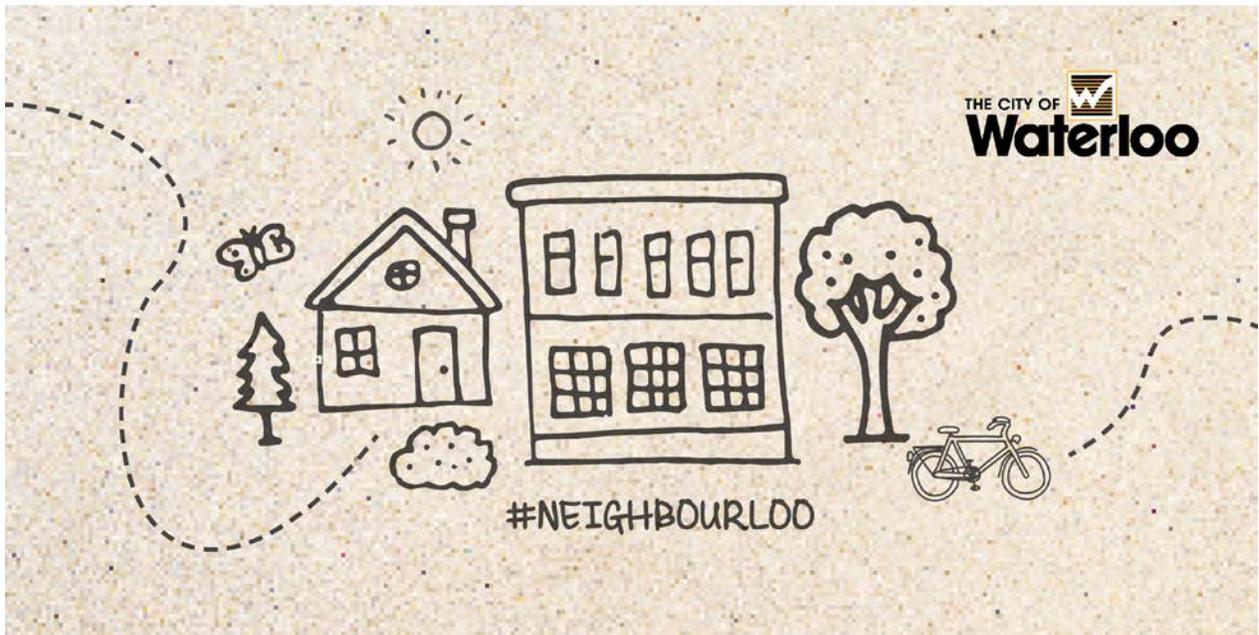


Waterloo Current Context

Prepared by the Neighbourhood Strategy Project Team
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Introduction

We belong to many different communities, but our geographic community is still important. “Neighbourhoods remain the locus of our most frequent interactions and the physical and social influences that are more likely to influence us” (Meagher, 2008, p.12). The people and places we encounter in our neighbourhood every day shape how safe we feel, how we access the help we need, and our quality of life.

The City of Waterloo fosters connected and active neighbourhoods through a variety of policies, programs and investments, including: affiliation of neighbourhood associations, liaison staff to support neighbourhood initiatives, and grant programs.

The City’s Strategic Plan for 2015-2018 highlights the City’s commitment to strong community, in which neighbourhoods play a key role. This plan identifies a neighbourhood strategy as a means to “harness social capital to increase neighbourhood vibrancy and resident leadership.” The 2016-2018 business plan for the Community Services Department also notes that “a neighbourhood strategy will foster a level of inclusiveness and vibrancy that is built from the grassroots of the community and our neighbourhoods.”

The City of Waterloo and its neighbourhoods are changing in many ways, including increased ethnic diversity and number of newcomers, a growing aging population, a changing economy, and urban intensification. These factors are shaping what neighbourhoods look like and how neighbours interact with each other. The City needs a strategic approach to respond to this changing context.

The neighbourhood strategy will examine where we are now and the vision residents have for Waterloo neighbourhoods in 2028, and will include recommendations intended to lead us towards that vision.

This document contains an overview of demographics, current neighbourhood groups, programs, initiatives, grants and the city’s policy framework that influence neighbourhoods. This will help guide discussion with community stakeholders and residents throughout the neighbourhood strategy development process. This is a living document; as the strategy progresses, it will be updated to more accurately reflect the context in which residents live together in communities called neighbourhoods.

Section A: City of Waterloo Demographics

Waterloo neighbours are building community within a diverse and changing context. Understanding these shifting dynamics can shed light on community priorities, and help frame our understanding of individual wards and neighbourhoods within Waterloo.

The following map (Figure 1) shows the City of Waterloo's seven wards and 21 planning districts.

