

FINAL



Township of Hamilton

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

July 2022



Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Prepared by thinc design in association with Mehak, Kelly & Associates and Oraclepoll Research Ltd. for the Township of Hamilton.

July 2022

Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of truth and reconciliation and as an opening statement to this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, we recognize that the Township of Hamilton is located on the Williams Treaty (1923) and Gunshot Treaty (1788) lands and traditional territory of many nations including the Mississauga Anishinaabek, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee.

As settlers, we recognize the long history of this traditional territory and that recreation activities have been occurring on these lands and waters by Indigenous Peoples long before the establishment of European settlements. We acknowledge our shared responsibility to care for the land peacefully and respectfully as stewards of its past, present and future.

Acknowledgements

We thank all community members who shared their ideas, aspirations and insights through public and stakeholder consultation.

In particular, we are appreciative of the following individuals who contributed their time, knowledge and expertise to the development of the Township of Hamilton Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

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Executive Summary

The Township of Hamilton's Strategic Plan sets the overarching framework for service planning in all areas of municipal responsibility. Although it can be said that every statement in the Strategic Plan is at least indirectly related to parks and recreation services, many of the priorities are very closely tied to the objectives of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Thus, this Plan is a key tool for achieving the Township's strategic goals.

This Plan analyzes the current and future recreation needs of those who live, work and play in the Township and considers recent changes to demographics, incomes, volunteering, operations and repair costs, emerging trends in recreation, etc.

The Township's role as an indirect provider of recreation services is supporting the provision of high quality parks and facilities delivered by other program providers and used for general community activity and enjoyment. The current supply of recreation facilities is both diverse and well maintained, with considerable potential to accommodate additional use. A key objective of the Master Plan is to increase recreation programming, activity and events using existing municipal assets.

Proactively facilitating programming, partnerships and promotion through a dedicated Recreation Program/Event Developer new staff position is a prerequisite to optimizing the use of recreation facilities and parks. The cost to the Township for this position can be viewed as a return on investment. Growth in programming and facility use will generate revenues that would otherwise not materialize.

This Master Plan provides 129 recommendations for managing and developing parks and recreation facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources and investment through to 2031. The suggested timing and cost estimates of these recommendations are detailed in an implementation strategy found in section 7.0 of this Plan. The graphic on page xi summarizes the Master Plan's objectives and implementation.

The following recommendations are recommended for roll-out in the first year of this Plan's implementation through costs absorbed within the Township's operating budget, the roles and responsibilities of a new staff position and dedicated capital costs:

- Continue offering Township-led public skate times for all ages.
- Continue to support community groups that provide recreation programming in the Township for diverse age groups and ability levels.
- Continue to provide Township-led all-ages events, and support community groups that organize events.
- Support efforts to establish a community-led pickleball league in the Township.
- Work with public providers like EarlyON and the library to better promote/deliver programs for preschoolers and young children.
- Partner with tourism initiatives in Northumberland County to promote/deliver programming and events unique to Hamilton.
- Continue work to further AODA improvements and monitor general facility conditions as need and opportunity arises.

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- Retain both indoor ice pads.
- Continue to seek opportunities to accommodate the needs of ice users in the market and beyond, and to develop ice-based events.
- Continue to promote and develop use of the arena floor, including new uses such as pickleball.
- Consult with Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit to investigate the potential to use community centre kitchens for programming.
- Ideally, retain Plainville courts as dedicated tennis-only facilities.
- Conduct regular AODA assessments for accessible and safe paths, connections, entrance sand other amenities.
- Develop a Township-branded signage and wayfinding strategy to be implemented at Township parks, trails, boat launches, facilities, heritage sites and main arterials.
- Develop an “environment first” policy, focusing on the support of the local ecology and waterfront development and management.
- Develop an “Active Hamilton” policy, focusing on the support and improvement of outdoor sporting activities and facilities.
- Consider building partnerships with local school boards for community use of sporting facilities, or joint development if providing a new facility.
- Develop a trail strategy to further develop a trail network over the long term that will serve residents and support tourism.
- At Baltimore Recreation Centre, revise path layout; improve quality of existing volleyball courts; install pedestrian lighting at the various paths; install additional seating through the park.
- At Bewdley Community Centre, upgrade sport court into basketball courts; upgrade bleachers; install new playground.
- At Bewdley Optimist Park, install natural barriers.
- At Cold Springs Memorial Park, install new playground; install new shade structure; install new seating, garbage receptacles and park signage.
- At Harwood Waterfront Park: install pedestrian lighting and enhance water quality with naturalized planting along shoreline.
- At Gores Landing Wharf, expand boat launch with seasonal dock and clean up planting.
- At Plainville Tennis Courts, conduct a yearly review on the court surfacing; install sport lighting; install new seating.
- At Scriven Parkette, move location of monument; install walking path; add new seating; install Township branded signage.
- Hire a Recreation Program/Event Developer immediately to begin developing programs/activities at all Township facilities and parks, and to facilitate programming at other community spaces that are public serving.
- Use Master Plan survey results to follow up on expressed interest and encourage people to register for specific volunteer positions or for possible future engagement as need/opportunity arises.
- Engage the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to research and identify the required on and off-line, in-person and remote, components of a comprehensive volunteer recruitment strategy.
- Further develop existing relationships with agencies such as the Cobourg Library and EarlyON to expand services.

Achieving Your Recommendations

TIMELINE



When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece.
John Ruskin



Recreation Program/ Event Developer



- Program development
- Policy development
- Signage & wayfinding strategy
- Trail strategy
- Build/expand partnerships



- Expanded program delivery
- Policy development
- Community-wide coordination/joint planning
- Volunteer recruitment & management
- Additional revenue generation mechanisms



- Expanded collaboration
- Service monitoring & evaluation
- Communications & promotion
- Review & update of Master Plan

Specific Park/ Facility Improvements & AODA Assessments







Figure 1-1: Harwood Dock

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2013, the Township of Hamilton completed a Parks and Recreation Facilities Review. Since then, recommendations have gradually been completed with some left outstanding.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed as a forward-thinking strategy to provide long-term direction to Township staff and Council for future development, redevelopment and enhancement of the Township's parks system, open spaces, recreation facilities, recreation programs and cultural programs through to 2031. The Plan is intended to reflect the current and forecasted recreation needs of the community including recent changes to demographics, incomes, volunteering, operations and repair costs, willingness to travel to sports and leisure activities, etc.

It should also be noted that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has amplified the value and importance of public spaces and recreation in supporting healthy, thriving communities. In developing and implementing this Master Plan, the Township reaffirms its commitment to residents' health and wellbeing.

1.2 Link to the 2023 Strategic Plan

The Township's Strategic Plan sets the overarching framework for service planning in all areas of municipal responsibility. Although it can be said that every statement in the Strategic Plan is at least indirectly related to parks and recreation services, those that are most closely tied to the objectives of the Master Plan are noted in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Priority Activities of the Township of Hamilton's Strategic Plan (2019) Most Related to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Strategic Pillar	Goal(s)	Priority Activities
1. Effective Governance	1.3 Improve Communication with the Public and Increase Public Awareness of Municipal Activities	a) Communicate with residents about local programs and related service delivery expectations.
2. Environment	2.3 Promote Unique Tourism Opportunities	b) Work with the County to explore opportunities to bring the tourism sector together and develop municipality-wide tourism experiences and packages and approaches.

Table 1-1: Priority Activities of the Township of Hamilton's Strategic Plan (2019) Most Related to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (Continued)

Strategic Pillar	Goal(s)	Priority Activities
3. Physical Assets	3.2 Optimize the Use of Municipal Infrastructure	a) Manage and maintain all municipal infrastructure with an emphasis on continuous improvement and greater efficiencies.
4. Recreation, Culture and Social Well-being	4.1 Civic Engagement	a) Continue to support and promote volunteerism, and community spirit.
		b) Maintain and enhance the volunteer system of service delivery, where efficient and effective to do so.
	4.2 Promote Healthy Living & Active Lifestyles	a) Transition from recreational capital facilities development to Township-wide community program development increasing investment in active programming in the interest of promoting healthy living and active lifestyles.
		b) Utilize the Parks Master Plan by developing an implementation strategy to complete long-term plans for recreation and parkland development.
		c) Explore opportunities to promote and market the Township's facilities, extensive trails network, historic features, unique communities and local arts, culture and heritage.
	4.3 Provide for Inclusive and Accessible Communities	a) Consider municipal policies, services and programs that take into account the impact of an aging population.

1.3 Process

The process of developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan has spanned from May 2021 to July 2022 across the following four phases:

Phase 1: Background Research and Community Context

The first phase involved reviewing background documents, collecting data, interviewing Township Council and staff and establishing the current context for recreation in Hamilton, including inventories of facilities, parks and trails, service delivery and parks conditions assessments. A Background Report detailed the findings of Phase 1.

Phase 2: Stakeholder Consultation

Next, a suite of engagement activities were delivered to discuss with community members the current and future state of parks, trails and facilities in the Township. Consultation included stakeholder interviews, focus groups, a user group survey, two resident surveys (telephone and online) and a dedicated project page on the Connect Hamilton Township website. A Consultation Report detailed the findings of Phase 2.

Phase 3: Needs Assessment and Draft Master Plan

Phase 3 focused on conducting needs assessments for programming and events, recreation facilities, parks and trails through analysis of the background research, consultation findings and emerging trends. An initial set of recommendations for the Township were proposed, resulting in a draft Master Plan and implementation strategy for community comment.

Phase 4: Final Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The final phase involved revising the draft Master Plan and presenting to the community, stakeholders and Township staff and Council before preparing the final Master Plan.

1.4 Consultation

To leverage the community's knowledge, ideas and expertise on current and future delivery of the Township's parks, recreation and facility services, a multi-faceted engagement strategy was conducted during the summer and fall of 2021. In keeping with Public Health's recommendation of physical distancing and limited gatherings to prevent the spread of COVID-19, all meetings, interviews and discussions were held virtually using Zoom.

