



## Recreation Service Plan 2013 – 2017



Parks, Forestry and Recreation

# Parks and Recreation Ontario Educational Forum

**April 17, 2013**

# Presentation Overview

- Toronto's Recreation Service Sector
- Consultation
- Recommendations
- Endorsement
- Service Planning Dialogue

# Why a Service Plan?

- No defining strategy document for the Community Recreation Branch since 2004's 'Our Common Grounds'
- Continued inconsistency of programs, services and facilities across the City as a result of amalgamation
- Programs and services in high demand, with competing priorities and limited budgets, no policy framework to guide decision making
- Service planning, efficiency studies, budget targets all influencing service delivery, a need for alignment across the City.

# Strategic Directions of the Plan

## Program Goals

- How can we achieve the four principles of the Plan?

## Service Offerings

- What is the appropriate mix of programs and services?
- What service gaps need to be addressed?

## Service Improvements

- What improvements are needed to achieve our principles, goals and objectives?



# Looking Forward

- Increasing Torontonians' participation in recreation and leisure
- Addressing barriers to participation
- Providing consistent levels of service throughout the City
- Defining our role and strengthening partnerships with other providers

# What the Recreation Service Plan is Not

- A Facilities Plan
- A Parks Plan
- About fees and subsidies



# Time Line

- 2004 – *Our Common Ground*
- 2009 – Council-approved RSP Principles
- 2010 – *RSP Public Engagement Plan*
- 2010-2011 – staff consultations
- 2011 – public & stakeholder engagement
- 2011-2012 – research & develop RSP
- 2012 – Nov 14 – Community Development & Recreation Committee
- 2012 November 29 – City Council



# Recreation Service Plan Principles

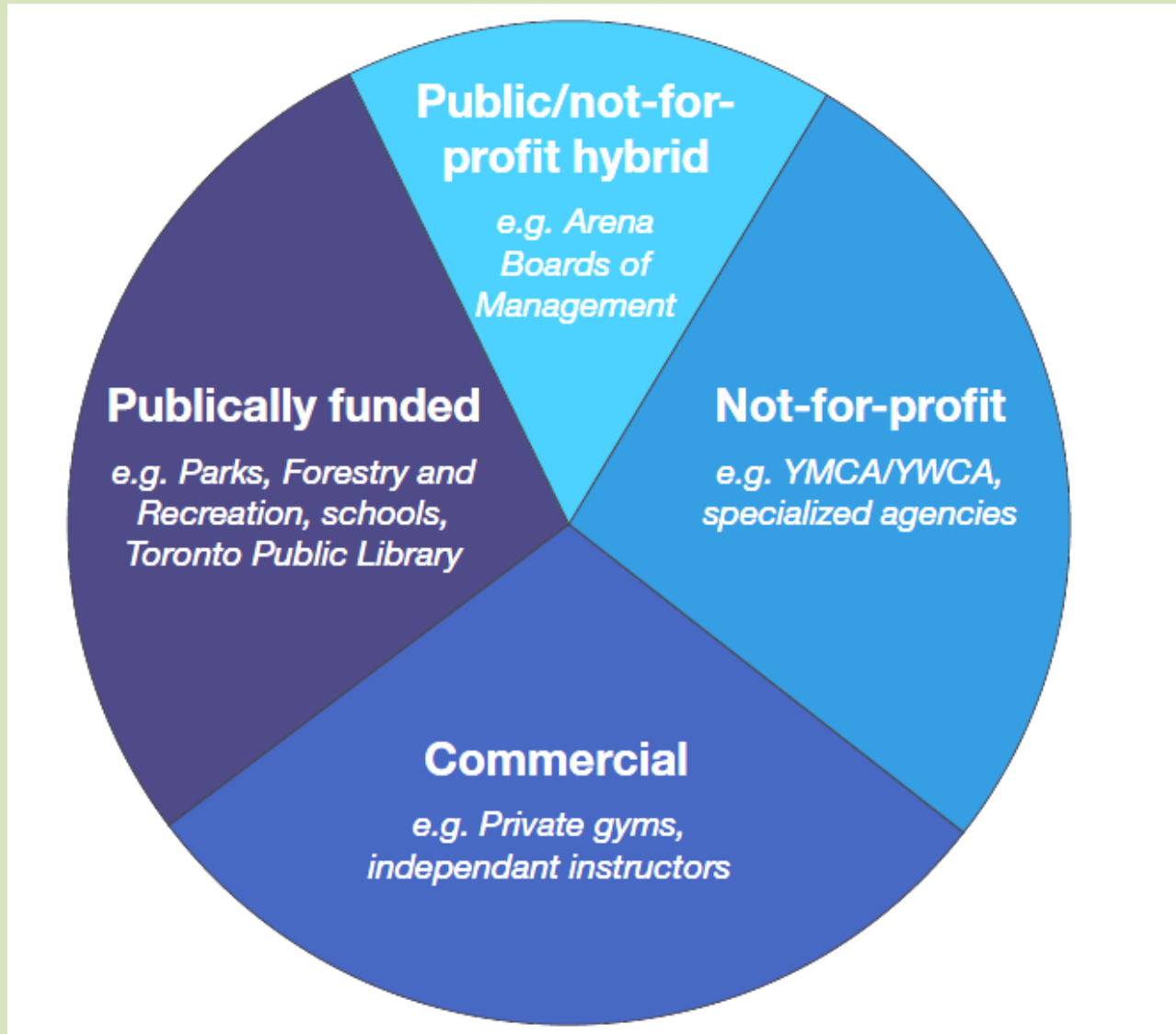
1. **Quality** - provide the highest quality of programs and services to enhance the health, quality of life and well-being of residents.
2. **Inclusion** - ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access recreation programs and services that are planned, delivered and managed to recognize diversity and encourage participation of marginalized people and groups.
3. **Capacity Building** - providing programs and services of social, economic and physical benefit to all participants and that create a sense of community, belonging and vitality.
4. **Equitable Access** - provide equitable recreation access to all city residents on a geographic and demographic basis.



# Service Plan Structure

- Context for Recreation- describing the recreation service sector, including the City's programs and services as well as those offered by the non-profit and for profit organizations.
- Trends - major demographic, leisure service, and health trends that affect the delivery of recreation services in Toronto.
- Chapters, with recommendations, that correspond to the principles adopted by Council: quality, capacity building, inclusion, and equitable access.