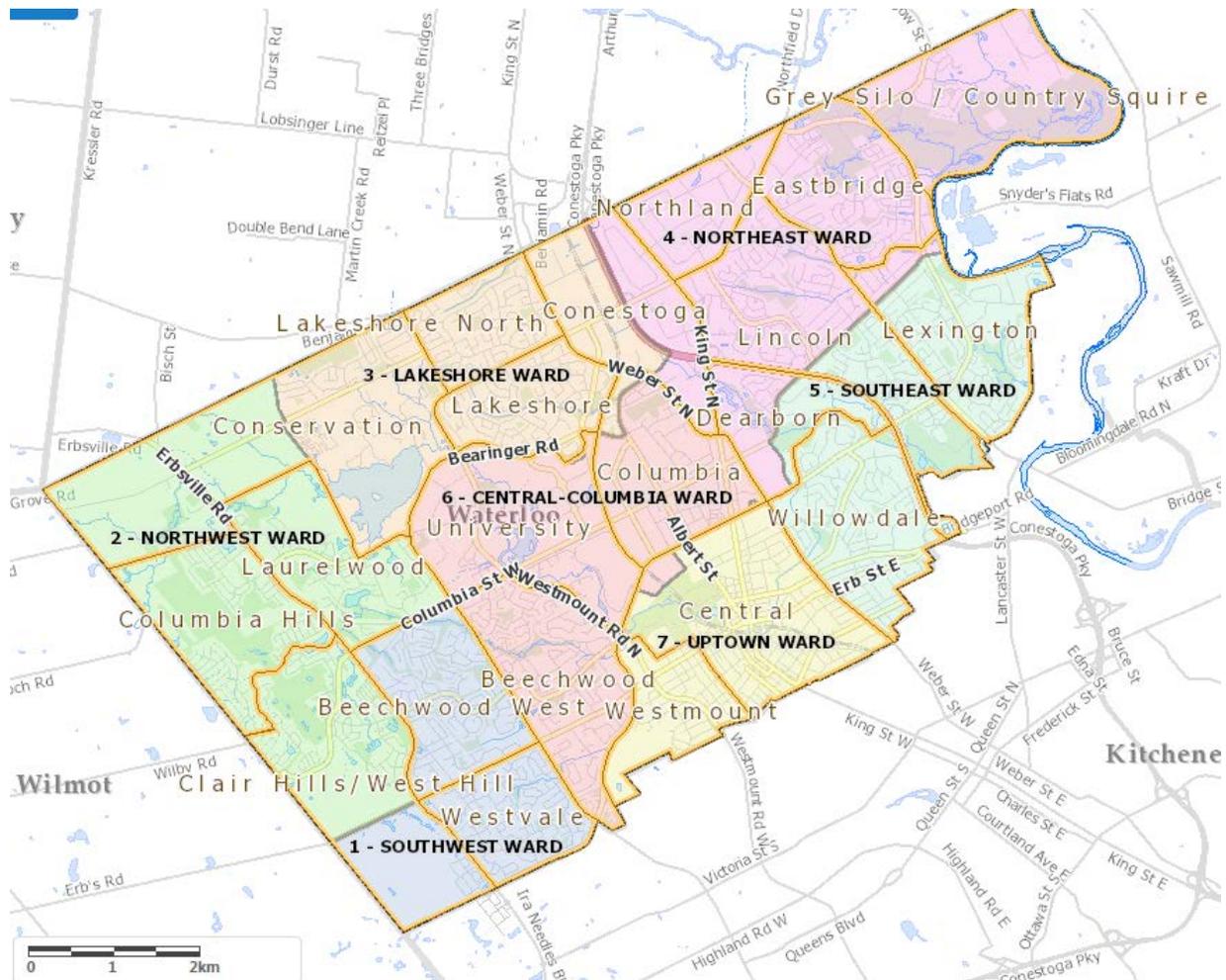


Figure 1: Map of City of Waterloo Wards and Planning Districts

Note: most of the data in this section are drawn, at least in part, from the short-form census and the National Household Survey (NHS) administered in 2011. Due to the voluntary nature of the NHS, the statistical information may not be accurate. Data from the 2016 National Census is not yet available.

An overview of statistics and potential implications

The City of Waterloo is a dynamic and diverse city that has been growing steadily over the past couple of decades. With renowned post-secondary institutions, a booming tech industry, think tanks, a flourishing Uptown core, and quiet residential neighbourhoods, Waterloo is attracting a variety of citizens from around the world.

Population and intensification

The 2011 Census identified the City having a population of 98,780 (2016 Census data has not yet been released), recognizing that this figure did not include non-resident post-secondary students and other foreign/temporary residents. In comparison, the Region's Year-end 2015 Population and Household Estimates Report estimated a population of 133,700, when including students and other foreign/temporary residents and excluding the students who leave Waterloo in order to study elsewhere (Region of Waterloo, 2016). The year-end 2015 total population of 133,700 included an estimate of approximately 25,000 students who have come to the city from elsewhere.

According to the National Household Survey, 2011, the homeownership rate was 73.6% in the City of Waterloo, compared to 71.4% across Ontario (Stats Canada, NHS Focus on Geography Series). There are many different types of housing options in Waterloo, with the most popular being single-detached houses, row houses, and apartment buildings with fewer than five stories (Figure 2).

Structural type of dwelling	Waterloo, CY		Ontario		Canada	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Single-detached house	21,720	57.9	2,718,880	55.6	7,329,150	55.0
Semi-detached house	1,965	5.2	279,470	5.7	646,240	4.9
Row house	4,555	12.1	415,230	8.5	791,600	5.9
Apartment, building that has five or more storeys	4,025	10.7	789,975	16.2	1,234,770	9.3
Apartment, building that has fewer than five storeys	4,195	11.2	498,160	10.2	2,397,555	18.0
Apartment, duplex	870	2.3	160,460	3.3	704,485	5.3
Other single-attached house	20	0.1	9,535	0.2	33,310	0.3
Movable dwelling	170	0.5	15,795	0.3	183,510	1.4

Figure 2: Distribution of private households by structural type of dwelling, 2011 Census

There is very little green field land remaining for development of new housing. Instead, the Uptown core has intensified, with new apartment buildings to accommodate more people within that geographic location. New development in the City of Waterloo is tending to focus more on high-density forms of housing such as apartment buildings (City of Waterloo, IPPW Fact Sheet, 2015).

To accommodate this intensification, there is increasing investment in alternate means of transportation. There are currently more than 60 km of on-road cycling lanes and 150 km of off-road trails throughout the City. There are also plans in place to further improve mobility and connectivity throughout the city, including the Light Rail Transit (LRT), and additional bicycle lanes and multi-use trail improvements.

As the city experiences urban intensification, transportation and housing is changing; this is impacting people's definitions of neighbourhoods and the manner in which they meet and interact with other community members.

Newcomers

Every year, the City of Waterloo welcomes newcomers from other cities, provinces and countries. These newcomers are drawn here for a wide variety of reasons, including the post-secondary institutions or the thriving technology sector.

In any given year, over 25,000 post-secondary students come to Waterloo from elsewhere to study (Region of Waterloo). Although these students may not be considered permanent residents, they form a part of the community for as long as they remain in the City, and many choose to work and live in the city long-term.

In 2011, an estimated 24% of Waterloo's residents were born outside of Canada. The majority of these immigrants came from China and the United Kingdom (Statistics Canada, Focus on Geography Series 2011 Census). In Ontario as a whole, the number of residents moving from other parts of Canada or other countries is anticipated to account for approximately two-thirds of the expected population growth between 2008 and 2018 (Region of Waterloo Public Health).

Ethnic and Cultural Diversity

A community's cultural makeup can influence what types of neighbourhood activities and events are wanted and needed, and how neighbours interact with each other. The City of Waterloo has an increasingly diverse population in terms of culture and ethnicity.

In 2011, approximately 20% of the population in the City of Waterloo belonged to a visible minority group, compared to 25% across Ontario. The largest visible minority groups in Waterloo were Chinese and South Asian. (Statistics Canada, NHS Focus on Geography Series).

0.8% of the population of Waterloo reported having an Aboriginal identity, with the majority being First Nations identity, followed by Métis identity. According to the NHS, in Waterloo the most frequently reported ethnic origins were German, English, and Canadian. (Statistics Canada, NHS Focus on Geography).

Many different languages are being spoken across the City of Waterloo, including Mandarin, German, Arabic, and Spanish. Wards 2 and 6 have the highest percentages of residents whose mother tongue is other than English or French (Environics Analytics, 2013).

Age demographics and older adults

When examining Waterloo’s age demographics, there are two distinct peaks: one from 15-30 years and another from 40-55 years of age (Figure 3, Statistics Canada Focus on Geography Series 2011 Census).