Consultation activities included:

- a survey of Township residents, administered through two formats:
 - a self-selected online survey promoted on the Township's website, Connect Hamilton Township engagement webpage and social media channels, accessed by 212 respondents¹;
 - a random telephone survey of 400 resident households²;
- an invitational online survey of 42 user groups that facilitate programming and/or use Township facilities or parks to provide their programs and activities, to which 14 representatives responded³;

- four focus groups on special interest topics (Arts, Culture & Heritage; Passive Parks; Older Adults; Households with Young Children) that ranged from 4-10 participants; and
- individual interviews with 15 municipal representatives including the Mayor, Council members and senior Township staff.

Township staff also provided written feedback on the status of recommendations resulting from the Parks and Recreation Facilities Review in 2013. Additionally, regular meetings were held with the Township's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee consisting of Councillors, staff and residents. The Committee's 11 members provided feedback on drafts of deliverables throughout the duration of the project.

-
- 1 The survey did not require every question to be answered. Thus, although there were 212 participants in the online survey, not all chose to answer all of the questions. As a result, the total number of respondents per question varied from 22 to 212 respondents.
 - 2 Results from the telephone survey are considered more representative than results from the online survey, because telephone survey respondents were screened to ensure they were residents of Hamilton Township; in contrast, 21.6% of online survey respondents indicated they do not live in the Township. It should also be noted that online survey respondents self-selected to participate, so they may have prior or above-average interest or involvement in parks and recreation.
 - 3 The organizations that participated in the user group survey included sports leagues (lacrosse, ice skating, hockey, ball, slow pitch), yoga, homeschoolers and a secondary school. The majority (78.6%, or 11 organizations) indicated they are based in Hamilton Township.





Figure 2-1: Gores Landing Waterfront

2.0 Context

2.1 Geographic Context

The Township of Hamilton is a rural community located in western Northumberland County. Northumberland County is on the 401 corridor, east of Toronto, and spans 1,905 km². The County includes seven municipalities (the Township of Alnwick/Haldimand, Municipality of Brighton, Town of Cobourg, Township of Cramahe, Township of Hamilton, Municipality of Port Hope, Municipality of Trent Hills) and Alderville First Nation. Of the municipalities, Port Hope and Cobourg are centres with the largest populations and provision of parks and recreation facilities and programming. Figure 2-2 shows the Township of Hamilton in the context of Northumberland County.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

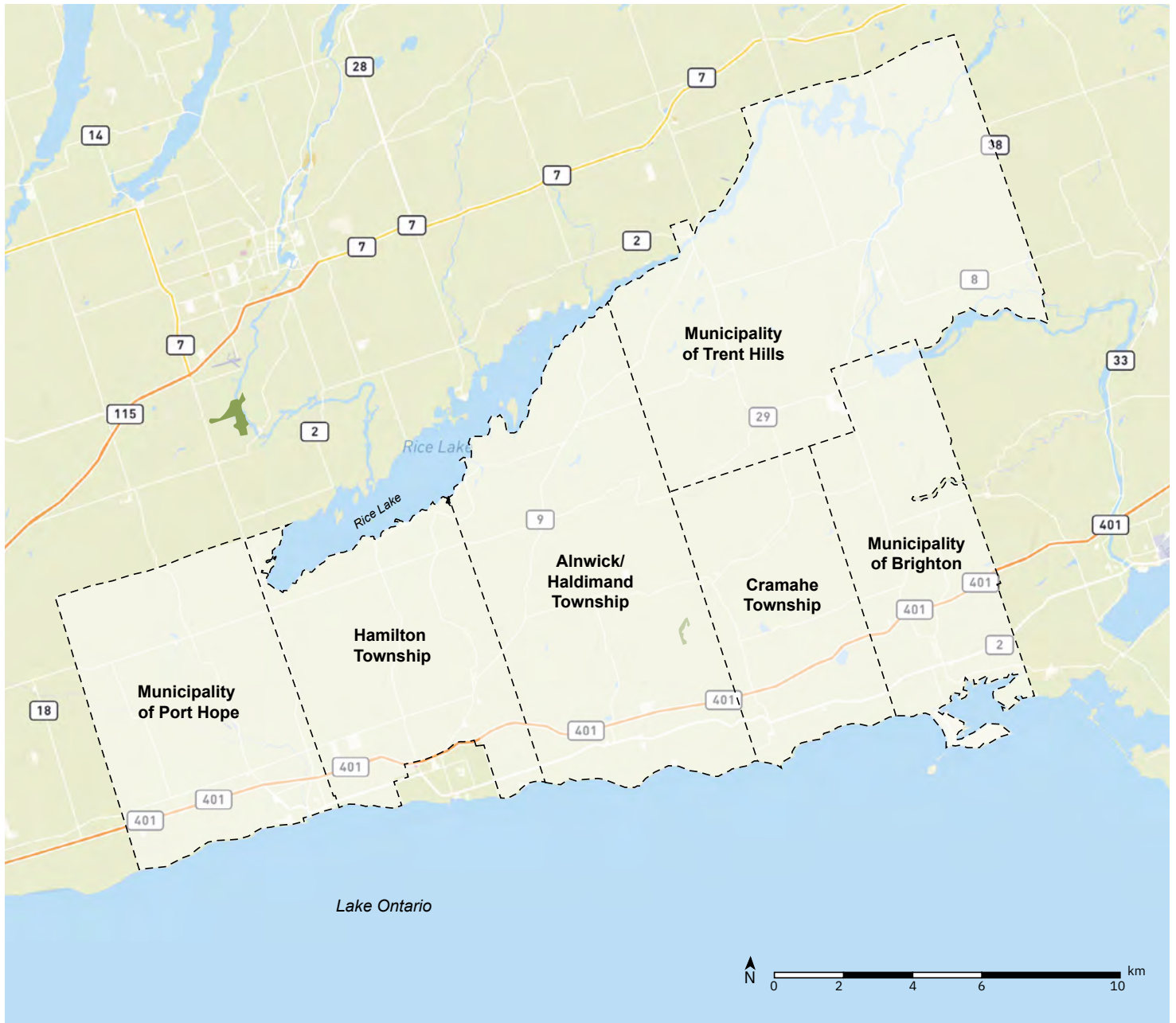


Figure 2-2: Township of Hamilton in the context of Northumberland County

Established in 1850, the Township of Hamilton is bounded by Lake Ontario and the Town of Cobourg to the south and Rice Lake to the north. It comprises six hamlets: Baltimore, Bewdley, Camborne, Cold Springs, Gore's Landing and Harwood (Figure 2-3). These communities are between 10-30 minutes' drive from the larger municipalities of Cobourg and Port Hope in Northumberland County.

With a land area of approximately 256 km², the Township comprises a mix of land uses including settlement areas, employment areas and agriculture as well as natural heritage areas floodplains, significant wetlands and the Oak Ridges Moraine.



Figure 2-3: Township of Hamilton's Boundaries and Settlement Areas

2.2 Socio-demographic Profile

Current Population

Recent data from the 2021 census¹ indicates the Township of Hamilton has a population of 11,059 (a 1.1% increase from 2016). Northumberland County has an overall population of 89,365 (a 4.4% increase from 2016). The median age in Hamilton is 49.6 years, younger than the median age in Northumberland County (52.4 years) but older than the median age in Ontario (41.6 years). Table 2-1 shows the age distribution of the Township's population relative to Ontario's population. In comparison to the province as a whole, the Township has a smaller proportion of residents under the age of 44 and a greater proportion of population between the ages of 45 and 74.

Table 2-1: Age Distribution for the Population of the Township of Hamilton and the Province of Ontario*

Age Group	Township of Hamilton Population	Proportion of Township Total Population	Proportion of Total Ontario Population
0-4 years	440	4.0%	4.8%
5-14 years	1,095	9.9%	11%
15-29 years	1,645	14.9%	18.8%
30-44 years	1,730	15.6%	19.8%
45-54 years	1,475	13.3%	12.9%
55-74 years	3,800	34.3%	24.7%
75+ years	870	7.9%	8%

*(Source: 2021 Census)

Note: 2021 Census by age category does not add up to the reported total population of 11,059.

1 Statistics Canada. 2022. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released April 27, 2022. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed May 2, 2022).

In 2015, the Township's median after-tax household income was \$76,032, larger than that of Northumberland County as a whole (\$62,187). Considering groups that may face barriers to equity and inclusion, the Township had smaller proportions of low-income households, immigrants and Indigenous people compared to Northumberland County and the Province of Ontario (Table 2-2).²

Table 2-2: Proportion of Low-income Households, Immigrants and Indigenous People in the Township of Hamilton, County of Northumberland and Province of Ontario

Demographic	Proportion of Township Population	Proportion of County Population	Proportion of Ontario Population
Low-income households	6.4%	11.6%	14.4%
Immigrants	9.3%	10.7%	28.6%
Indigenous	2.1%	2.7%	2.8%

Future Growth

Northumberland County is currently undertaking an [Official Plan Review/Municipal Comprehensive Review](#) and updating long-term growth projections. The County is forecast to experience significant outward growth pressure from upper-tier municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA); its total population base is forecast to increase by 34,400 people to a total of approximately 122,000 people by 2051. Although all of the County's municipalities are expected to experience growth over the long term, more than half of this population growth is expected to be concentrated in Cobourg and Port Hope.

Growth in Hamilton Township is expected to be slow. From 2016 to 2051, the Township is forecast to accommodate 6% of the share of Northumberland's population growth (2,000 people), growing by approximately 60 people per year and resulting in a projected population of 12,900 people in the Township of Hamilton by 2051.³ It is anticipated that the population growth of different age categories will mirror the trend in the County, which is that of an aging population, and with the greatest growth of all population age groups seen in the 75+ age group.