# Toronto's Recreation Service Sector



# City Recreation Facilities

- 134 Community Centres
- 1 Track and Field Centre
- 59 Outdoor Pools
- 64 Indoor Pools
- 2 Ski Hills
- 51 Outdoor Ice Pads
- 40 arenas (48 pads of ice)
- 106 wading Pools
- 93 Splash Pads



# Parks Facilities

- Over 1600 parks, 7,500 Hectares
- 4 Stadiums
- 580 kms of Trail
- 858 Playgrounds
- 634 tennis Courts
- 7 Skateboard Parks
- 5 Golf Courses
- 3 BMX facilities
- 676 Sports fields
- 145 Bocce Courts

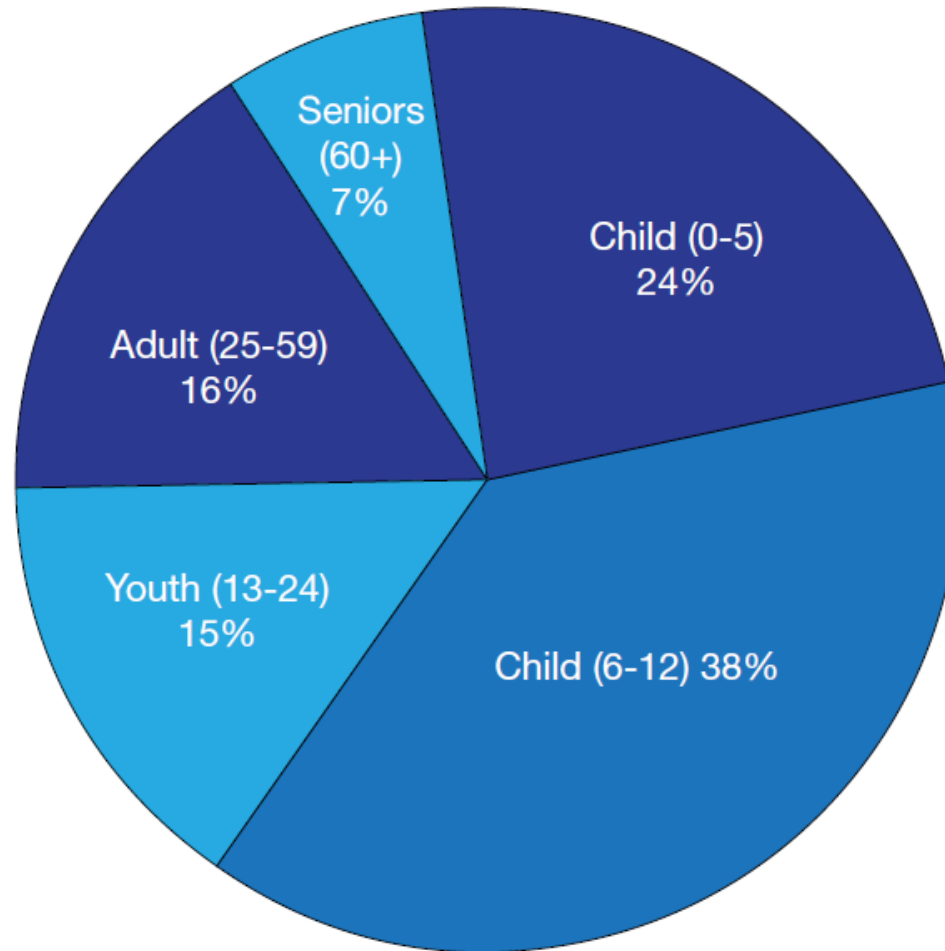


# Community Recreation By the Numbers

- 1 million hours of programming in over 75,000 programs
- 154,000+ individuals registered for programs or 4.2million visits.
- 4.3 million visits to drop-in programs, 93 per cent of drop-ins programs are free
- 56 per cent of registrations are completed within the first hour of availability.
- 80 per cent of registrations are for children or youth.
- 14,000 programs are just for adults 60+. six seniors' centres
- 24,000 residents participate through the Welcome Policy
- Over 5,500 Toronto residents volunteer with Community Recreation.

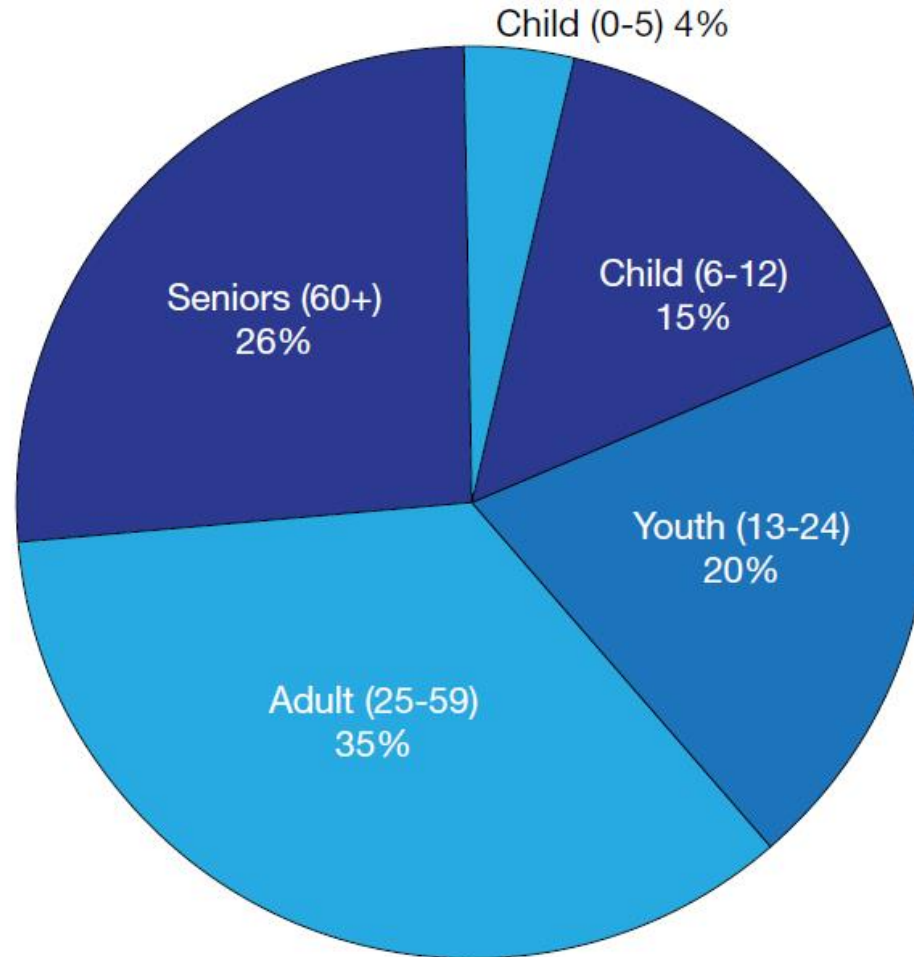
# Direct Program Delivery - Registered

Figure 4: Registered program participants by age category (2011)



# Direct Program Delivery – Drop-In

Figure 6: Drop-in visits by age category (2010-2011)





# Participation Trends

**Table 2: Registered program delivery trends: change in hours (2003-2011)**

	2003	2011	% change
Aquatics	144,700	178,744	+24 %
Skating	8,963	10,568	+18 %
Leadership	3,198	4,457	+ 39 %