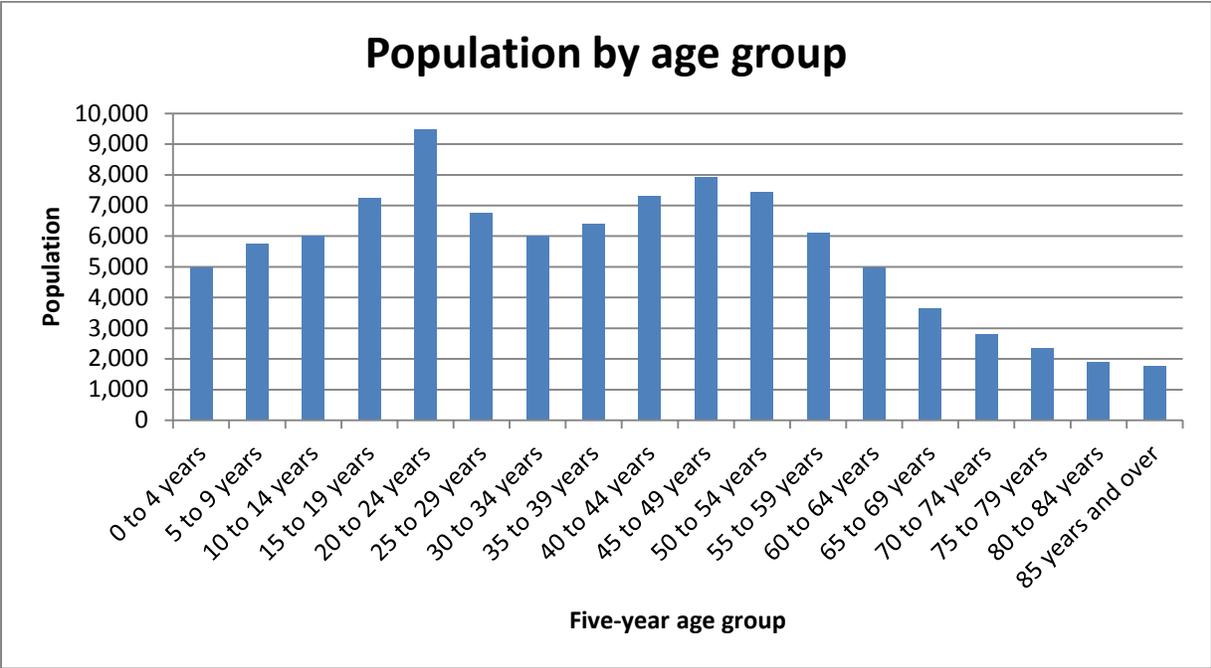


Figure 3: Population by five-year age groups, 2011 Census

Approximately 24% of City of Waterloo residents were 55+ at the time of the 2011 census, and this is expected to increase in the coming years (Environics Analytics, 2013; Social Planning Council, as cited by the City of Waterloo, 2015). The increase in the aging population, along with changes in family caregiving trends such as adult children moving away from parents, may point to new roles for neighbours and neighbourhoods to enable older adults to age in place.

Education and Educational Institutions

In the City of Waterloo, in 2011 over 70% of the population 25 years of age and over had attained a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, compared to the Ontario average of 60.3% (Figure 4, Statistics Canada, NHS Focus on Geography Series).

Highest level of educational attainment

	Waterloo		Ontario		Canada	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total population aged 25 years and over	63,780	100.0	8,771,320	100.0	22,935,460	100.0
No certificate, diploma or degree	6,090	9.5	1,366,620	15.6	3,956,620	17.3
High school diploma	12,100	19.0	2,111,855	24.1	5,300,080	23.1
Post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	45,590	71.5	5,292,840	60.3	13,678,765	59.6
Trades certificate	3,950	6.2	730,670	8.3	2,744,380	12.0
College diploma	11,935	18.7	1,895,340	21.6	4,487,520	19.6
University certificate below bachelor	2,610	4.1	387,200	4.4	1,100,325	4.8
University degree	27,090	42.5	2,279,630	26.0	5,346,530	23.3

Figure 4: Population aged 25 and over by highest level of educational attainment, Waterloo (City), Ontario, Canada

Post-secondary student enrollment fluctuates throughout the year. The number of students attending classes on campus at any given time is difficult to calculate. Many students are involved in research projects, co-op programs, internships, or distance education, meaning they may not be actually living in the city. While the majority of full-time students attend the University of Waterloo, a large portion is enrolled in programs through Wilfrid Laurier University, and a smaller portion at Conestoga College's Waterloo campus. The post-secondary institutions offer students a myriad of recreational clubs and groups; in many cases, the campuses in effect become the students' community.

Around the post-secondary institutions, particularly the two universities, the high concentration of students has an impact on how community is built. This is mostly impacting the Northdale area. Over the past couple of decades, permanent residents have been moving out of the Northdale area, and housing is being transformed into higher density housing geared to students (Waterloo, n.d.). Recognizing this trend, the City is currently leading implementation of a plan to achieve the following vision: "by 2029, Northdale is revitalized and reurbanized into a diverse, vibrant neighbourhood, integrated with educational, residential, commercial, cultural, heritage and recreational functions, and improved open space, pedestrian, cycling and transit networks" (IBM Corporation, 2014).

Many students are enrolled in co-op programs or leave the city during the summer months, meaning that students may only be in the city for four to eight months at a time.

As such, students may not view their neighbours or the neighbourhood in the same way permanent residents would.

Income

When examining income by population, there is a higher percentage of residents earning \$51,305 or more (33%) compared to Ontario as a whole (26%) (Figure 5, Statistics Canada, NHS Focus on Geography Series).

Total income	Waterloo (CY)	Ontario	Canada
Without income or less than \$27,815 (%)	45.3	49.6	50.0
Without income or less than \$12,025 (%)	25.4	25.6	25.0
\$12,025 to \$27,814 (%)	19.9	24.0	25.0
\$27,815 and over (%)	54.7	50.4	50.0
\$27,815 to \$51,304 (%)	21.6	23.8	25.0
\$51,305 and over (%)	33.0	26.6	25.0
\$80,420 and over (top 10 percent) (%)	16.2	11.3	10.0
\$102,305 and over (top 5 percent) (%)	8.1	5.5	5.0
\$191,150 and over (top 1 percent) (%)	1.6	1.1	1.0

Figure 5: Population aged 15 years and over by total income, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

In the City of Waterloo, wards 1, 2 and 4 have the highest average household incomes (Environics Analytics, 2013).

Income inequality could influence the supports and programs specific areas need in order to develop strong and vibrant neighbourhoods. Social equity in particular is a concern for many community groups, and the City of Waterloo already partners with some of these groups, including United Way KW & Area, Carizon and House of Friendship. While the City of Waterloo does provide a degree of support, the City's focus is on community services and recreation focus, whereas the Region of Waterloo is responsible for social services.

Section B: Policy Framework influencing Neighbourhoods

Not only are there many supports the City of Waterloo offers neighbourhoods and committees that influence neighbourhoods, there are also a number of existing plans and strategies that must be considered while developing the neighbourhood strategy.

Plans that identify the need for a neighbourhood strategy

The first mention of a neighbourhood strategy is found in the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (2008). It recommended the development of a neighbourhood service strategy focused on delivering recreation and leisure programs locally. The Culture Plan (2013) has a slightly different focus, recommending developing a strategy that would explore “opportunities to create a distinct sense of identity and culture at a neighbourhood level.”

In more recent years, the need for a neighbourhood strategy has still been identified, but a broader focus has been taken. The Waterloo Strategic Plan 2015-2018 recommends developing “a neighbourhood strategy focused on harnessing social capital to increase neighbourhood vibrancy and resident leadership.” Similarly, the 2016 Business Plan identifies the need for a strategy that “will foster a level of inclusiveness and vibrancy that is built from the grass roots of the community and our neighbourhoods.”