2 Statistics Canada. 2017. Hamilton, TP [Census subdivision], Ontario and Northumberland, CTY [Census division], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed May 5, 2022).

3 Watson & Associates. 2021, Nov. 24. Official Plan Review - Northumberland County: Municipal Comprehensive Review - Long-Term Growth Forecast and Urban Land Needs Analysis.

2.3 Relevant Plans and Studies

A number of relevant plans, studies and reports from the Township of Hamilton and Northumberland County were considered in developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Township of Hamilton

Official Plan (2010)

The Township of Hamilton Official Plan was established in 2010 and acts as a policy guide for the development of land in the Township. The Official Plan is in accordance with the policies outlined in the provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006). Its vision is for the Township to be a “self-reliant, fiscally sound municipality striving for positive growth, a sustainable infrastructure with socially responsible and accessible services that promotes a safe, healthy and family friendly lifestyle” (p. 18). The Township aims to implement policies that will help build a more vibrant and exciting community that exhibits an appreciation for well-built social and cultural values (e.g., diverse recreation, social and cultural opportunities). Key points include the following:

- Recreation uses are permitted on lands designated for other land uses (e.g., rural, agricultural, natural heritage, commercial and industrial lands).
- Recreational uses are classified into two types: Resort Recreational (e.g., tourist trailer parks, tourist cabin establishment campgrounds, etc.) and Outdoor Recreation (e.g., golf courses, public land, public or private trails, etc.).
- Recreational activity or development is permitted by the Township and other regulatory bodies (e.g., Conservation Authority) on special land designations, including natural heritage lands (e.g.,



Figure 2-4: Township of Hamilton Official Plan (2010)

conservation areas) and natural hazard lands (e.g., floodplains).

- Recreation uses must not be harmful or negatively impact the lands where their permitted uses were requested.
- The management and preservation of the Township’s natural resources is crucial to upholding sufficient economic growth and environmental sustainability.
- There are future potential opportunities for economic growth in Hamilton Township in the agriculture, tourism, service and light industries. The Township seeks to create a stronger and innovative economic climate.
- An increase in tourism is expected. Natural, historical, and cultural attractions will be the primary focus of the Township’s tourism strategy, (e.g., Rice Lake and Lake Ontario shorelines and the Oak Ridges Moraine)
- The Township aims to expand and diversify the commercial service sector, including community, business, and personal services.

- The Township should build an integrated network for transportation, open space, natural areas, servicing and communication to create connections that minimizes travel, time, distance, monetary and energy costs.
- The Township should build active communities by improving opportunities for people to walk, bike and be more active.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Review (2013)

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Review provided an analysis of parks and other public open spaces as well as indoor and outdoor culture and recreation facilities. Its key findings were:

- The community's preferred leisure activities at the time included walking/hiking, ice hockey, community events/themed meals/dances, swimming, gardening, ball, music concerts, fishing, golf, skiing, soccer and cycling.
- The most popular parks and facilities were community halls, Baltimore Recreation Centre and Park, walking paths and trails.
- The top leisure activities of interest were soccer, walking and hiking, swimming in pools, curling, youth ball, art classes, fitness classes, and dances and concerts in parks.
- Needed improvements were identified for parks and facilities, trails, playground equipment and Harwood docks, as well as lights at all ball diamonds and more access to lakes.
- It was recommended the Township invest in promotion of parks and recreation programs and facilities.
- Volunteer groups are the primary providers of recreation programming and require the support of the Township to continue to meet community demand for recreation services.

The Township provided an update to the Parks and Recreation Facilities Review in May 2019.

Asset Management Plan (2016)

The Asset Management Plan analyzed the Township's infrastructure and services to calculate the anticipated costs for maintenance. The Plan also discussed financial planning for infrastructure and service investments. Its key points are as follows:

- A Key Performance Indicator of "Demographic Changes" was highlighted for its influence on parks and recreation services as a demand driver. For example, an aging population may result in some resources for parks and sports facilities being re-diverted into funding additional wellbeing centres.
- Demographic changes can also result in changes to the Township's level of service for existing assets, so more investment in infrastructure and services may be required to meet community expectations.
- The estimated replacement cost of the Township's Recreation Equipment with a useful life expectancy of five to ten years was estimated to be \$24,289 in 2016.
- The Township's current funding position in 2016 for land improvements was zero, despite a required annual investment of \$100,000. The current funding position in 2016 for buildings was also zero, despite a required annual investment of \$917,000.
- Tax changes of 0.4% for land improvements and 12.4% for buildings were recommended to reach full funding capacity.
- In 2015, the balance of the reserves available for land improvements was \$291,000 and \$168,000 for facilities.
- A "C" (fair) asset health grade was assigned to land improvements and buildings and facilities at a funding percentage of 0%. Both the financial capacity grade and average asset class grade were "F" (very poor) for land improvements and buildings and facilities.

Development Charges Background Study (2019)

This Study was completed to establish the Township of Hamilton's development charges and identify the amount, type and location of growth, servicing needs to accommodate growth, capital costs to provide services to meet needs and deductions of various grants, services, development, etc. There are two categories of development charges that can be implemented based upon either a specific area or service:

Outdoor Recreation Services:

- In 2019, Hamilton Township had 33 acres of parkland within its jurisdiction (parkettes, parks, and open space areas).
- There was an average of 3.0 acres of parkland, 414.4 metres of trails, and 2.6 parkland amenities per 1000 people (of the population). The level of service was approximately \$467 per capita (eligible development charges of \$194,822).
- The Township operated and maintained a total of 10 parks-related vehicles and equipment. The average level of service is \$32 per capita and provides an eligible amount of \$13,548 over a 10- year period.
- The total eligible development charges for outdoor recreation was \$208,371.
- The Township identified \$225,000 in future growth capital costs for parkland development (e.g., additional parks, playgrounds, outdoor equipment) to a net amount of \$85,141 in developments from the reserve fund balance of \$117,359 (after mandatory 10% deduction).
- The forecast growth-related costs allocated 95% to residential users and 5% to non-residential users.

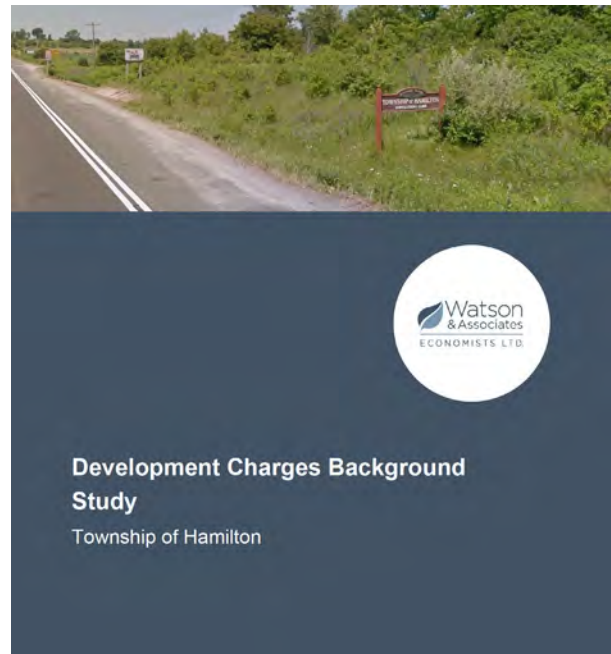


Figure 2-5: Township of Hamilton Development Charges Background Study (2019)

Indoor Recreation Facilities:

- In 2019, the Township had a total of 87,808 sq. ft. of space for facilities (approximate average 8.1 sq. ft. of space per capita) over a previous ten-year period (investment of \$2,275 per capita), resulting in \$948,754 of development charges eligible for collection by the Township for facility space.
- The Township operated three ice resurfacers for an average level of service cost of \$29 per capita and eligible development charges of \$12,097 (the Township has since converted one of the ice rinks into an indoor turf).
- The total eligible development charges for indoor recreation were \$960,851.
- A net cost of \$112,500 included in development charges of \$125,000 for additional recreation equipment (after mandatory 10% deduction).
- The forecast growth-related costs allocated 95% to residential users and 5% to non-residential users.

Strategic Plan – 2023 (2019)

This Plan is an important document for guiding the Township's future. It states core community goals and outlines strategies to achieve them through appropriate allocation of human, physical and financial resources over the next four to six years. The Strategic Plan aims to improve the community and be attuned to the needs of residents and business owners. Key points include:

- Vision: to improve the life of residents by providing the necessary support to help create a safe, healthy and active community.
- Mission: to provide professional, effective and efficient services within a collaborative governance model to promote the social and economic development of the community while creating an active and safe environment.
- The Plan identifies the following five fundamental Values to guide Council, the administration and the community in meeting objectives: Leadership, Teamwork, Integrity, Respect and Accountability and Responsibility.
- Four equally strategic Pillars of focus were identified:
 - Effective Governance: goals include improving communication with the public and increasing public awareness of municipal activities such as local programs.
 - Environment: goals include promoting unique tourism opportunities and working with Northumberland County.
 - Physical Assets: goals include optimizing the use of municipal infrastructure.
 - Recreation, Culture and Social Well-being: goals include maintaining and enhancing the volunteer system of service delivery, transitioning to Township-wide community programming

development and exploring opportunities to promote and use the Township's facilities and trails.

- Each of these Pillars is relevant to the development and implementation of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Accessibility Plan (2018)

This Plan was prepared by the Township of Hamilton Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and is reviewed annually and updated as required by the 2005 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). It highlights the AAC's accomplishments during each committee year beginning from 2003 until 2017 (e.g., improving accessibility at various municipal facilities and generating greater public awareness). Among the AAC's planning objectives for 2018-2019 were establishing guidelines for accessible open spaces, widening the doorways in Cold Springs Hall (accessible washroom), replacing taps and knobs in all municipally owned buildings and conducting site inspections.