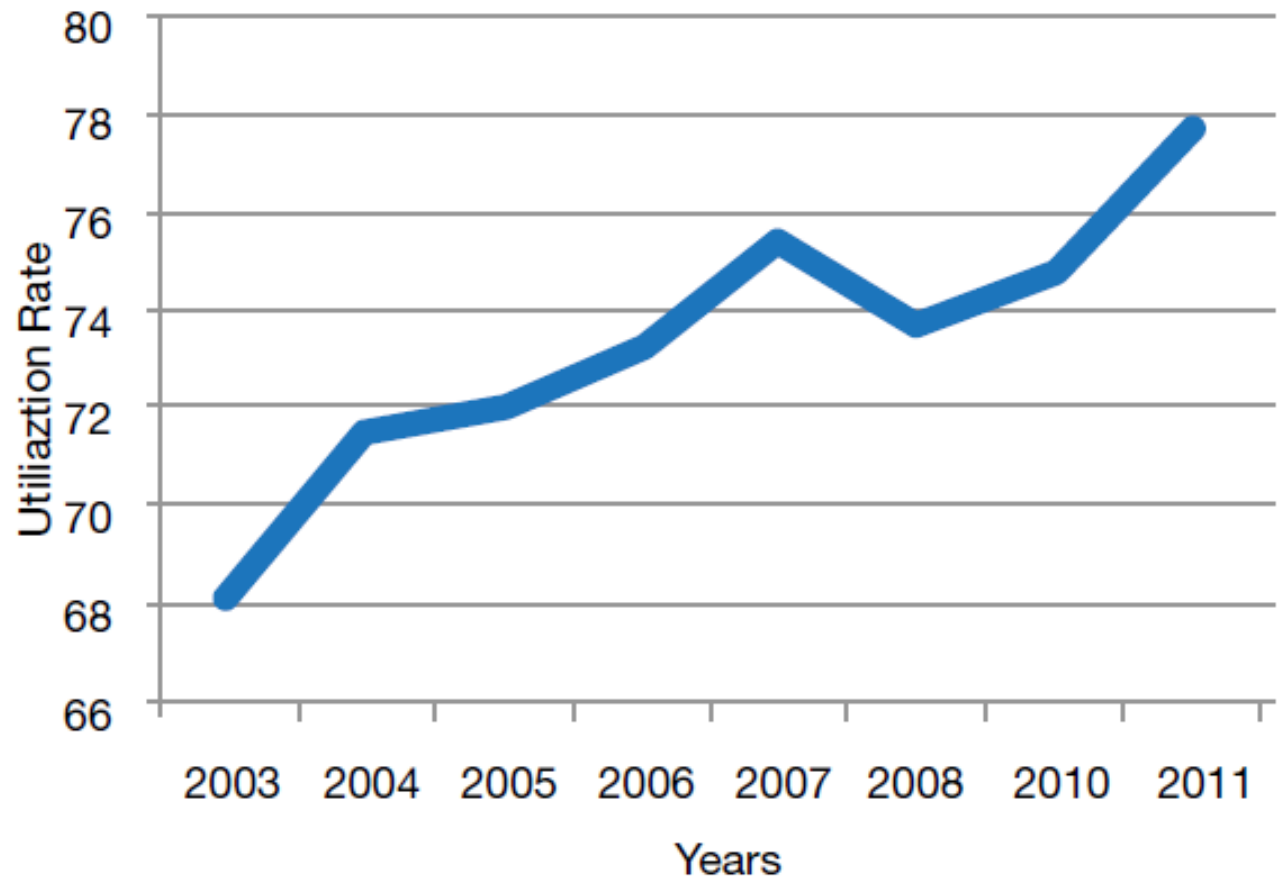
The increase in drop-in hours are mostly in aquatics, seniors and sport programs.

**Table 3: Drop-in program delivery trends: change in hours (2003-2011)**

	2003	2011	% change
Aquatics	88,022	125,410	+42 %
Seniors	38,305	52,157	+36 %
Sports (e.g. basketball)	12,004	24,914	+108 %