Simply put, social capital is relationship that builds trust between neighbours and through which neighbours get the help and support they need (see Definitions for full description). Building on existing strategies and plans, the City of Waterloo neighbourhood strategy will focus on strengthening social connections within neighbourhoods and fostering neighbourhood vibrancy, although recreation programs, culture and identity could be the means through which this is achieved.

Plans and strategies that impact the people and places within the City of Waterloo

In developing the neighbourhood strategy, it is important to understand how other plans and strategies will influence neighbourhoods. There may also be opportunities for the neighbourhood strategy to align with and support existing plans.

The following 4 plans have a direct impact on neighbourhoods:

Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan (also known as CCRS Master Plan)

Recommendation: Neighbourhood Services Strategy

1. "That the Recreation and Leisure Services Department undertake a neighbourhood services development strategy, engaging existing and new neighbourhood associations, supported through community development and capacity building services of the Department, to develop and deliver local neighbourhood recreation and leisure programs;
2. "That Department staff resources be assigned to supporting neighbourhood associations within the community development and capacity building model;
3. "That program venues be primarily focused on existing spaces within the neighbourhood involving schools, churches, clubhouses, multicultural halls, appropriate City facilities and other resources to facilitate enhanced accessibility;
4. "That the primary supports to be provided to the neighbourhood associations would involve organizational development and financial sustainability, training and development, facility access, marketing and promotion and program demand and evaluation assessments undertaken within a collaborative model involving neighbourhood association leadership."

Culture Plan (2013)

Recommendation 3.1: "Develop a neighbourhood strategy that explores opportunities to create a distinct sense of identity and culture at a neighbourhood level."

The Plan identifies a need for the strategy to explore "a long-term plan for the neighbourhood matching fund, increased cultural place-making that includes neighbourhood heritage mapping and cultural engagement opportunities. Public art, formalized district naming and identity building, as well as increasing cultural and heritage engagement opportunities are tools to enhance safety, cultural vibrancy and sense of place in neighbourhoods that should be considered in development of a strategy."

Waterloo Strategic Plan 2015-2018

Strong Community, Objective: "Develop a neighbourhood strategy focused on harnessing social capital to increase neighbourhood vibrancy and resident leadership."

Business Plans 2016-2018

"Develop a neighbourhood strategy: a neighbourhood strategy will foster a level of inclusiveness and vibrancy that is built from the grass roots of the community and our neighbourhoods."

Success will be measured through the engagement of the public and a determination of inclusiveness and vibrancy in our neighbourhoods as well as the continued growth of neighbourhood associations.

The following plans and strategies have an indirect impact on neighbourhoods:

Action Sports Strategy (2013)

In identifying the opportunities and challenges for establishing and/or expanding action sport venues (skateboarding, BMX and mountain biking), key themes explored include Local Destination Facilities and Neighbourhood Amenities.

The recommended model consists of a two-tier action sport venue hierarchy:

1. City-wide hubs: the primary, largest scale venue(s)
2. Neighbourhood facilities and spots: smaller venues situated nearby residential areas with high concentrations of youth.

Age Friendly Report

1. Health and Community Support Services Action Item 1:

“Develop a “check in” for older adults.”

It was intended that neighbourhood associations could play a role in implementing this recommendation, and that this could be a consideration for the neighbourhood strategy.

2. Respect, Social Inclusion and Social Participation Recommendation 1:

“That the City of Waterloo continues to support neighbourhood associations, using Sunnydale as an example to establish additional community centres in similar circumstances.”

3. Respect, Social Inclusion and Social Participation Recommendation 4:

“That the City of Waterloo continues to expand its support of neighbourhood associations to encourage senior specific groups to meet and to foster social participation. The City of Waterloo needs to identify the various groups active in the area and develop communications links with them while recognizing their unique characteristics.”

Transportation Master Plan (2011)

Guiding principle for updating the cycling and trails network:

“Connected and comprehensive—within and between neighbourhoods; throughout all areas of the City; to adjacent municipalities and external destinations; within, to and around Uptown; and to transit in neighbourhoods.”

Northdale Land Use and Community Improvement Plan Study (2012)

This study “was initiated to develop a clear vision and plan for Northdale, and to address issues related to the evolving neighbourhood demographic and associated development pressures for student rental housing, the conversion of existing dwellings, and higher density housing forms, which has implications on the character and livability of the neighbourhood.”

Design and road reconstruction was considered outside the project scope, but the Northdale streetscape and design master plan has since been initiated to address this item.

Museum and Collections Strategy (2015)

Recommendation 15 mentions: “Consider integrating some new permanent displays in public spaces as a means of encouraging learning.”

This could involve exhibits hosted within neighbourhood spaces.

Older Adult Recreation Strategy (2015)

Recommendation 7: “Reduce program duplication within older adult facilities and promote programs of interest to older adults offered at other locations.”

(Could include older adult programming at the neighbourhood level)

Waterloo Built Heritage Strategy (2015)

Goal 2: “Identify properties of cultural heritage value or interest to the community.”
“Identifying concentrations or groupings or heritage resources, such as cultural heritage landscapes and heritage conservation districts, can help the City conserve cultural heritage resources, such as neighbourhoods, streetscapes, and landscapes that have collective value.”

Northdale streetscape and design master plan (current)

This plan includes developing “design concepts and strategies for the neighbourhood's public spaces and reconstruction of its city streets. The study direction is based on the city's vision for a vibrant neighbourhood with more attractive streets and public spaces.”

LRT Station Area Planning (current)

“Station Area Planning is the process of understanding the strengths, opportunities and aspirations for lands surrounding Station Areas in supporting and taking advantage of ION and managing potential changes resulting from development.” Five stations will impact Waterloo neighbourhoods.

Plans, strategies, and projects impacting neighbourhoods:

- Beaver Creek Meadows District Plan: provides direction regarding the design and development of the Beaver Creek Meadows area

- Cultural Heritage Landscape Project: this project will examine cultural and heritage features in Waterloo
- East Side library feasibility study: the study forms part of the larger East Side library project
- Parks Strategy: This project will be started in 2017 and will build off of and align with the neighbourhood strategy
- Recreation Facility Development study: the study forms part of the potential expansion of the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex
- Zoning by-law review: changes to the by-law could impact population density, parking, and other factors within the various zones in the city

Section C: Neighbourhood Associations and Groups

The City of Waterloo currently has 12 affiliated neighbourhood associations, 12 homes associations, and a few non-affiliated neighbourhood groups (**Error! Reference source not found.** is a map including many of the neighbourhood associations and homes associations). The non-affiliated groups tend to be more informal in nature. Each neighbourhood group runs events and programs that align with neighbourhood priorities. Many areas of the city do not have any neighbourhood associations, homes associations or non-affiliated neighbourhood groups.