Commuter Cycling Master Plan (2020)

This Plan provides a long-term vision, strategy and implementation plan to develop cycling culture in the Township of Hamilton. It discusses policies, programs and facilities that will support the development of a more efficient cycling infrastructure lane network in the Township. Its key points are as follows:

- Hamilton Township is primarily a rural municipality that spans 25,600 hectares (63,250 acres).
- The landscape in Hamilton Township includes rolling hills, trees and farmlands, lakes (e.g., Rice Lake and Lake Ontario) and the Oak Ridges Moraine – all popular attractions to residents and tourists who cycle.
- The Township's Plan supports the County of Northumberland's Cycling Master Plan, adopted in 2012, which aims to build a cycling network in the County in order to encourage more cycling in the area.
- The Plan's vision supports creating a cycling network that encourages a safe, healthy and family-friendly lifestyle for residents, workers and visitors.
- Five types of benefits from cycling were identified: economic development, quality of life, health, decreased costs (cycling infrastructure tends to cost less to construct and maintain than new roads) and environment.
- Statistics Canada data from 2016 indicated that 0% of Hamilton Township residents used cycling as a mode of transportation to travel to work. Other modes of transportation were by car (96%), transit (2%), walking (1%), and other (1%).
- The Township has two types of bikeways: Paved Shoulders and Multi-use Trails.
- A total of 23 recommendations were highlighted in the Plan and cover the following areas of focus: developing the network, cycling facilities, amenities and maintenance, promotion and outreach, and implementation.

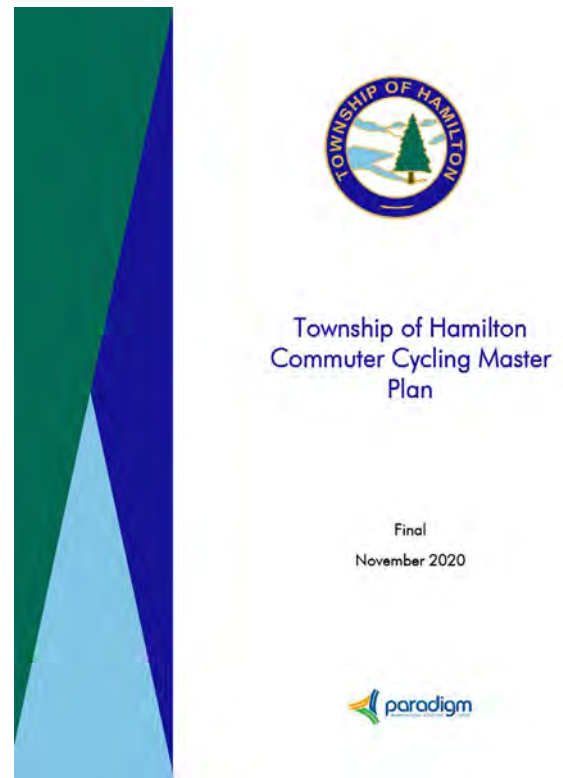


Figure 2-6: Township of Hamilton Commuter Cycling Master Plan (2020)

Waterfront Management Strategy – COVID-19 (2021)

This Strategy was developed to provide an update to the previous waterfront strategy and considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It serves as a guide to the Township for the operation and development of its amenities for residents and visitors, with the following findings:

- Identified issues include parking and parking enforcement, a fire ban, fire concerns, fire routes, late night noise, fishers, recreational use conflicts, visitor day use behaviour, access to the water, garbage and maintenance, and required improvements at three community parks (Bewdley, Gore's Landing and Harwood).
- Staff regularly visited each community throughout Summer 2020 to manage respective issues and gain an understanding of both the short-term and long-term remedies; meetings with residents did not occur due to the pandemic.
- The Strategy addresses the Township's waterfront operations within the next three-to-five-year period.
- The Strategy gives priority to local residents and homeowners before visitor activities.
- Bewdley has undergone redevelopment of its waterfront to improve the overall appearance and operation of the site. It represents the Township's largest economic development expenditure (which included grant funding), and helped to accommodate visitor traffic and special events and supported local tourism business.
- Gore's Landing has significant site constraints, making it unsuitable as a large-scale visitor destination. The site includes a gazebo on the pier, seasonal washroom facilities and a deck. The site is in need of significant repairs as it has suffered considerable deterioration.
- Harwood has significant site constraints and is currently not a suitable site for a large-scale visitor attraction. There are plans to renovate the site to install washrooms that accommodate more people, improve the retaining wall and improve the landscaping. There is interest in providing a greater focus and support for local initiatives and activities led by Friends of the Harwood Waterfront.
- The Strategy includes the 2021 Parking and Parks Program Plan, which provides a parking program to address concerns regarding municipal parking and the use of parks in the Township.

Report on Structural Condition Survey for Baltimore Recreation Centre and Bewdley Recreation Centre (2014)

Visual inspections of both arenas revealed good overall structural conditions, with recommendations for repairs or replacements to:

- a crack in the building foundation within the seating area at the Baltimore Arena
- extensive deterioration of the lower portion of the Bewdley Arena's exterior wall.

Northumberland County

Official Plan (2016)

The Northumberland County Official Plan directs decision-making for growth and land use planning in Northumberland County until 2034. The Plan discusses the policies, guidelines and regulations to shape growth and development in the County. It outlines the framework of how the County will positively manage growth and change to uphold its character, diversity, civic identity, urban and rural lifestyles, and natural and cultural heritage. Key points include:

- The Plan supports developing a range of cultural and recreational opportunities and facilities in Urban Areas/Rural Settlement Areas to create complete communities. Likewise, it supports the establishment of recreation and tourism uses in other land use designations (e.g., Agricultural, Rural, Resource and Constraint Areas).
- Compatible secondary uses (e.g., passive recreation) are encouraged in hydro corridor lands, but there must be consideration of the surrounding land uses, electricity transmission and distribution facilities, and pre-approval from Hydro One Networks may be required.



Figure 2-7: Northumberland County Official Plan (2016)

2019-2023 Strategic Plan (2019)

The Strategic Plan outlines the County's directional framework from 2019 until 2023. It discusses various topics including the County's vision, mission, values, process and priorities, economic prosperity and innovation, sustainable growth, thriving and inclusive communities, leadership and measurement and reporting:

- The County's vision is to "bring people together, partnerships and possibilities for a strong and vibrant Northumberland County" (p. 4).
- The County's mission is to be a leader in best practices for County governments, and a collaborative partner with municipal and community partners.
- The County's values are Accountability, Care and Support, Collaboration and Communication, Honesty and Integrity, Innovation and Excellence, and Mutual Trust and Respect.
- The County's priorities emphasize interconnection and alignment of County members to achieve their respective goals and objectives: Economic Prosperity and Innovation, Sustainable Growth, Thriving and Inclusive Communities and Leadership in Change.



Figure 2-8: Northumberland County 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Transportation Master Plan (2017)

The Transportation Master Plan aims to provide a long-term planning framework to develop multi-modal transportation in the County to help attract more residents, businesses and tourism to the area. Its findings include:

- There are five existing regional transit services travelling between the municipalities located in the County. The Northumberland Transportation Initiative (NTI) operates in Trent Hills, Cramahe, Alnwick/Haldimand and Hamilton Township.
- The County's goal is to have a multi-faceted transportation network based on five guiding principles:
 - Maintain and improve connections of active and road transportation networks.
 - Invest and support policy development addressing alternative transit services and routes in the Cycling Master Plan.
 - Strengthen, update and develop County transportation policies to encourage collaboration between municipalities and/or external agencies to make transit services more efficient and effective.
 - Improve the road network to a point that is sustainable both environmentally and financially.
 - Ensure the County's transportation network is safe and efficiently operated.

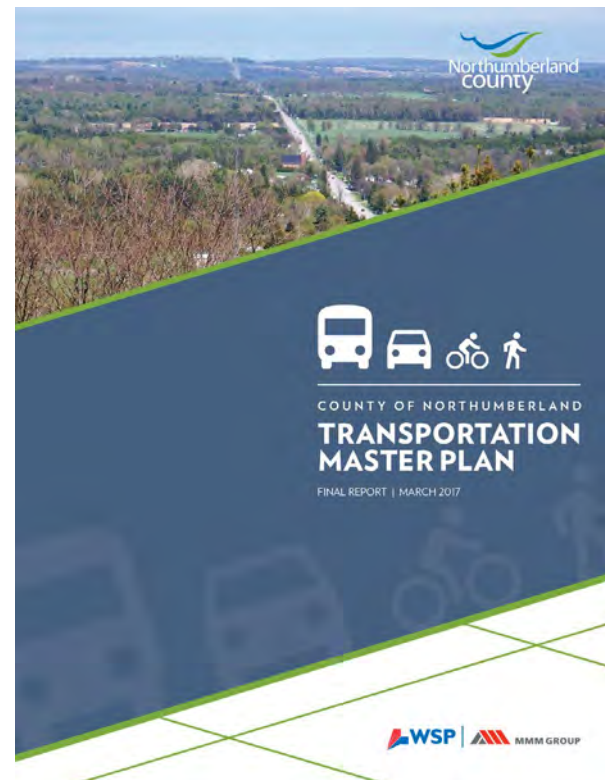


Figure 2-9: Northumberland County Transportation Master Plan (2017)

Cycling Master Plan (2014)

The Cycling Master Plan guides the development of the County's cycle network and infrastructure. The Plan covers a period of 20 years and emphasizes implementation, effective planning and forecasting, design guidelines and best practices that are meant to build support for existing standards. The following points summarize the Plan:

- Cycling provides economic, social, environmental, public health and transportation benefits.
- The main goals of the Cycling Master Plan are to:
 - Develop a cycling network, including both on and off-road cycling facilities for implementation.
 - Address specific areas of concern within the County (e.g., ridership barriers).
 - Develop policies, programs and other initiatives that support the creation of a more cycling-friendly County.
 - Create more attractive cycling routes for residents and tourists.
 - Provide enhanced recreational, commuter and competitive cycling opportunities.
 - Develop consistent and clear guidelines, standards and specifications for cycling facilities that can be integrated into capital and operational improvements.
- The County is well positioned to attract more tourists if there is adequate cycling infrastructure.
- Proposed facilities in cycling networks include signed routes and wide curb lanes, paved shoulders, bike lanes, bike paths and multi-use paths.
- Four roads are identified as freeway underpasses/overpasses of Highway 401: Theatre Road, Burham Road (#18), Ontario Street, County Road #45, and Nagle Road.