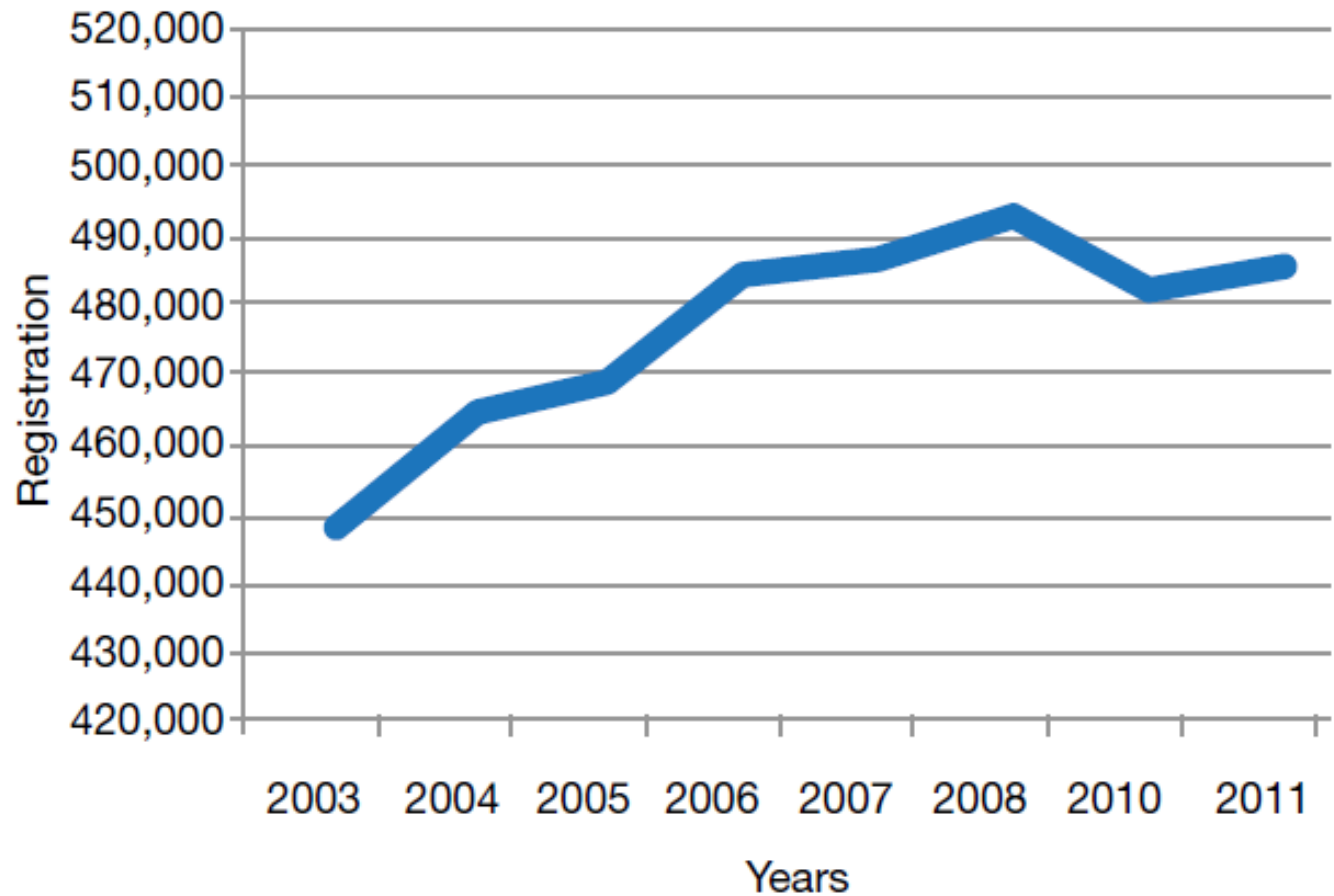
# Program Utilization

Figure 8: Registered program utilization

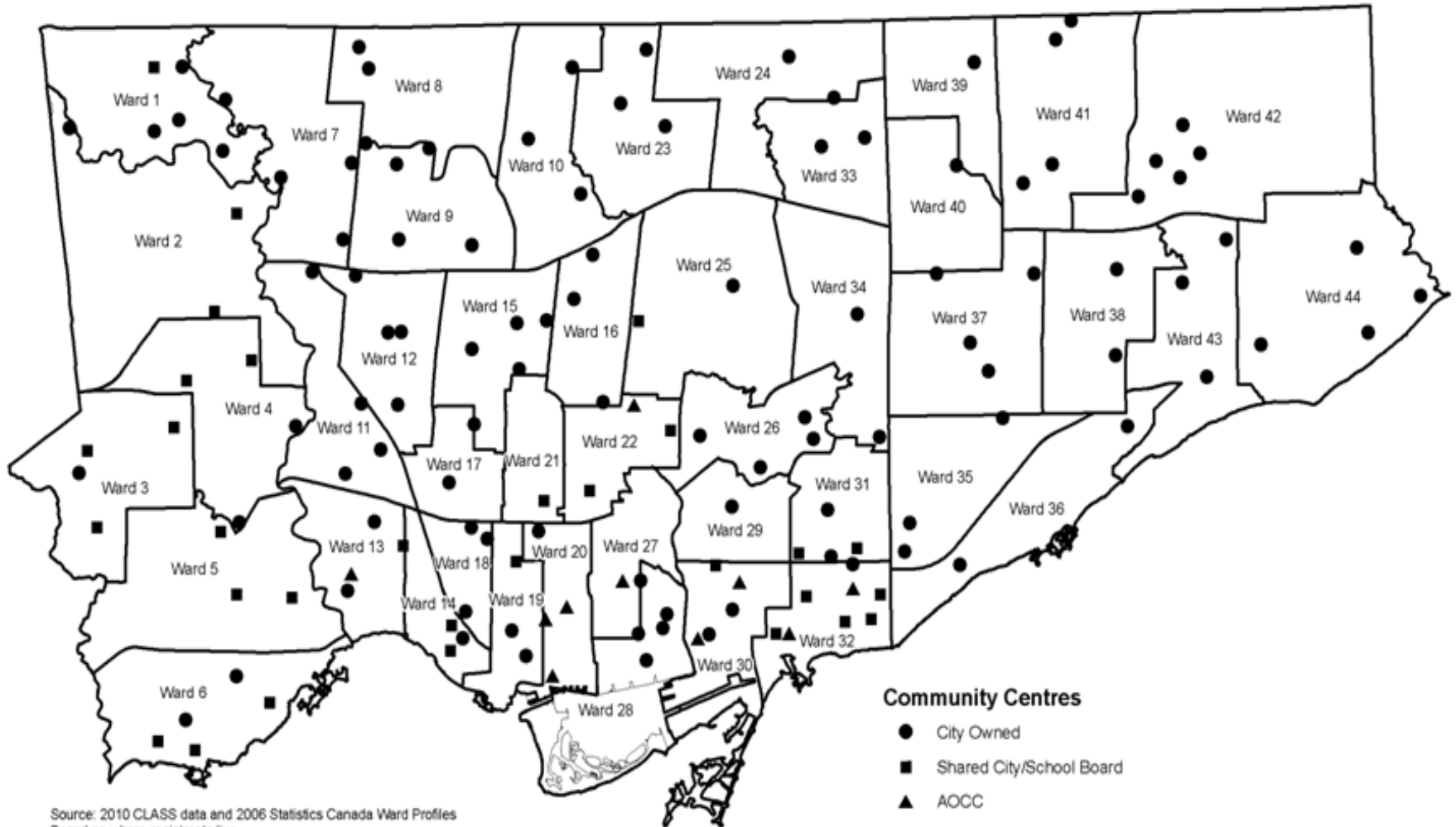


# Program Registration

Figure 9: Program registration (2003-2011)