Affiliated Neighbourhood Associations (some called Community Associations):

1. Clair Hills
2. Eastbridge on the Grand
3. Lakeshore North
4. Laurel Creek
5. Laurelwood
6. MacGregor Albert
7. Mary Allen
8. Sunnydale
9. University Downs
10. Uptown West
11. Vermont Park
12. Westvale

Homes Associations (some called Homeowners' Associations):

1. Beechwood II*
2. Beechwood/Bridlegate
3. Beechwood North

4. Beechwood Park
5. Beechwood South*
6. Beechwood West I
7. Beechwood West II
8. Craigeith
9. Glasgow Heights I
10. Glasgow Heights II
11. Upper Beechwood Phase I
12. Upper Beechwood Phase II

Note:*currently entered into Special Service Levy to provide financial support for shared amenities

Other neighbourhood groups:

- Conservation Meadows
- Lakeshore East
- Uptown North
- Vista Hills

There are also a few supporting organizations that are doing additional work in specific Waterloo neighbourhoods:

- Carizon provides a development worker for the Erb West neighbourhood
- House of Friendship provides a community resource coordinator for Sunnydale

Funding for these organizations comes from multiple sources, including the City of Waterloo and the Region of Waterloo.

City of Waterloo Neighbourhood Associations

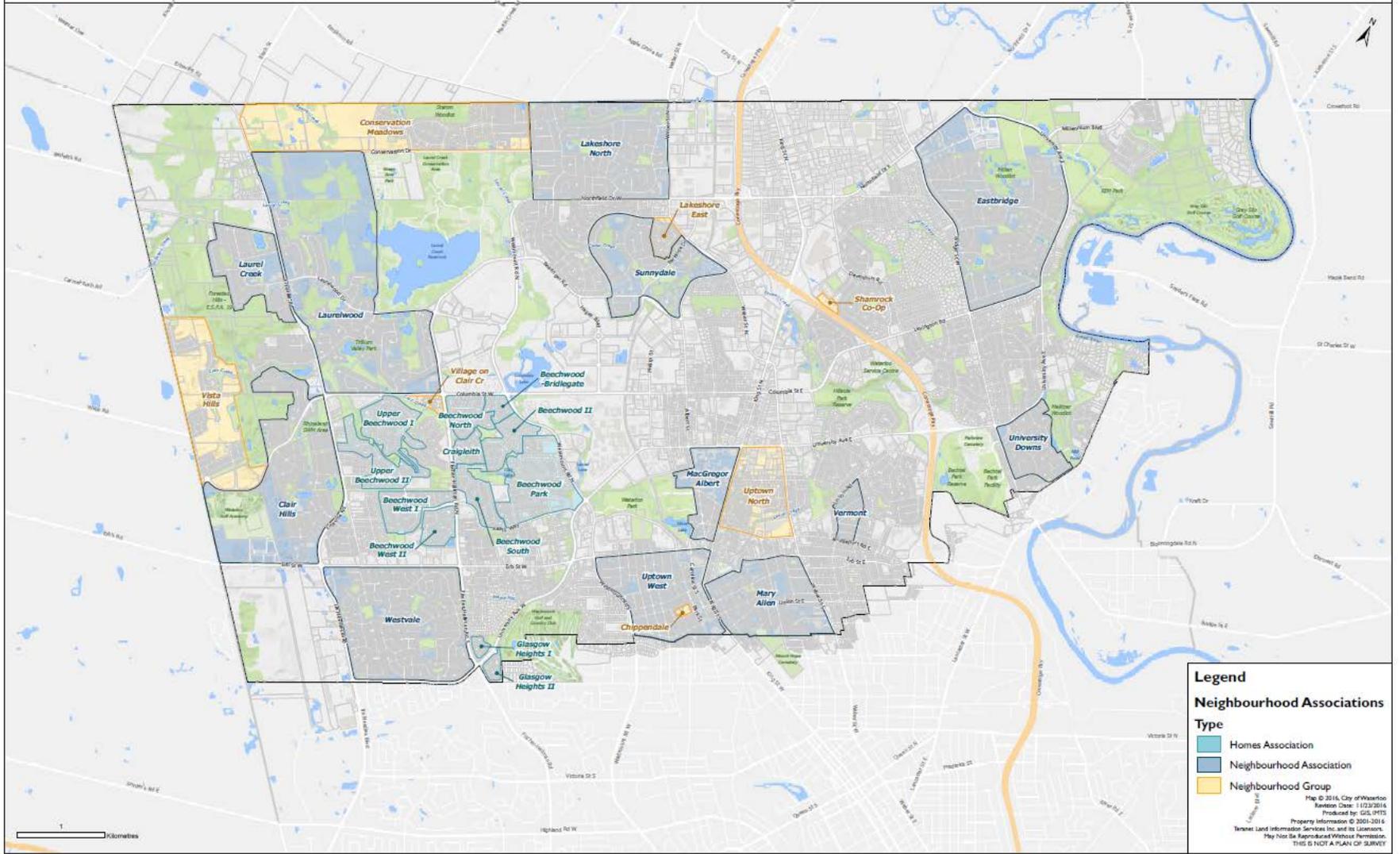


Figure 6: Map of Neighbourhood Associations and Homes Associations in Waterloo

Affiliated neighbourhood associations

Eligible neighbourhood associations may enter affiliation service agreements with the City. If the association chooses, the City and the association build a mutually-beneficial relationship, where the association works towards aligning its own goals with City goals and receives supports for their programs, activities, and events. These groups receive support from the City's Coordinator of Neighbourhoods Liaison. 12 neighbourhood associations receive support from the City through these agreements.

Affiliated neighbourhood associations work towards building a sense of belonging and community within Waterloo neighbourhoods. They can participate in community-building activities, or host events and activities that bring neighbours together. Examples include:

- An annual family fun fair, picnic, street party
- Community cleanup
- E-mail lists, Facebook groups, and websites to communicate with neighbourhood residents
- Family skate or swim
- Holiday or seasonal events or festivals
- Neighbourhood newsletters
- Movie night
- Neighbourhood garage sale
- Outdoor neighbourhood rink
- Weekly sports programs

It is important to note that neighbours do not need to form an affiliated association in order to host events, set up a neighbourhood ice rink, or organize community cleanups.

The City offers affiliated associations a variety of supports, including foundational operating grants and in-kind services. It should be noted that Carizon Family & Community Services and House of Friendship, although not neighbourhood associations, have also affiliated with the City through their work and support of the Erb West neighbourhood and Sunnyside neighbourhood, respectively.

Primary methods in which affiliated neighbourhood associations access funding:

1. Fundraising:
 - a. Sponsorship activities and soliciting donations
 - b. Participation fees
 - c. Selling advertising space
2. City supports:
 - a. Foundational operating grants
 - b. Project grants

- c. Neighbourhood Matching Fund (funded in conjunction with United Way KW & Area)
- d. In-kind services from the City or the community

Homes associations

Homes associations were originally established by the neighbourhood developer. They operate independently from the City and are bound by requirements within each association's legal covenant agreement, which are quite different from affiliation service agreements. These groups may access the City's Coordinator of Neighbourhoods Liaison as needed. Homes associations primarily manage the neighbourhood's shared amenities, such as tennis courts or pools. Some also provide events and programs to members and/or residents of the neighbourhood.

