total Respondents	658	74%
Skipped Question	235	26%

Q17. Including yourself, please indicate the total number of people within your household that fall into the following age categories.

	# of Households	% of Households	# of People	% of People	2021 Census (Pop)#	2021 Census (Pop) %
Under 10 years	110	12%	211	11%	85	3%
10-19 years	106	12%	172	9%	135	4%
20-34 years	111	12%	160	8%	180	6%
35-54 years	225	25%	378	20%	375	12%
55-69 years	377	42%	624	33%	1155	38%
70 years or older	232	26%	368	19%	1115	37%
Total Respondents	686	77%	1913	100%	3045	100%
Avg. Persons Per Household	2.79					
Skipped Question	207					

Q18. Please select the choice best describes your household.

	#	%
Adult living alone	87	12%
Couple with children living at home	189	26%
Single parent with children at home	13	2%
Couple with no children / empty nesters	375	51%
Living with extended family	35	5%
Other (please specify)	32	4%
Total Respondents	731	100%
Skipped Question	162	

Q19. What is your year of birth?

Top Ten Responses	#	%
1930 - 1940	8	1%
1940 - 1950	67	10%
1950 - 1960	231	34%
1960 - 1970	160	24%
1970 - 1980	79	12%
1980 - 1990	88	13%
1990 - 2000	29	4%
2000 - 2010	6	1%
2010 - 2020	2	0%
Total Respondents	670	100%
Skipped Question	223	