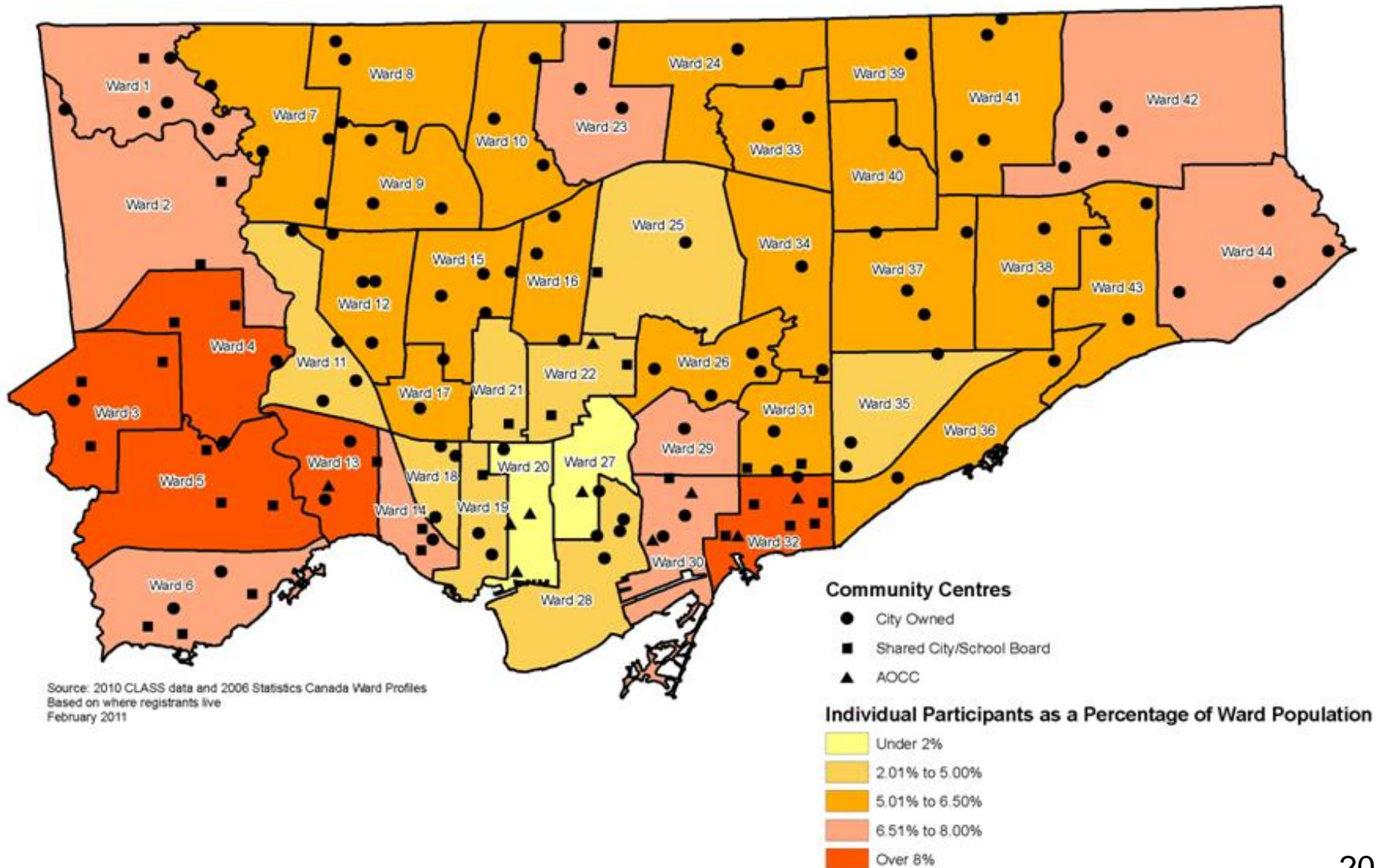


# Geographic Equity



Source: 2010 CLASS data and 2006 Statistics Canada Ward Profiles  
Based on where registrants live  
February 2011

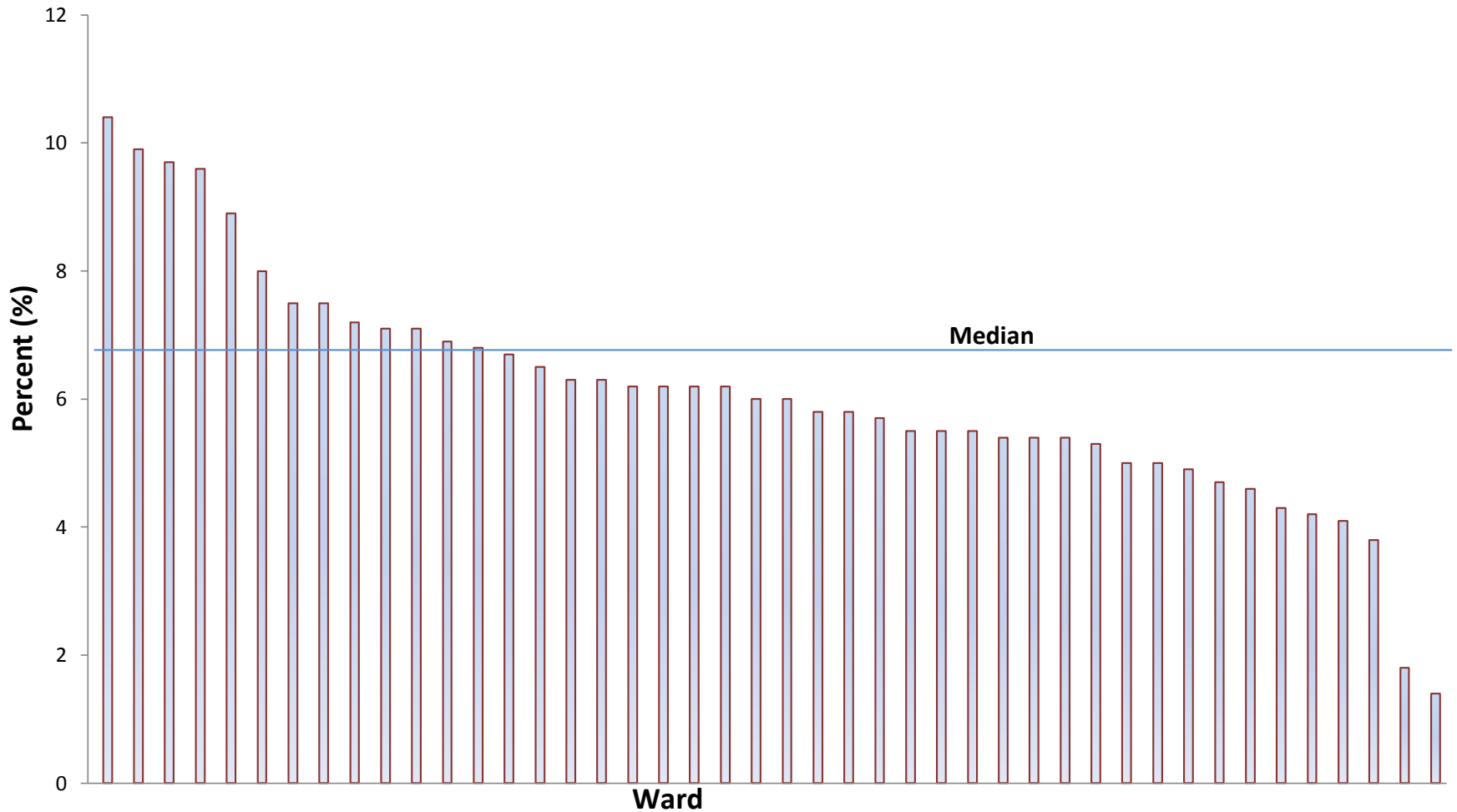
# 2010 – Geographic Equity



Source: 2010 CLASS data and 2006 Statistics Canada Ward Profiles  
Based on where registrants live  
February 2011

# Another View of Geographic Equity

Individual Program Participants by Ward as Percent of Ward Population



# Other Service Providers

**Table 4: Survey question**

Question	Response	Per cent
“Have you or any members of your household participated in a recreation program provided by an organization other than the City of Toronto?”	Yes	61
	No	33
	Don't Know	6



# Other Service Providers

**Table 7: Toronto community organizations that deliver recreation services<sup>20</sup>**

Provider category	Number	Examples of organization
Health	52	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; Mount Sinai Hospital
Cultural	51	Islamic Community of Afghans in Canada; Canadian Arab Federation
Multi-service	49	YMCA of Greater Toronto; Variety Village
Seniors	48	CANES Community Care; North York Seniors Centre
Youth	30	Cabbagetown Youth Centre; East Metro Youth Services
Settlement	29	Dejinta Beesha, WoodGreen Community Services
Family	20	Syme-Woolner Neighbourhood and Family Centre; Metro Mothers Network
Art	7	ArtHeart; Creative Spirit Art Centre
Counselling	6	San Romanoway Revitalization Association; Children's Aid Society of Toronto
Women	6	Rexdale Women's Centre; Canadian Centre for Women's Education and Development
Housing	5	Riverdale Housing Action Group; Houselink Community Homes
Adult	3	St. Christopher House; Fred Victor Centre

# Commercial Providers

- Deliver a large portion of recreation opportunities in the City, especially fitness, but difficult to quantify
- Respond quickly to new recreation trends
- Major distinction – offer services to clients who can afford to pay, determined by market factors

# Toronto's Recreation Service Sector

- Torontonians access recreation from a variety of providers, choice is influenced by a number of factors including; location, income level, program type, age, and personal preference
- Service Planning needs to look at the system as a whole and rather than any one component in isolation

# Broad Issues Facing Recreation

- A growing population that is becoming increasingly inactive
- High and increasing demand for PFR programs and services
- Barriers to recreation faced by underserved communities and residents
- Facilities and equipment that are aging and in need of repair and replacement
- High demand for resources to adapt facilities and services to comply with AODA 2025
- High demand to support partnerships that show great potential
- Need for ongoing improvements to data collection to provide consistent information, continuous improvement

# Quality

## **Principle:**

Providing the highest quality programs and services to enhance the health quality of life, and well being of residents

## **Definition:**

Quality refers to the standard of programs, services and facilities that provide the greatest benefit to participants

# What we heard on Quality

**Question:** In your opinion, what are the most important areas the City of Toronto needs to focus on to provide high quality recreation programs and services?