Homes associations generally receive funds through one of the following methods:

1. **Covenant Agreement:** As per the covenant agreement, set up when the neighbourhood was first built, all households within the area pay a membership into the homes association. The covenants are held by the associations themselves, and different neighbourhoods have different terms and different covenant fees.
2. **Special Service Levy:** Once the covenant agreement approaches expiration, the homes association can consider entering into a special service levy arrangement with the City of Waterloo. Following a prescribed process (managed by the City Clerks office and Finance), neighbours vote to ask Council to impose a special service levy tax. If the vote succeeds, Council can choose to approve the special service levy and the City enters into a lease and license agreement with the homes association to allow the City to collect an additional tax levy on each property. The City flows the funds back to the homes association in two installments less an administration fee.
3. **Voluntary Membership fees:** Another option post covenant agreement is charging a membership fee to households within the boundaries, and sometimes even allowing an associate membership to households outside of the boundaries. Households within the neighbourhood boundaries are strongly encouraged to continue with their membership fee, however can choose not to purchase a membership, and therefore would not have access to the amenities and programs.

Many of the covenant agreements are drawing close to their expiry date, and some homes associations have chosen to work with the City to determine the best options for continuing maintenance of the neighbourhood's amenities such as a special service levy.

Other neighbourhood groups

In areas of the city that do not have homes associations or affiliated neighbourhood associations, there are sometimes community members that will organize neighbourhood events or activities. These groups may not be “officially” recognized, but sometimes operate similar to an affiliated association. They will sometimes recuperate costs through a similar manner to the affiliated neighbourhood associations, except that they do not receive benefits through an affiliation service agreement, including the foundational operating grants.

Some unaffiliated neighbourhood groups request support from the City of Waterloo’s Coordinator of Neighbourhoods Liaison, while others prefer to operate more independent from the City.

Section D: City Department Structure and Staff Roles related to Neighbourhoods

All City of Waterloo departments have a role to play in supporting and building strong and connected neighbourhoods whether directly or indirectly (Figure 7 shows the organizational structure of the city at the level of departments and City divisions). This section gives an overview of the departmental and division mandates, staff positions, and programs offered by the city that are most directly connected to neighbourhoods and the goals of the neighbourhood strategy.

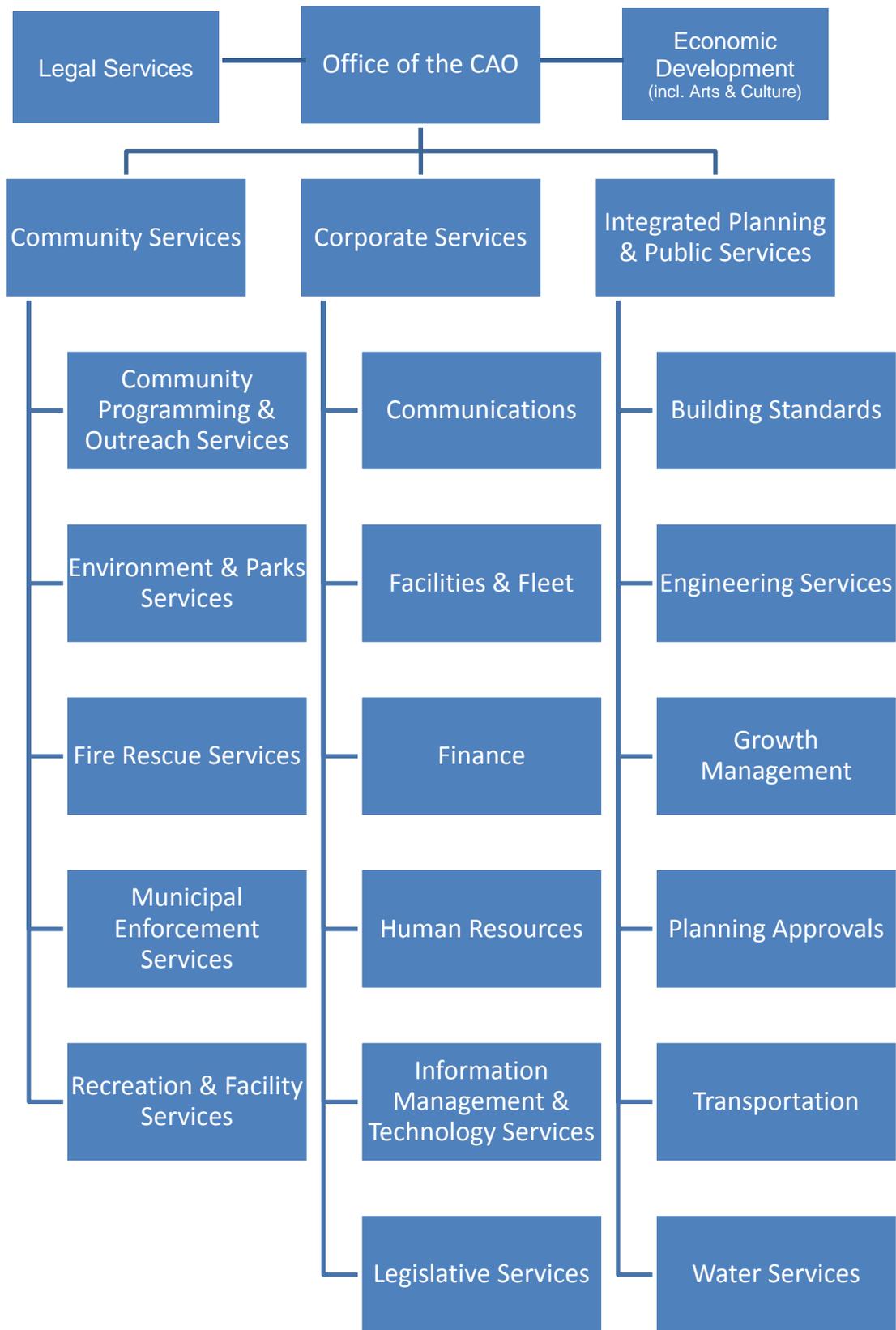


Figure 7: City of Waterloo departments and select divisions; the primary responsibility for neighbourhoods lies in Community Programming & Outreach Services

Community Programming & Outreach Services Division, Community Services

The Community Programming & Outreach Division supports the community at large which contributes to fostering a vibrant quality of life for all community members. This division includes three units: Seniors Services which provides recreation programming and support services for older adults at two city facilities, Museum Services which operates the City of Waterloo's Museum at Conestoga Mall, and the Community & Neighbourhood Services which provides neighbourhood-focused activities, services, and supports.

The Division is guided by the Service Delivery Policy. This policy identifies the City of Waterloo as being responsible for providing broad-based recreation and leisure service opportunities for community members. The policy outlines service criteria, prioritizing services that support corporate strategic initiatives, services that encourage broad-based participation, accessibility supports, among others. Services are delivered through three primary methods: firstly through facilitation (staff will work with community groups and individuals by providing information, facility access, and other supports; secondly through partnership (shared responsibility for recreation and leisure service delivery); and thirdly through direct delivery of services (where needed and when other service delivery options are not viable or available).