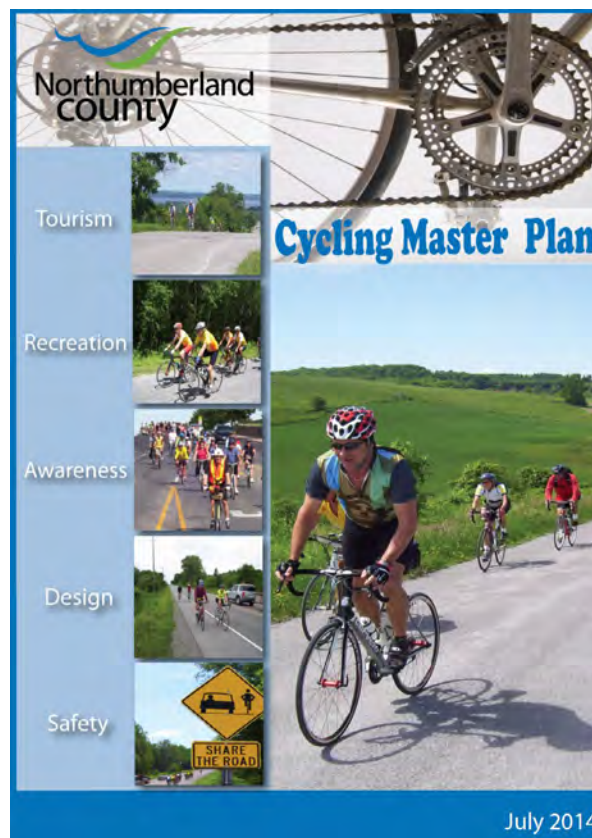


Figure 2-10: Northumberland Cycling Master Plan

The roads are relevant to the Township of Hamilton's prospective cycling network in connection with the Town of Cobourg.

- Four cycling route linkages are proposed in the West Quadrant: County Road 74 (between Hamilton Township and the Municipality of Port Hope) and County Road 2 (between Hamilton Township, the Municipality of Port Hope to the Town of Cobourg).
- The Plan outlines specific design guidelines for roadways, signage and pavement marking along roadways.
- The Plan also emphasizes the importance of promotion, awareness and education to help build cycling culture in the County for people of all ages and abilities.
- In 2014, the Township of Hamilton would invest a total of \$260 for cycling infrastructure.

Integrated Economic Development Master Plan (2017)

This Plan outlines the framework and process at the County level to support and strengthen the local economy, encourage community vibrancy and emphasize the importance of interconnection between all municipalities. Its key points are as follows:

- The County's view of economic development is to improve building on the qualities of individual communities (e.g., agriculture, food, entrepreneurship and other prominent resources and services) rather than a focus on filling gaps and deficiencies.
- Based on 2011 statistical data, there were 53 arts, entertainment and recreation businesses in the County.
- The County aims to work with its municipal partners to achieve a goal of supporting over 90% of businesses within the County, mostly micro and small enterprises, as well as attracting large employers.
- The County has a diverse and thriving tourism industry and wants to highlight cultural and outdoor experiences, through supporting greater collaborations and partnerships between businesses and government organizations.
- The agriculture industry in the County is strong and growing. The County has 200 agricultural commodities with 231,303 acres of farmland in use – the gross total receipts recorded from the last census were valued at \$152 million.
- The County wants to continue to build the agricultural industry and support agriculture-related career opportunities to become a leader in the agriculture industry.
- The County wants to build a diverse workforce through new settlement and immigration by establishing an attraction and retention strategy for Northumberland that highlights services to support new residents.

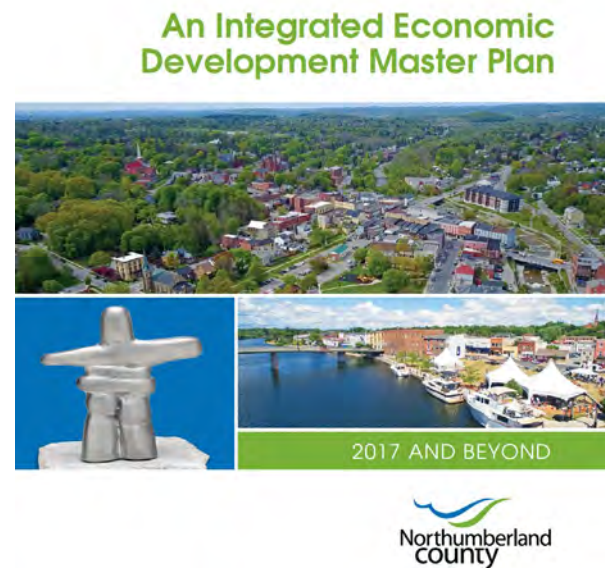


Figure 2-11: Northumberland County Integrated Economic Development Master Plan (2017)

2.4 New and Emerging Trends

This section discusses a number of prevalent trends in the provision of community parks and recreation services that are identified as most relevant to Hamilton Township based on current and projected demographics, public and stakeholder consultation and analysis of trends at the national, provincial and municipal level. These trends include promoting healthy active living, recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing cultural tourism, supporting all-season outdoor recreation, installing off-leash dog areas and adapting to the changing nature of volunteerism.

Trends in parks and recreation service provision are influenced by many factors including legislated requirements, demographic shifts, technological developments, the evolution of lifestyles and other spheres of society such as politics and the economy. The trends presented here are not an exhaustive review of ever emerging and evolving changes in the field; some trends represent directions that might be applicable today on some level while others may present opportunities as the Master Plan is implemented over time. In general, these trends should be considered when developing and improving the Township's parks and recreation infrastructure. Trends that are specific to programs and activities, facilities, or parks and trails are also incorporated in assessments in relevant sections of this Master Plan.

Healthy Active Living

A broad definition of healthy active living encompasses two aspects. The first, “traditional” position focuses on individual lifestyle choices that contribute to health, such as increasing physical activity, eating healthier foods and/or spending more time outdoors and away from screens. The second aspect has emerged in recent years and focuses on providing a healthier physical environment for all through initiatives that contribute to, for example, cleaner air and water, and restoring, protecting and/or enhancing natural ecosystems. This perspective aligns with more global imperatives around environmental sustainability and also takes some of the onus off individuals.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Framework for [Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing \(2015\)](#) provides an approach to addressing healthy active living – in its fullest sense – in parks and recreation services. The Framework includes five goals and priorities: foster active living, increase inclusion and access, connect people and nature, provide supportive physical and social environments and sustain capacity in the recreation sector.

The priorities that address people-oriented initiatives align well with health-promoting frameworks put forth in other national and provincial initiatives. At the same time, the Framework recognizes the importance of the built and natural environments in influencing health and well-being:

- Built form, street networks, and neighbourhoods can be designed to encourage walking and cycling, making it easier for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines. The design of outdoor spaces can improve accessibility to increase their use and enjoyment by people

of all ages and abilities. Beyond physical health, recreation facilities, parks, and public spaces also help people to achieve socially connected lives.

- The health and quality of the natural environment can be improved through tree planting, removal of invasive species, planting native plants, restoring habitat, restoring shorelines, introducing organic community gardens, etc. These actions have a direct impact on air and water quality and create an overall healthier environment in which to live, work and play. They also create beautified, animated spaces that draw people to spend time in them. In addition, studies have shown greater stress and anxiety reduction in people when they spend time around trees and naturalized spaces as opposed to urban environments. This encompasses the eco-health approach discussed above.

Case Study: Healthy Community Network - Town of Wasaga Beach, ON

The Healthy Community Network is a committee of Council with a mandate to “act as a link between Council and the citizens of Wasaga Beach and advise Council on matters relating to active and healthy living, the environment – natural, physical, social, economic – and the creation of a sustainable and healthy future for the town.” Committee members from various sectors of the community are appointed and must have knowledge of healthy active living-related spheres. They inform Council on current topics, develop awareness campaigns and develop strategic goals and objectives based on best practices to be submitted to Council annually.

Pandemic Recovery

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)’s [ReImagine RREC - Renew, Retool, Engage and Contribute](#) is a multi-phase COVID-19 recovery initiative for the parks and recreation sector. In Phase 1 of this initiative (May 2021), CPRA and the ReImagine RREC Leadership Team identified early outcomes from surveys and focus groups. Some of these were already known factors that have accelerated or been exacerbated by the pandemic including sub-population groups being disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and staffing challenges within municipal parks and recreation. Others are a direct result of the pandemic’s impact on day-to-day life and are anticipated to continue influencing service delivery over the long-term. Although not mutually exclusive, key themes are summarized below by service area.

Parks, Trails and Open Space

The report notes the public’s increased recognition of the importance of outdoor activity during the pandemic as well as dramatic increases in the use of parks, paths and trails. This has stimulated support for renewal and expansion of these assets to make them more accessible for year-round use, as well as demand to address the complexity of managing visitor volumes and user conflicts. 2020 data revealed 70% of Canadians expressed an increased appreciation for parks and green spaces; 66% reported increased levels of walking/jogging outdoors, and there was a 25% increase in cycling.

Programs, Events and Activities

The report notes Phase 1 findings confirm that some users are hesitant to return to organized sport and recreation programming, with a parallel increase in self-directed unstructured recreation and physical activity. At the same time, COVID-19 lockdowns have resulted in the widespread decrease of physical activity and increased sedentary behaviour, underscoring the importance of promoting the integration of health-enhancing physical activity into everyday living and capitalizing on the heightened interest in parks and outdoor green spaces. The demand for outdoor, holistic and self-directed programming, including winter programming, is increasing. “Animating” outdoor programming to attract existing and new users – including vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations – has been identified as a best or “next” practice by leaders.