## **Survey**

- 9/10 respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied Community Consultations:
- Concerns about maintenance, upkeep and cleaning of facilities
- Concerns about state of good repair
- Concerns about permit processes

## **Staff/research:**

- Quality standards exist in some programs but not all, standards vary across the City

# Quality Recommendations

- Expand quality standards to all age groups and program areas with a focus on safety, health and skill development
- Improve consistency of cleanliness and repair of facilities (state of good repair)
- Develop and Implement a Customer Service Improvement Strategy to measure and track levels of satisfaction of services and facilities
- Improve facility permitting process, program registration process and availability of info online
- Need for consistent data collection, improve the capacity to measure and report on program objectives/outcomes



# Capacity Building

## **Principle:**

Providing Recreation programs and services of social, economic and physical benefit to all participants that create a sense of community, belonging vitality

## **Definition:**

An approach to community development that involves communities in the planning and delivery of services

# What we heard on Capacity Building

**Question:** How can Parks, Forestry and Recreation help to strengthen communities and who can we partner with? How can we attract, support and maintain volunteers?

**Survey** • Partnerships and volunteering are the key to expanding community capacity

## **Community Consultations:**

- Need to improve the City's approach to engaging, orienting, supporting and recognizing volunteers
- Facilities and resources need to be shared to provide relevant, accessible and responsive programs
- Agreement that recreation facilities and services are vital to communities and helps link other services

**Staff/research:** • Onus is on City to play facilitation role in the community

# Capacity Building Recommendations

- Maximize the use of recreation facilities as core community assets (permits, partnerships)
- Enable local service planning with local residents, other recreation providers and schools – address gaps and reduce overlaps
- Public input in decision making, in particular populations facing barriers such as newcomers, persons living with disabilities, youth
- Develop a centralized volunteer management system (recruit, support and train, recognize); leverage opportunity Summer/2015 Pan Parapan American games

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# Inclusion

## **Principle:**

Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access and participate in programs and services that are planned, delivered and managed in a way that promotes diversity and encourages participation of marginalized and racialized people

## **Definition:**

Actions taken to overcome non financial barriers and increase the involvement and participation of others

# What we heard on Inclusion

**Question:** How can Parks, Forestry and Recreation engage community groups and groups who do not participate?

**Survey** • Less than 50% were satisfied with efforts to accommodate language barriers, programs meet the diverse needs

## **Community Consultations:**

- Lack of information on recreation programs, lack of promotion
- Improve the FUN Guide, provide multi-lingual resources
- Efforts to reach out to youth, seniors and newcomers should be a priority
- Improve registration processes (CLASS, Welcome Policy, permits)
- Need for programs that reflect the community, non traditional sports, etc
- Enhance services for people with a disability, regardless of age

# Inclusion Recommendations

- Improve citywide and local promotion of programs and services through communications strategy
- Improve registration and Welcome Policy applications processes, make it easier
- Create tools and strategies to support diverse and newcomer populations
- Strengthen partnerships with agencies/orgs that work with underserved populations
- Ensure continued compliance with AODA legislation

# Equitable Access

## **Principle:**

Providing equitable recreation access on a geographic and demographic basis for all residents of Toronto

## **Definition:**

All Toronto residents should be able to participate in recreation, regardless of their age, location, financial or other barriers



# What we heard on Equitable Access

**Question:** What are the barriers to achieving equitable recreation access across the City? Does the current mix of programs support equitable access?

**Survey** • Top three barriers to accessing recreation were identified as: **insufficient program space, cost, distance**

## **Community Consultations:**

- Support for subsidy programs to provide access
- Demand for programs exceeds capacity
- Inconsistent programming from one facility to the next
- Lack of recreation facilities in many neighbourhoods
- Provide the same basic programs everywhere

# Equitable Access Recommendations

## Implementing a Primary Program Model

- Model puts a priority on introductory level programs, group settings, and those that teach basic life skills
- Will improve consistency of program delivery across the City
- Ensures programs remain responsive to local needs
- Continued focus on children, youth and seniors