The Manager of Community & Neighbourhood Services ensures the efficient and effective delivery of programs and services as they relate to the interaction between the department and community/neighbourhood groups, individuals, and service providers for the City of Waterloo. The Manager is also responsible for the administration of grant and financial assistance programs including: neighbourhood matching fund, fee assistance, and community cash grants. The Manager provides oversight for the affiliation program.

There are four staff positions reporting to this manager:

- **Coordinator, Neighbourhoods** is the position most directly tied to neighbourhoods. This position was created in response to the Community, Culture and Recreation Services Master Plan (2008) to enable more staff energy to be invested in neighbourhoods. The Coordinator is responsible for working with affiliated neighbourhood associations to support them in the development and delivery of neighbourhood programs. This position operates under a community development service delivery model, in conjunction with the mandate of the department, and in keeping with the corporate values. The primary focus is on building capacity within neighbourhood groups to take on leadership roles, to identify neighbourhood goals, and support community members in achieving

those goals. Tasks include: attending association meetings; keeping up to date with association meeting agendas and minutes; responding to inquiries that are neighbourhood-focused; helping plan events and navigate municipal procedures to hosting events; overseeing that affiliation service agreement requirements are being met; supporting neighbourhood groups in forming associations and in affiliating. This position also facilitates the Neighbourhood Matching Fund program. The work of this position is diverse and flexible – the position responds to community interests and needs while ensuring compliance with city policy and operating within existing resource constraints. The Coordinator also provides some support to non-affiliated neighbourhood associations and homes association as requested. The outdoor community rink program is also within the scope or responsibility of this position. This involves coordinating with neighbourhood groups to create and maintain outdoor ice rinks in neighbourhoods. This position has also been supporting the work of the Town and Gown Committee and the post-secondary institutions in recent years to support increasing a sense of belonging among post-secondary students coming to Waterloo to study.

- **Coordinator, Sports and Recreation** works with 37 affiliated sport groups, such as Waterloo Minor Hockey and Waterloo Minor Soccer, and provides leadership and guidance in the support and development of sport and recreation organizations to ensure effective, efficient, sustainable and high quality programs for the broader community. While the focus is on supporting access to sport and recreation opportunities city-wide, many sport facilities, particularly outdoor facilities, used by these groups are located within neighbourhoods either in city parks or on school grounds.
- **Community Outreach Coordinator** is a newer part-time staff position, and liaises with a variety of community groups that represent cross-sectoral and diverse populations and assists them in the development of programs that support the future direction of those organizations. Examples of these groups include: Breaking the Silence Working Group, Immigration Partnership, Rainbow Community Council, and the Waterloo Aboriginal Education Centre. This staff position is loosely tied to neighbourhoods, as some organizations and community groups the Coordinator will be working with will be neighbourhood-based or doing work that impacts specific neighbourhoods.
- **Coordinator, Inclusion AODA** is a shared position with the City of Kitchener whose primary responsibility is supporting the ongoing implementation of the City's Corporate Accessibility Plan, working with the Grand River Accessibility

Advisory Committee, and working to ensure the City of Waterloo meets or exceeds the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities standards established by the Ontario government. This position is loosely tied to neighbourhoods through supporting community inclusion in city programs and services including training for affiliated neighbourhood associations,

Recreation & Facility Services Division

The Recreation & Facility Services division manages and maintains the City's four indoor recreation facilities aimed at residents of all ages (RIM Park, Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex, Moses Springer, and Albert McCormick Community Centre). These facilities include spaces such as ice rinks, field houses, gymnasiums, program and meeting room, as well as a walking track. This division also offers both indoor and outdoor recreational programs and activities. These facilities can be booked by any resident, but the main uses are for affiliated youth sports groups, adult sport groups, tournaments, special events, city leagues and programs, and meetings. A team of staff in this division are responsible for all bookings and allocation of both indoor and outdoor facilities.

Environment & Parks Services Division

In relation to neighbourhoods, the Environment & Parks division focuses on the management of municipal outdoor spaces, including parks of all sizes and sport fields and diamonds. This work includes long term planning, ongoing maintenance and capital improvements, sport field set up (lining, grooming, etc.), and support for special events within parks (setting up picnic tables, people fencing, etc.).

There are many parks and green spaces across the City of Waterloo. Some parks, such as Waterloo Park and Bechtel Park, have a wide variety of facilities and amenities that attract community members from all areas of the city. For example, there are multiple sports fields and diamonds, picnic areas, walking trails, and playgrounds. Bechtel Park also includes a leash free dog park.

Across the city, there are over 200 green space properties with a total area of approximately 700 hectares, including hydro corridors, environmental lands, and parks. Approximately 130 of these properties are identified as parkland, including undeveloped and passive spaces (green spaces with nothing more than paths and/or benches), playgrounds, sports, and multi-use properties.

Within neighbourhoods, residents often go to these parkland spaces to have a picnic, walk their dogs, or play sports. Many schools have sports fields and playgrounds that can be accessed as community spaces during after-school hours. In total, there are approximately 40 sports fields and nearly 40 ball diamonds in the city.

Smaller parks tend to be considered “passive use” meaning that they are available for informal community use, rather than bookable for events or formal recreation activities or programs. However, there are 9 of these passive use parks that can be booked through the City for more formal, organized recreation uses such as yoga classes or fitness boot camps.

During the winter season, parks staff takes responsibility for snow removal activities across the city and the set-up of outdoor rinks.

Municipal Enforcement Division

The City of Waterloo's enforcement team is committed to serving, protecting and providing a desired quality of life for residents and visitors to the city. They take a role in enforcing property standards such as [building maintenance](#), [exterior yards](#) and sidewalk shovelling. The Municipal Enforcement division also has a role to play in many neighbourhood events, especially for areas such as noise exemptions and vendor permits. There are many City bylaws that provide direction on what [is permitted and regulated in](#) neighbourhoods, with the goal of promoting harmony among residents and supporting community safety.

Some of the bylaws include:

- Regulation for Municipal Parks and Process for Authorizing Particular Uses within Parks
- Sign By-law
- Fence By-law
- Property Standards By-law
- Graffiti By-law
- Fireworks By-law

To improve neighbour relations, Municipal Enforcement offers tips, tools, and support to help neighbours resolve issues in a non-confrontational manner. Free professional mediation is also available to assist in resolving concerns that are not covered by a law or by-law.

Arts and Culture Unit in the Economic Development Division, Office of the CAO

Staff in the Arts and Culture unit is responsible for public art, festivals and events including programming of the public square, and fostering appreciation and engagement in arts and culture in the community. This work is guided by the Culture Plan approved by City council in 2013. Staff plans and implements direct programs, but also works with arts and community groups to support them in the development and implementation of

programs. While festivals and events supported by the team have tended to be centralized in the core of the city and intended to attract the community as a whole as well as visitors, there is a keen interest in bringing more arts and culture opportunities into neighbourhoods, and to help foster a sense of identity at the neighbourhood level through arts and culture engagement.