The return to structured group programming, and particularly indoor activities, as well as community events and other mass gatherings will be slow to occur. Online/on-demand programming will become a permanent component of recreation services, with a focus on improvements in quality and equity.

Facilities and Amenities

It was noted that during the pandemic, recreation centres were facilities that transitioned to a variety of emerging uses such as food banks and vaccinations centres. It will be important to ensure facilities are designed and built to maximize both adaptability for various uses and resistance to future contagions.

Cultural Tourism

Tourism is an essential sector of today’s service economy, creating a competitive environment in which communities must secure their place in the market. Moreover, as the world becomes progressively more homogeneous on many levels, people are expressing greater interest in that which remains different. Every community is different in some way from all others, and these differences are the foundation of its unique story.

Given these factors, there needs to be something unique or special that differentiates the community from others – and it must be different enough to provide a reason or reasons for people to visit. To this end, a unique identity that captures the essence of this particular place needs to be developed, fostered and aggressively marketed.

The notion of “place-based” attractions is typically tied to cultural tourism in building destination-related visitor experiences (Thorne, S. 2012; Smith, S. 2013).⁴ It comprises those elements of culture and heritage that are intrinsically tied to a geographic place, and so cannot be replicated elsewhere.

A [Hill Strategies Research report](#) summarizes the findings of online surveys of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Member States and cultural tourism experts around the world, and provides the following definition of cultural tourism:

“Cultural tourism is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage,

4 Thorne, S. (2012). Place-based cultural tourism: A new planning paradigm. Economic Development. org

culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions.”

Almost all responding countries to the survey indicated that their definition of cultural tourism includes both “tangible (e.g., national and world heritage sites, monuments, historic places and buildings, cultural routes, and others), and intangible heritage (e.g., crafts, gastronomy, traditional festivals, music, oral traditions, religious/spiritual tourism, etc.).” Most countries also consider cultural tourism to include “contemporary culture (e.g., film, performing arts, design, fashion, new media, etc.).”

All-Season Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor programming provides a critical benefit to the health and well-being of people, particularly children and teens. Time spent outdoors has been shown to improve physical and mental health, boost confidence, reduce stress and build understanding of, and respect for, the natural environment. Outdoor learning and activities are common aspects of life for children in many other countries (e.g., tropical and Nordic countries), and as awareness of the benefits have become more mainstream in Canada, there have been increased efforts by municipalities and schools to offer more outdoor programs for children and teens.

The [ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth](#) (2020) recommends promoting and supporting “outdoor – and, when possible, nature-based – play opportunities given their association with both increased physical activity levels and improved mental health outcomes” (p. 48). Among others, the report’s recommendations for governments include promoting healthy movement by increasing access to recreation centres and public spaces outside of school hours, supporting families’ participation in sport and recreation activities and investing in no-charge active play spaces (especially outdoors) for families with children of all ages.

In practical terms, parks are significant assets that are often not optimized from a usage perspective and so they offer the potential to increase recreation activity relatively inexpensively. While not supported by a review of available research, it is also reasonable to suggest that an active park is more likely to motivate onlookers to “join in” than one that sits empty and idle.

For some time, municipalities in North America have been trying to encourage outdoor recreation in the winter, emulating approaches taken in many Nordic countries. Examples of initiatives include 8-80 Cities’ [Wintermission](#) project and [Winter Cities Toolkit](#), and activities and events organized through Edmonton’s [Winter City Strategy](#), which have been successful with winter recreation. “Winterizing” cities in North America is not a new topic, but the uptake has been slow, for a number of reasons that mostly fall outside of the mandate of parks and recreation departments (e.g., perceived or real conflicts between designing for pedestrians versus snow clearing and emergency vehicles, liability concerns, insufficient staff or resources, etc.).

One way municipalities can contribute to encouraging people to recreate outside in the winter is to help change the prevailing negative view of winter’s cold and snow. Working across departments, municipalities can set the tone by framing winter as a season to look forward to, with many positive and fun opportunities for recreation.

On the other hand, with average summer temperatures increasing due to climate change, considerations must also be made for making outdoor activity in extreme heat safer and more comfortable.

Innovative Venture in Food Service

Many municipalities face difficulties in operating their concessions, especially as the community volunteer sector continues to shrink. While the following example of a new approach to food service in public buildings is unique to Dufferin County, it is a model that the Dufferin Community Living organization is willing to assist interested organizations in developing in other settings. In addition to providing employment and a service to users of public spaces, it helps integrate residents with developmental disabilities in the life of the community.

In 2019 Community Living Dufferin (CLD) launched “B Social” - a new social enterprise initiative designed to create jobs for some of their community’s most vulnerable residents. It specializes in food preparation and sales, and its business model creates jobs in food service based on work for fair wages for individuals who want to be employed. It will also enable CLD to become less dependent on government funding and more self-sustaining.

Through this program, CLD-trained individuals currently operate four food service locations in Dufferin County: “Grizzlies Grub” at the Orangeville Georgian College campus which provides breakfast and lunch to students and staff, and the County of Dufferin Courthouse B Social café, offering breakfast, lunch and snacks to County and courthouse staff, local police services and visitors to the courthouse. The most recently opened ventures were the B Social Snack Bars located in the Town of Orangeville’s Alder Recreation Centre and the Tony Rose Sports Centre. These spots provide food to arena visitors and recreation program participants. Conveniently located beside two high schools, they also provide lunch to

students looking for options to their school cafeterias.

The services operate independently under an agreement with owners for use of the concession, café or cafeteria. They are self-sustaining, employee job training is provided, and CLD leads in partnerships if other local agencies are interested in participating in the program. It allows individuals with physical or emotional constraints to working full-time with suitable scheduling and additional support at work, if required. The intent is to be a stepping-stone to personal growth, “ensuring that the marginalized populations that [CLD and partners] support are given equal opportunity to secure paid employment while providing them with an opportunity to acquire needed training and stamina to eventually move into a community job if and when they are ready to do so.”⁵ Any profits from the enterprises are directed to growing the program.

5 <https://communitylivingdufferin.ca/b-social-dufferin-enterprises-making-a-difference-one-bite-at-a-time/>

Urban Out-Migration

The Ontario Rural Institute webinar “Rural Ontario’s Population Growth During COVID-19: Fad or Trend?”⁶ examined the accelerated movement of population from the GTA to primarily NMUs (non-major urban areas) that has paralleled the pandemic. Research revealed that, as early as 2016, two trends were resulting in population movement to NMUs: retired/semi-retired baby boomers started moving out of the Toronto area and rising housing prices in the GTA were triggering a more general outmigration. Available data, which did not include the impact of COVID-19 on this trend, showed an outmigration of 50,000 in 2020. The researchers’ estimate of the outmigration including that prompted by COVID was up to 80,000. Some of this additional movement would have been those who were on the cusp of retirement when COVID hit, and fast-tracked plans to leave. Although a levelling off is anticipated within the next few years, growth in NMUs will remain strong at 1% to 1.5%.

StrategyCorp’s white paper [Small Towns, Big Opportunities](#) identifies both push and pull factors that have contributed to this trend. The push factor was strongest for those communities that were within commuting distances from the GTA and had house prices that were attractive to those who could not afford to buy in Toronto, especially households with young families who were entering the housing market. The pull factor focused on the ability for some to move out of the GTA and work from home as well as those returning home since they were no longer tied to a place-based job.

Adult Programming

Historically, municipalities have focused on providing parks and recreation services to children, youth and seniors, with this last group becoming a much larger consumer of services as our population ages. The focus on children is rooted in the early days of organized recreation that began with the Playground Movement of the late 19th century in urban North America, which was intended to save poor, immigrant and homeless children from unhealthy, crowded tenement neighbourhoods. Over time, and with the development of recreation as a formal public service, the combined health and social objectives of these services retained an emphasis on those who were least likely to have the private means to purchase their leisure activities. Those with no or limited income included children, youth and seniors. Since adults were in their earning years and the primary purpose of public services was to fill gaps in the market, services for this age group were limited. At the same time, in terms of social support, all children and youth were provided with recreation regardless of the household’s ability to pay.

In recent years, however, we have seen a noticeable increase in adult interest in municipal recreation services for themselves. Anecdotal reasons for this trend are likely a blend of increased awareness of the importance of physical activity for long-term health, overall declines in disposable income and growth and greater sophistication in the provision and delivery of public recreation services. At the same time, current research indicates that adults are not achieving this awareness and interest through action. A just-released ParticipACTION report card on physical activity among Canadian adults (December, 2021) shows much higher “grades” in the areas of conceptual and environmental indicators than in activating, daily behaviours. The report suggests that beyond individual

⁶ <https://bit.ly/2Sb3wMP>

and environmental characteristics, there is a progressive decline in participation in activities that require a time commitment, specific movements and/or intense physical effort. Sport participation, muscle strengthening activities, balance activities and active transportation all scored grades D to F. The F grade in active transportation is a particularly interesting finding, given the promotion of active transportation and the increasing efforts of municipalities to make it safe and easy to access so people can integrate it into their daily lives.

The highest behavioural grades achieved are for light to medium-intensity activities that can be integrated into daily life. If the evolution to a highly active culture is viewed as a long-term social goal, and these findings are indicators of current progression to that end, it appears there is more work to do in the Bs and Cs before the Ds and Fs can improve. In terms of municipal programming for adults, therefore, progress in the foreseeable future may need to focus on additional ways to translate the desire to be active into introductory “first steps” that provide flexible access to low to medium intensity activities.





Figure 3-1: Baltimore Arena

3.0 Program and Event Needs

3.1 Introduction

Recreation programs and events are an important contributor to health, well-being and quality of life. They also play a key role in fostering social cohesion and a sense of community among residents, local organizations, government, businesses and visitors.