# Recreation Program Categories

## Primary – Offered Everywhere

Offered  
everywhere

Respond to  
general need

Societal  
benefit

## Primary – Locally Responsive

Not offered  
everywhere

Responds to  
local need

Community  
benefit

## Secondary

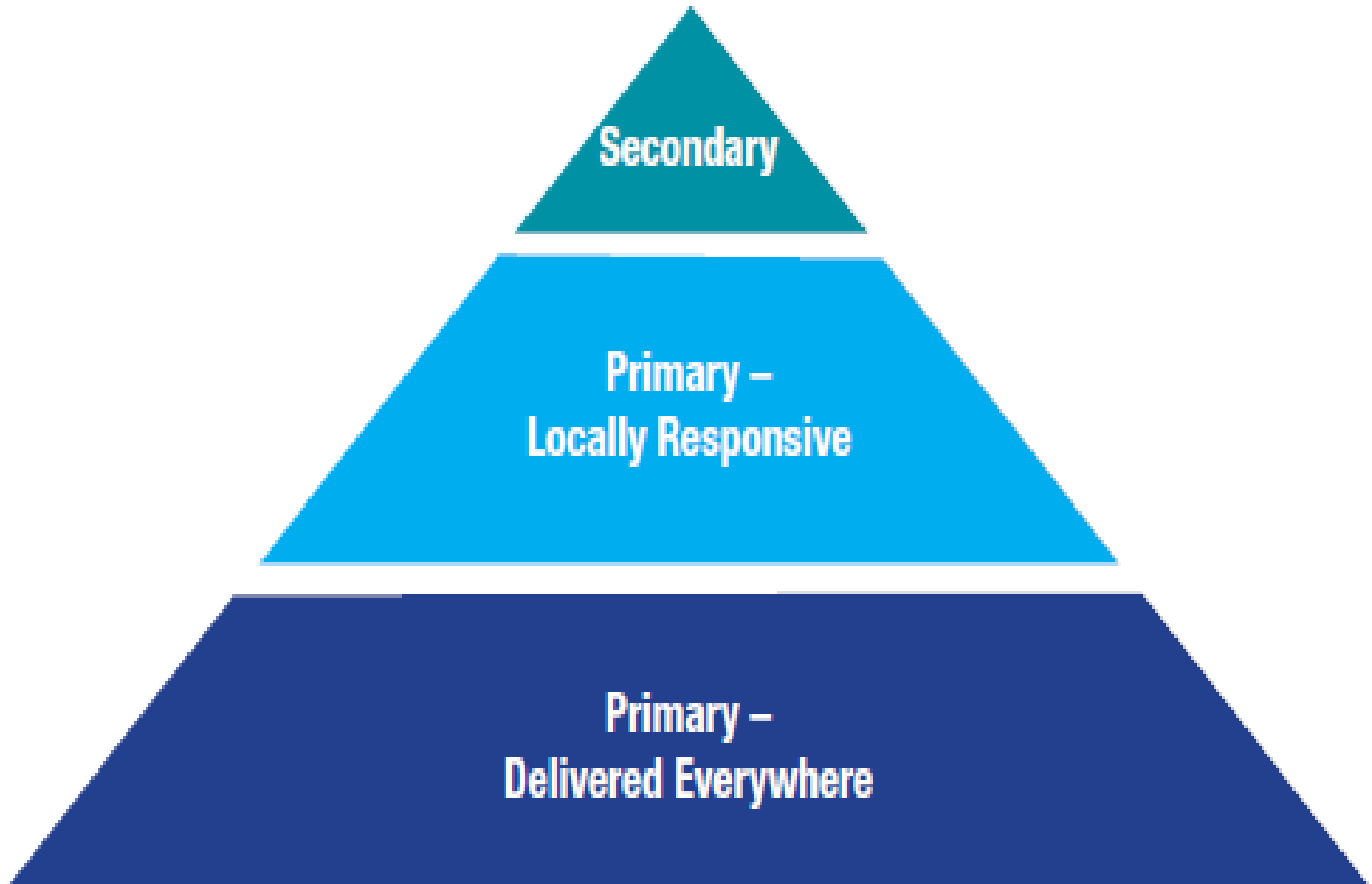
Not offered  
everywhere

Responds to  
individual need

Individual  
benefit

22

**Figure 15: Community Recreation's program model**



# Primary Program Model

**Table 15: Examples of primary and secondary programs by program area**

Program area	Examples of primary	Examples of secondary
Swimming	Ultra levels 1-9 Public swim	Masters swim clubs Private lessons
Camps	Adventure camps Activity camps	Advanced gymnastics camps Horseback riding camps
Skating	Learn to skate Public skate	Power skating Goalie skills
Fitness and Wellness	Beginner pilates Cardio Hi/Low	Private personal training Specialized fitness programs
General Interest	Ball hockey Family games	Private guitar lessons Requires a specific facility
Seniors	Badminton Arts and crafts	Advanced clogging Advanced tap dance
Skiing and Snowboarding	Learn to ski Learn to snowboard	Freestyle snowboarding Instructor training levels

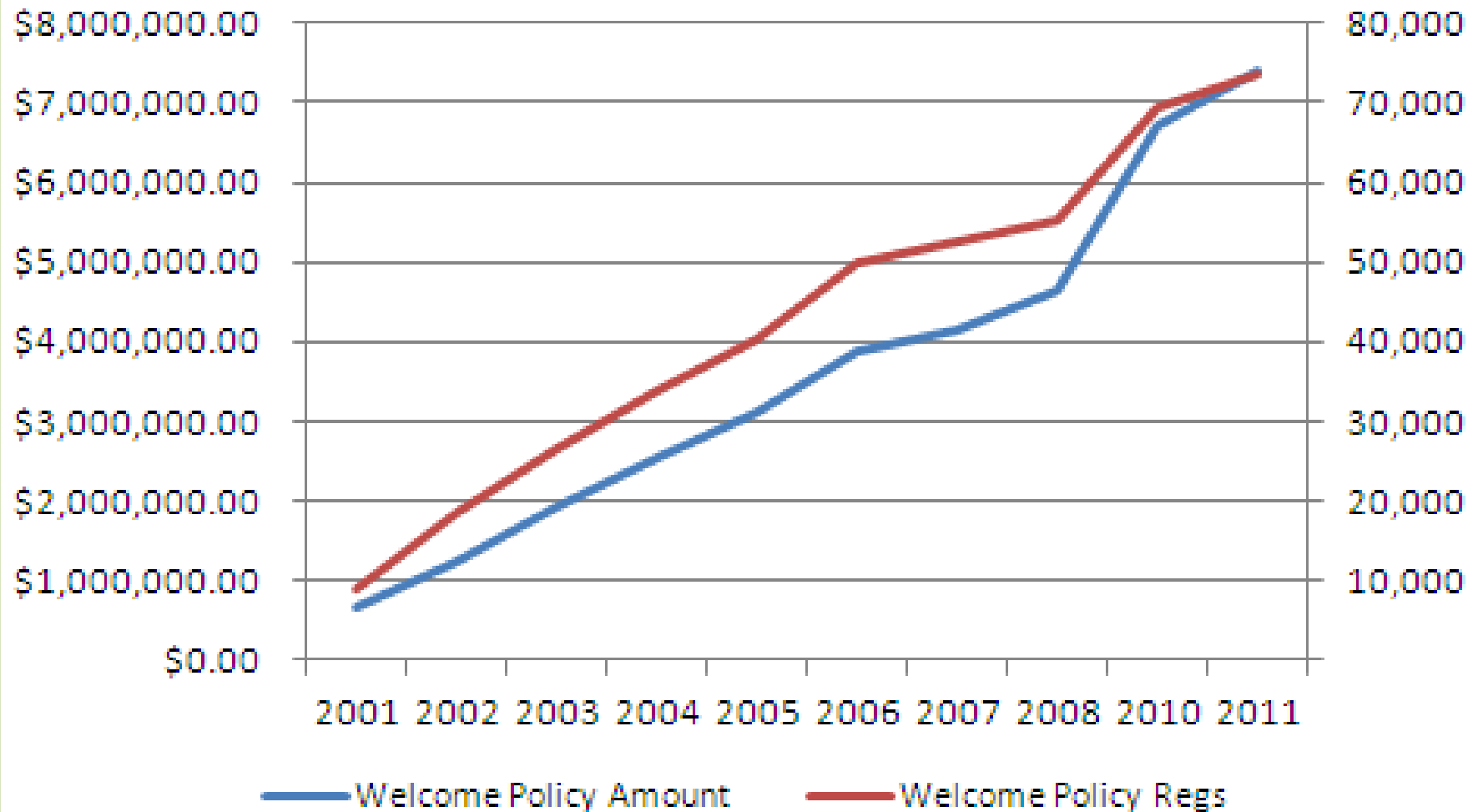
# Equity Recommendations

**PFR continue the use of Welcome Policy as a means to support access to recreation**

- Welcome Policy is working
- Poverty exists in all areas of the city
- Welcome Policy has increased dramatically since 1999
- Conversion to dollar based entitlement has increased registrations

# Welcome Policy Utilization

The program has been effective in improving access.