Each year, a number of different events are held within the City of Waterloo for community members to enjoy. Some of these events are hosted by the City, some by other organizations, and some in partnership between the City and other organizations.

These events are often focused on family and/or adult activities and are generally held in the Uptown area. Examples of Uptown events include: Solstice Sampling, Winterloo, National Aboriginal Day celebrations, the monthly Final Fridays program, Music & Movies in the Park, the Royal Medieval Faire, the Wonders of Winter festival of lights, and Waterloo Open Streets, as well as the Jazz Festival and Buskers Carnival (which are both sponsored by Sun Life Financial and held in the Uptown area). The City also provides financial support to the Canada Day event in the north of Waterloo, hosted by the University of Waterloo.

Integrated Planning & Public Services Department

The Integrated Planning & Public Services Department has an impact on the built form of the whole city, through policy such as the Official Plan and zoning bylaw, and responds to many neighbourhood-specific concerns. Traffic calming, roads, water systems, street lighting, heritage conservation and active transportation networks including on road bike paths, and off road trails, play an important role in shaping neighbourhoods, making the streets safer, and improving mobility through the neighbourhood.

For events requiring a road closure, there is a special event package that is completed and processed by the Transportation Services Unit. The Traffic Corridor Control Technician coordinates with City and Regional Services prior to road closure approval.

Section E: City of Waterloo Programs that Support Neighbourhoods

In addition to staff support and divisional responsibilities impacting neighbourhoods, the City of Waterloo offers residents and neighbourhood groups a number of programs intended to support neighbourhoods. These include:

Affiliation Program

In 2010, the City of Waterloo council approved the revised affiliation policy, to help build capacity for affiliated organizations to deliver high quality, inclusive, and sustainable programs. There are currently more than 100 affiliated organizations including sports groups, culture groups, seniors groups and neighbourhood associations. The City and the affiliated organization enter into affiliation service agreements which outline the benefits, roles and responsibilities of both the City and the organization. Affiliated groups can often access foundational funding, staff support and other in-kind resources, as per the affiliation service agreements.

Each neighbourhood affiliation service agreement reflects the financial and in kind supports unique to the needs and assets of the neighbourhood. In 2016, through the Affiliation Service Agreements, a total of \$52,750 was allocated to:

- Foundational funding (annual operating funding) for affiliated neighbourhood associations (funding amounts vary across the groups but tend to be in the range of \$1,000 - \$2,000 per association)
- Foundational funding for House of Friendship and Carizon Family and Community Services affiliation service agreements (reflects staffing support in Sunnydale and Erb West neighbourhoods)

Affiliation service agreements also detail the other supports and services available; although each agreement is different, most include:

- Staff liaison support and information sessions
- Liability Insurance coverage
- Volunteer recognition
- Facility rental credit
- Facility rental discount (50% of standard rental rates)
- Photocopying/advertising credit
- Volunteer Action Centre membership benefits

Neighbourhood Matching Fund

The Neighbourhood Matching Fund (NMF) is an initiative that was spearheaded by the City of Waterloo's former Safe and Healthy Community Advisory Committee. The NMF supports place based, grassroots projects that address a community need and also build an inclusive community. The grant request must be matched by the applicant either in funding, donated materials, or volunteer equity.

The NMF began as a pilot project in 2012, with the City of Waterloo's council investing \$10,000 in the program. This amount increased to \$20,000 in 2014. United Way Kitchener Waterloo & Area has also committed to supporting the program, contributing an additional \$10,000 per year, from 2015 to 2017.

According to NMF guidelines, projects may focus on arts, education, environment, history, public safety, placemaking, community building, celebrations of community, recreation, increasing social connections among neighbours and neighbourhood groups, and programs that build community leadership skills.

Examples of projects include:

- Fun run for neighbourhood community members
- Creation of welcome kits to welcome new neighbours
- Community garden enhancements
- Playground equipment or park amenities
- Music festival

Community Cash Grants

The City of Waterloo's cash grants program is available to volunteer/not-for-profit community organizations that provide programs aimed at improving quality of life in our community. There are both operating and project grants available.

The funding categories are:

- Arts & Culture
- Festivals
- Sports
- Neighbourhoods
- Recreation

In 2016, \$73,354 was allocated to community groups through the Cash Grants program.

Partners in Parks and other environmental programs

Partners in Parks is a City of Waterloo program that offers support and resources to residents committed to caring for local parks and public spaces. Short-term stewardship activities include a one-time 2 to 3 hour event in a neighbourhood park.

Examples include

- Birdhouse maintenance and monitoring
- Community planting
- Litter cleanup
- Plant salvaging
- Stream enhancement
- Woodland trail mulching

Long-term stewardship projects generally involve ongoing park maintenance throughout the spring to fall for up to five years. Examples of long-term projects within a public park in Waterloo include:

- Planting and maintaining community vegetable gardens
- Planting and maintaining garden beds or vegetated buffer
- Mowing grass on public green spaces regularly
- Managing an invasive plant species known as garlic mustard
- Installing a little library or message board

In 2016, there were 42 short term projects and 39 long term projects, engaging community members in improving shared green spaces across the city. The most common were short term litter cleanup projects, with planting and maintenance as the most common long term project.

A Parks Watch program is being implemented in the Eastbridge neighbourhood, to keep parks and green spaces safe. This program encourages residents to contact the police if they see or hear anything suspicious.

Section F: Other Community Organizations Strengthening Neighbourhoods

There are many organizations having a positive impact on neighbourhoods across the city. They offer programs, education and/or supports for children and families, and some operate from fixed centres within the city.

Organizations include:

- Better Beginnings – Waterloo
- Carizon Family and Community Services
- Early Years Waterloo Region
- House of Friendship (Kitchener/Waterloo)
- Focus for Ethnic Women
- Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation
- Immigration Partnership of Kitchener-Waterloo
- Region of Waterloo
- United Way Kitchener Waterloo & Area
- Volunteer Action Centre
- Waterloo Public Library
- YMCA

- YWCA

There are other types of groups and organizations supporting Waterloo neighbourhoods, a few being:

- Charities and not-for-profits
- Cultural groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Private businesses
- Retirement homes
- School Boards and schools

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Definitions

Asset based community development: community development that occurs by “building on the resources that are found in every community” (Diers, 2004, p. 14).

City: The Corporation of the City of Waterloo refers to the governing body and is abbreviated to the City. When the geographical area is being referred to, city will appear with a lower-case “c.”

Foundational operating funding: Funding pre-determined through affiliation service agreements, to contribute towards operating expenses. Non-affiliated groups may also apply for operating funding through the cash grants program.

Homes association: neighbourhood group established by the land developer to maintain shared assets in the neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood: “A district where people live” (Collins English Dictionary). Please note: this document will not focus on defining physical boundaries, but instead acknowledges that neighbourhood boundaries can be flexible and can be defined differently depending on each individual.

Neighbourhood association: A neighbourhood group that is either affiliated by the City or non-affiliated; sometimes also termed “community association.”

Social capital: “the features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putman, 2000, as quoted by Meager, 2008, p. 19).