This section addresses the need for new and/or improved recreation programs and special events in the Township of Hamilton. These encompass both structured/organized activities as well as unstructured/self-directed activities, including sport/physical activity, non-sport, arts, culture/heritage, general interest, social, well-being and nature-based activities.

First, an overview of the existing supply is shared, followed by feedback received during public and stakeholder consultation. These findings are then analyzed to understand community needs and interest in new and/or improved recreation programs and events, resulting in recommendations for the Township for further investigation and development.

3.2 Existing Supply

Programs

In the Township, available programs include sports and physical activities, arts, learning, hobbies and social activities. These are mostly offered by public agencies, volunteers and non-profit organizations, with the Township functioning primarily as a facilitator for these groups. The volunteer sector thus plays an important role in program development and delivery in Hamilton. The Township provides drop-in times for ice and roller skating as well as a kids' one-week firefighter camp. Table 3-1 shows a sample of programs provided in the Township.

Table 3-1: Survey Respondents' Participation and Interest in Programming and Events

Provider	Programs
Township of Hamilton	Public ice skating, adult skating, youth shinny, parents & tots, junior firefighter camp
Cobourg Public Library - Bewdley branch, Gore's Landing branch	Drop-in family story times, seed library exchange, book clubs, online learning programs, TD Summer Reading Club, Yarn Circle
EarlyON Mobile Outreach	Children's arts & crafts, learning & reading program, physical activity program, story time, family walks
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 577 - Bewdley	Euchre, dart league, pool, shuffleboard
Volunteer-led non-profits (e.g., Community Works)	Food bank
Community-based sports groups (e.g., Baltimore Minor Hockey Association, FishAbility Sports Club, Bewdley Skating Club, Baltimore Figure Skating Club)	Ball hockey and ball leagues, sledge hockey, adaptive fishing, parent & tot skating, learn to skate, figure skating
Private providers	Hatha yoga, chair yoga, roller skating

Events

Throughout the year, community events for all ages are held by the Township, local libraries and volunteer groups/non-profit organizations such as the Bewdley and District Lions Club and the Bewdley branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. Table 3-2 provides a sample of past events as well as those held in neighbouring communities. Event themes include meals, holiday celebrations, fundraisers, dances, skating, fishing derbies, learning and workshops. The Township of Hamilton advertises upcoming events on an online Community Calendar located on its website: <https://calendar.hamiltontownship.ca/default/ Month>.

Table 3-2: Sample of Past Events Provided in and Around Hamilton Township

Organizer	Events
Township of Hamilton	New Year's Eve Skate, Cold Springs Bethlehem Walk, heritage homes boat tour, heritage barn tours
Cobourg Public Library - Bewdley branch, Gore's Landing branch	Summer Fire Safety, Bat Chat, Family Craft Night, Tie Dye T-Shirt Day, Rain Cloud Gravity Painting, Butterflies & Hummingbirds workshop, Cookie Recipe Swap, Book Sale, Henna Tattoo workshop, Hunt for the Holiday Pickle
Bewdley & District Lions Club	Fish Fry, Santa Claus Meet & Greet, Classic Car Show, yard sale, bake sales
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 577 - Bewdley	Seniors Easter Bazaar, Saint Patrick Day Dance, Valentine Dance, Breakfast with Santa, Christmas Dance, Remembrance Day Dinner, Fish Fry, Halloween Dance, Steak Dinner, Horseshoe/Washer Toss Tournament
Other community-based organizations (e.g., Oak Ridges Trail Association, Stonehill Fiddlers, Navy League of Canada Northumberland Branch, Bewdley Skating Club, Bewdley Firefighters Association, Hazel Bird Nature Reserve, FishAbility Sports Club)	Oak Ridges Moraine Adventure Relay race, fiddle jam, Northumberland Military Tattoo, Skating Show, Holiday Family Skate, Community Roast Beef Dinner, Northumberland Kids Fun Fish Event, Kids Fishing Derby
Neighbouring communities (e.g., Cobourg, Trent Hills, Port Hope, Newtonville, Brighton, Campbellford)	Festivals, theatre productions, music concerts, film screenings, comedy nights, art shows/markets, themed dinners, pub crawls, guided nature walks/hikes, movies in the park/on the beach, holiday celebrations (e.g., Easter Egg Hunt, Santa Claus Parade), Cross-Country Ski and Snowshoe Day, Maple Syrup Supper, Trails Day

3.3 Interest and Demand: What We Heard

Residents

Residents were asked about their participation in recreation programming prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and their interest in future programs and events in Hamilton Township. Table 3-3 summarizes this data from both the online and telephone survey participants. The two groups differed in their responses: the majority of residents who completed the online survey indicated frequent participation in Township recreation activities prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as greater participation in recreation activities outside of Hamilton, while fewer than half of telephone survey participants indicated past involvement and future interest in recreation.

Table 3-3: Survey Respondents' Participation and Interest in Programming and Events

	Online Survey Respondents	Telephone Survey Respondents
Frequent (about once a week or more) participation in recreation in Hamilton Township, prior to COVID-19	71% (151 of 212)	48% (192 of 400)
Participation in recreation in communities outside of Hamilton Township	83% (148 of 178)	42% (170 of 400)
Interest in additional programs and activities provided at recreation facilities in Hamilton Township	59% (99 of 169)	38% (153 of 400)
Interest in attending one-day or weekend community-wide events offered in the Township	62% (102 of 165)	29% (115 of 400)

Table 3-4 shows respondents' interest in specific activities, including future active sport/fitness programs and non-sport programs. The online and telephone survey participants varied in their top choices, but both groups indicated their households would use additional gymnasium sports programming such as badminton, volleyball, pickleball and basketball as well as children's day/summer camps and wellness programming such as yoga and tai chi. Table 3-5 shows respondents' top interests in future events in the Township, which were wide-ranging.

Table 3-4: Survey Respondents' Top Interests in New/Expanded Programming in Hamilton Township

	Online Survey Respondents	Telephone Survey Respondents
Top active sport/fitness programs that would be used	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. water-based activities (e.g., canoe, kayak, swimming) 2. group fitness classes (e.g., aerobics, Zumba) 3. gymnasium sports (e.g., badminton, volleyball, pickleball, basketball) 4. outdoor ice activities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. gymnasium sports (e.g., badminton, volleyball, pickleball, basketball) 2. court sports (e.g., tennis, pickleball) 3. arena ice activities (e.g., hockey, icestock, sledge hockey, skating, curling) 4. field sports (e.g., soccer, lacrosse, ball)
Top non-sports programs that would be used	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. wellness programs (e.g., yoga, tai chi, mental health) 2. social/club activities (e.g., youth drop-in, seniors, new moms) 3. visual arts (e.g., painting, photography, digital media) 4. camps (e.g., day, summer break) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. camps (e.g., day, summer break) 2. play programs for preschoolers 3. wellness programs (e.g., yoga, tai chi, mental health) 4. before and after school programs

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Table 3-5: Survey Respondents' Top Events of Interest in Hamilton Township

	Online Survey	Telephone Survey Respondents
Top events of interest	1. Active events (e.g., community run) 2. Outdoor concerts/music festivals 3. Festivals/fairs/workshops	1. Christmas/holiday events or festivals 2. Winter (carnival) 3. Halloween

When asked to consider which age groups in their households would be interested in participating in future programming in the Township, telephone survey respondents indicated the greatest interest in active programming for children (5-12 years old), youth (13-19 years old) and young adults (20-34 years old) and non-sport recreation programming for preschoolers (0-4 years old) and children (5-12 years old). The majority of online survey respondents indicated interest in both sport and non-sport programming for all age categories except seniors aged 75 years and older; the greatest interest in non-sport recreation was in seniors aged 65 and older.

Interviews and Focus Groups

A number of popular recreation activities (e.g., yoga classes, hockey leagues, library programming) and events (e.g., Cold Springs Bethlehem Walk, Canada 150) were noted in the stakeholder interviews. There is a desire for more recreation programs and events in the Township, especially arts and culture activities and family programming, with a suggestion to deliver through the public library. Lawn bowling and golf were noted as becoming more popular. It was also mentioned that some residents do not like to travel far distances between settlement areas to participate in recreation.

Participants in the focus groups acknowledged the importance of creating a sense of community through the type of events and

activities in the Township. They recognized that many residents travel to surrounding municipalities to participate in programming at the YMCA and in hockey leagues and skating clubs. Noted popular Township activities included pickleball, soccer, lawn bowling and the library book club. It was suggested that a focus on sports has created a gap in cultural activities like art, music and plays. Participants would like to see the Township invest in diverse recreation programs and events and suggested new activities such as art classes (e.g., painting, sculpting), music, theatre, heritage tours, fishing derbies, line dancing, quilting and intergenerational programs that bring youth, adults and seniors together. Participants emphasized that programming needs to be improved for different age groups, including younger children (e.g., arts & crafts, learn to paddle), and more spring break/summer camps should be introduced (e.g., arts & crafts camp, science camp, nature/junior explorer camp).

User Groups

The 14 participants in the user group survey indicated they provide programs in the following areas: arena ice/floor activities, outdoor field sports, gym sports/recreation, fitness/wellness, children's play programs, club/social activities, drop-in activities, learning programs and social support. The majority of programming (64%) is provided seasonally or throughout the year; most groups (71%) indicated they do not provide annual/periodic events, tournaments

or competitions. All age groups are served, with the greatest proportion of activities available for adults aged 35 to 64 years, reflecting a trend toward adult programming. In a regular (i.e., pre-COVID) operating year, participation ranged from 20 to 400 people in programs and 45 to 800 attendees at events. The majority of groups (54%) anticipate up to 10% growth in the next five to ten years given interest in their program/event focus, overall population growth in the area and changes to population age groups.