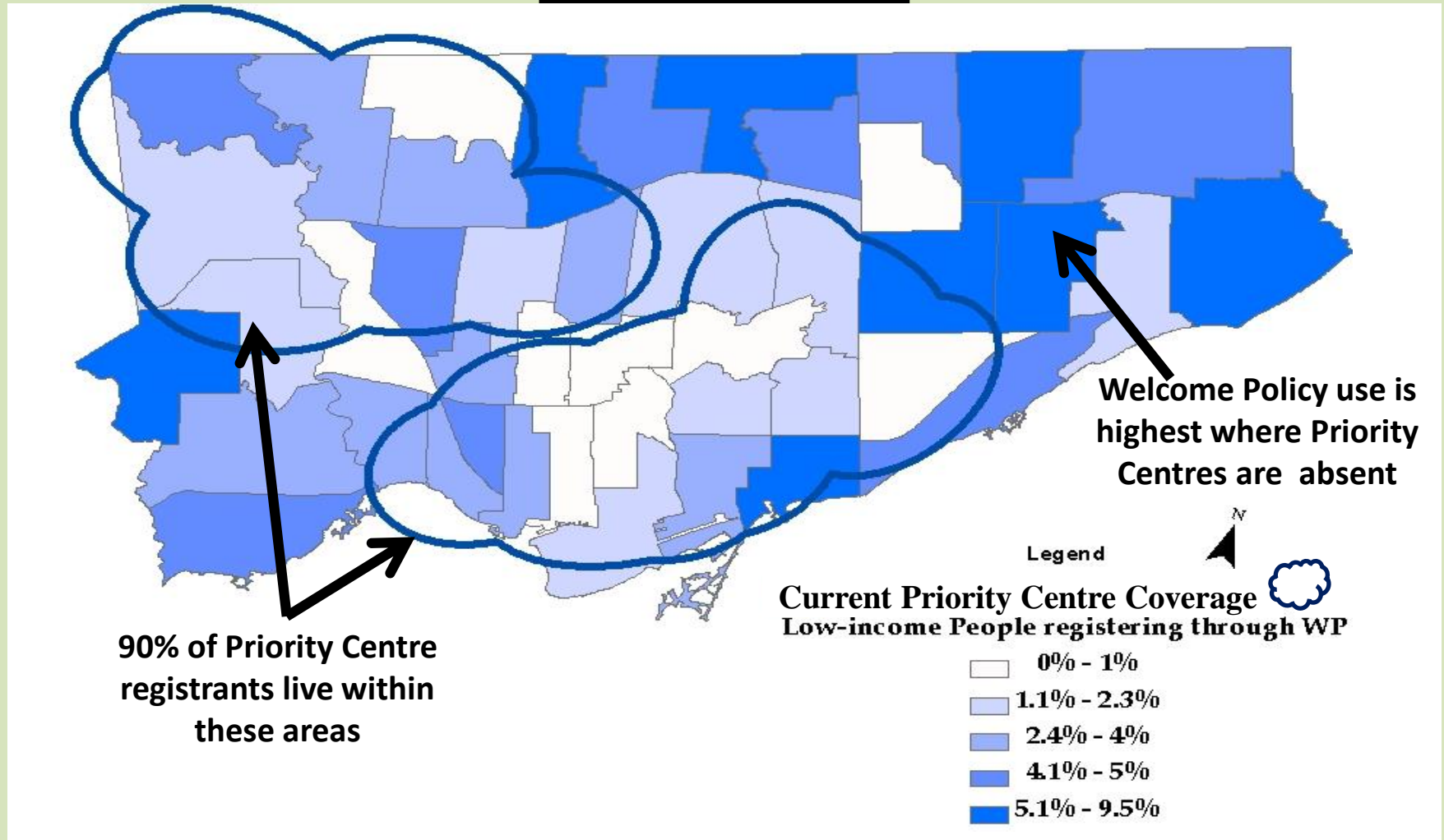
# Equity Recommendations

A revised method for determining Priority Centres  
Term “Priority Centre” replaced with a more generic term, reduce stigma

- Priority Centres are an effective way to serve low income neighbourhoods
- Original method for designation resulted in inconsistent and inequitable distribution across the city



# Priority Centre Coverage vs. Welcome Policy Use



# Priority Centre Usage

**Table 16: Comparing Priority and non-Priority Centres (2011)**

	Priority Centres	Non-Priority Centres
Local access – average distance traveled (in kilometres)	1.8	2.7
Utilization rate (per cent)	84	79
Average number of registrations per participant	2.7	2.8

# Geographic Distribution Current vs. New Priority Centres

	Number of Priority Centres			
	Etobicoke - York	North York	Toronto & East York	Scarborough
Currently funded (22)	6	6	9	1
New method (39)	10	10	9	10

# Equity Recommendations

- Expand the current Swim to Survive program
- Develop a Youth Leadership Program model
  - PFR does not have the capacity to offer broad based programs that reach all
  - With program demand and wait lists growing, the City must find new ways to meet the goal of increasing participation
  - Both programs based on partnership delivery

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# Equity Recommendations

- "Swim to Survive", delivered in partnership with the school boards, to teach all 22,300 Grade 4 children in Toronto learn basic swim survival skills.
- Develop a Youth Leadership program model- builds leadership, civic engagement and employability skills. Working with schools, this will reach over 12,600 youth across the City.

# Endorsement

**Goal: Unanimous approval by City Council, endorsement by internal staff and the community at large.**

- Political Approvals
- Recreation staff involvement and buy-in
- Cross Divisional (City wide) endorsement
- Community Endorsement

# Financial Impact

## **New and Enhanced Service:**

- New Priority Centres: \$4.5M
- New Universal programs: \$1.5M
  - Swim to Survive and
  - Youth Leadership
- All other recommendations: To be absorbed through regular operating budget.



# Political Endorsement

- One on one briefings with Councillors to review the Plan's general recommendations (35/44 Councillors)
- Briefings with Committee Chairs and the Mayors Office
- Expert Panel to inform the Committee's deliberations



# **Community Development and Recreation Committee**

## **“The Future of Community Recreation” Expert Panel**

September 18, 2012

# Expert Panel Members

**Dr. Bruce Kidd** - Warden, Hart House and Professor of Kinesiology and Physical Education at the University of Toronto

**Dr. Gina Browne** - Professor, School of Nursing, McMaster University

**JoAnne Doyle** - Senior Vice-President Community Impact, United Way Toronto

**Elio Antunes** - Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Partnerships, ParticipACTION

# Staff/Community Endorsement

- Staff involved in ongoing consultation process
- Meetings with Community recreation staff at all levels at various milestones in the plan's development
- Cross Divisional Steering Committee, endorsement from aligned City divisions
- One on one briefings with key community agencies

# Learnings

- Vet internally – functional teams, front line staff, cross Branch (directions level)
- Build in opportunity to vet with other key Divisions to support refinement of document

## **Prior to Council**

- Engage community stakeholders, strategically
- Political briefings
- Question and Answers

# Learnings

## **Developing the Plan**

- Ground directions in “what was heard “ in consultations
- Align directions to Divisional strategic planning work
- Ensure key recommendations are supported with data
- Articulate a few key goals (participation, financial barriers, geographic equity)

# Questions



## Parks, Forestry and Recreation 2013