3.4 Assessment and Recommendations

This section provides recommendations on the development and provision of programs and events in the Township of Hamilton. These recommendations are developed in relation to current supply, gaps, demand, growth, available information on future trends and expressed community interests and feedback.

The aim of these recommendations is to improve, expand and diversify the supply of programs and events by optimizing new and existing facilities, parks, trails, services and partnerships to achieve an accessible, inclusive and relevant balance of year-round opportunities for current and future Township residents and visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Together, the recommendations reflect the collective vision of a safe, healthy and active community as outlined in the Township's Strategic Plan.

Existing Programming and Events

The Township hosts public ice skating, adult skating and youth shinny at its indoor facilities from September to March. Consultation indicated that residents are using the Township's arena ice (86% of online survey respondents, 30% of telephone survey respondents). There is only some interest from residents (26.3% of online survey respondents, 28% of telephone survey respondents) in new or expanded ice activities. This suggests that

the Township's existing ice programming is sufficient for most residents. Providing ice time for different age groups helps support healthy active living in Hamilton (see 2.4.1) through increased physical activity, time away from screens, inclusion and social connection.

Existing recreation programs in Hamilton are primarily led by the Cobourg Public Library, private providers and volunteer groups such as the Bewdley and District Lions Club and the Bewdley branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. These programs are important for promoting social interaction and recreation in the community, and consultation indicated that residents are taking part.

The Township delivers a few events per year, with many others led by non-profit/volunteer groups. Together these build community in Hamilton.

In its role as a facilitator, the Township should continue to support groups in delivering programming and events through effective coordination, outreach, promotion and communication. Further recommendations and opportunities are discussed in section 6.0 on Service Delivery.

Accessibility and Inclusion

[FishAbility](#) is a Township-based volunteer-led sports club that delivers recreational programs for children, youth and adults with disabilities. Founded in 2008, the adapted fishing program runs on Rice Lake from May to September using adapted pontoon boats designed for people with disabilities. Each fishing trip is approximately 1-1.5 hours in length and costs \$30 per angler (one support person may accompany each angler, free of charge). The program focuses on conservation of the fish population, habitat and preservation of the environment; live release of the fish is followed by light snacks at Bewdley Waterfront Park and social time. In addition to a number of fundraiser events throughout the year, FishAbility holds an annual kids' Fishing Day at Bewdley Waterfront Park.

The FishAbility charity expanded to include the Northumberland Predators sledge hockey team, which runs on Saturdays from September to April in two age categories: junior (differently abled players aged 5 and up) and intermediate (differently abled players aged 15 and up). Teams are based at Bewdley Community Centre and compete in a non-contact, province-wide league within the Ontario Sledge Hockey Association.

To support accessibility and inclusion in the community, the Township should champion FishAbility's activities for individuals with special needs and promote them on its communications channels. Section 6.2 identifies opportunities for the Township to partner with other organizations that promote accessibility and inclusion such as Special Olympics Ontario.

Although the proportion of low-income households in the Township is low compared to the County and Province (see section 2.2), Hamilton can further foster a sense of inclusion by ensuring some events (both provided by the Township and by external groups) are free or low-cost, making them accessible to all members of the community including newcomers and those that may face financial barriers.

- P&E 1: Continue offering Township-led public skate times for all ages.
- P&E 2: Continue to support community groups that provide recreation programming in the Township for diverse age groups and ability levels.
- P&E 3: Continue to provide Township-led all-ages events, and support community groups that organize events.

Opportunities for Additional Recreation Programming

Hamilton Township has a diverse and well-maintained supply of public spaces that are suitable for holding recreation activities. While 79% of user groups indicated they use indoor facilities in the Township to run their programs and events, only 29% use the Township's outdoor facilities for programming and the majority of user groups (93%) do not use waterfront areas or trails. Additional recreation opportunities can optimize these underutilized spaces (see section 4.0) and fill existing programming gaps. Moreover, they will help achieve the goals of the Township's Strategic Plan, which prioritizes a transition to Township-wide community program development and increased investment in active programming.

Outdoor Programming

As described in section 2.4, outdoor recreation and learning is an emerging trend in communities and time spent in nature has many proven positive outcomes for physical and emotional wellbeing. From the COVID-19 pandemic there has emerged an even greater appreciation for time spent outdoors in the natural environment: a [cross-country survey by Park People](#) showed that appreciation for parks and green spaces increased over the pandemic and Canadians want to see expansion of parks-based community programming and events.

However, the need to make use of existing assets and resources – to encourage more residents and visitors to use parks and facilities – has also been apparent. These public spaces have the potential to serve all age groups. The pandemic is not over, so it is not yet possible to know if the increase in park and trail use will be permanent, but it is reasonable to expect that many people have developed new interests in spending time outdoors, and these interests will remain high. Coupled with increased awareness and concern about climate change, it is likely

that interest in outdoor programs will continue to rise as people, particularly youth, seek to reconnect with nature and obtain a better understanding of ecology and the environment.

The Township should explore development of additional recreation activities such as nature-/trail-based programming (e.g., forest school, educational lectures/wilderness workshops, guided walks/interpretive signage focused on local ecology/plant identification, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing) and water-based activities (e.g., canoeing, kayaking, swimming, stand-up paddleboarding, children's beach/water safety, fishing, sailing) at existing parks, trails and water access areas. Online survey participants indicated the greatest interest in water-based activities among a list of sports programming options. Of the Township's water access areas, Bewdley Waterfront/Optimist Park is recommended for water-based programming given proximity to washrooms and parking.

Children's Camps

Households in the telephone survey had the greatest interest in new children's day camps provided as non-sport programming. Camps were also among the top non-sport programming activities selected by online survey respondents and were suggested in focus group discussions. Existing camp offerings in the Township are one-week junior firefighter camps for children aged 8-12.

New and expanded camps should use the Township's facilities and public spaces. In collaboration with community groups, the Township should first explore delivering nature/trail-based and water-based programming described above in a camp format (e.g., junior explorer camp, learn to paddle). Given survey respondents' interest in children's arts & crafts programming, these outdoor camps could also be complemented by art activities led by community members and held in indoor Township facilities such as Baltimore and Bewdley Halls and Old Camborne Schoolhouse.

Events

Consultation with stakeholders and the community indicated there is interest in holding more events in Hamilton Township. Survey respondents expressed interest in one-day or weekend events, particularly active events like a community walk/run/hike as well as holiday/seasonal festivals. Desire for these kinds of activities aligns with emerging trends of outdoor recreation, particularly as the community recovers from changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since trails were identified during stakeholder interviews as popular and important amenities in the Township, with good year-round maintenance and use by both residents and visitors, the Township could consider leading an annual Spring Bike Day focused on bike safety, tune-up and recreation on local trails. An event focused on cycling would support the objectives of the Township of Hamilton Commuter Cycling Master Plan and Northumberland County Cycling Master Plan to develop cycling culture in the Township. It may also support tourism by attracting interested visitors from nearby communities.

Events held at Township facilities (e.g., Baltimore and Bewdley Halls and Old Camborne Schoolhouse) should bring age groups together, be marketed with a distinct Township identity and include a shared experience. For example, open mic nights/coffeehouses (promoted as, for example, “Hamilton Township Presents” or “Ham’s Got Talent”) can fill gaps in arts-based programming by encouraging diverse performances of community talent (e.g., singing, poetry reading, storytelling/reading, playing instruments, standup comedy, improv, magic, TED talk). Community potlucks (promoted as, for example, “Hamilton Eats” or “The Great Hamilton Bake-Off”) can showcase cooking and baking over a shared meal. Events grounded in culture, socializing and community building should be welcoming, accessible and inclusive of all ages, abilities and income levels.

Programming for Diverse Age Groups

The current mix of programming in Hamilton is not balanced among age groups. Children aged 7 years and younger have access to physical activity, arts and learning programs through the Township, library, EarlyON and sports leagues. In contrast, older children, youth and adults are primarily offered sports/fitness programming with few arts, learning and social offerings in the Township. Recreation for seniors aged 65 years and older is limited to social activities at the Legion, ice skating/community-based sports leagues and yoga by private providers.

In general, more non-sports programming is needed for all community members aged 8 years and older. Activities should be diverse in theme such as wellness, arts, culture/heritage, nature, etc. and take place in the Township’s park spaces, water access areas, trails and indoor facilities. The Township should work with community groups to plan and promote additional programs. Section 3.4 further discusses opportunities for delivering short-duration programming and intergenerational programming, in particular.

P&E 4: Explore opportunities to use park spaces, water access areas, trails and facilities as venues for more recreation programs and events, in collaboration with community agencies and organizations.

Additional Sports Activities

Respondents in both the online and telephone surveys were interested in more provision of gymnasium sports programming. Gymnasium sports encompass a wide variety of activities including basketball, pickleball, badminton, volleyball, archery, games (dodgeball, tag, etc.), martial arts, wrestling, yoga, fitness classes and more. Gymnasiums can also host events and social club programs; social clubs (e.g., youth drop-in, new moms circle, seniors' group) were the second-highest program of interest from online survey respondents.

Considering the wide array of sport and activity interests and age groups that can be accommodated, it is not surprising that “gymnasium sports” was a program/activity of interest in both resident surveys. In the focus groups it was also suggested there is interest in establishing a pickleball league in the Township, and an online survey respondent indicated there is a pickleball club in Cobourg looking for courts.

The Township should first identify community organizers/instructors who are able and willing to provide gymnasium sport programming (for all ages) and look to expand programming at existing Township facilities like the Sabic field and arena floor. Future use of these facilities is discussed more in section 4.4.

P&E 5: Expand gymnasium sports programming (e.g., badminton, volleyball, pickleball, basketball) at existing Township facilities in partnership with community providers.

P&E 6: Support efforts to establish a community-led pickleball league in the Township.

Programming Delivery

Children's Programming

Free programming for children from birth to six years old is currently delivered in indoor, outdoor and virtual formats at dedicated child and family centres (e.g., community centres, schools, day cares) through EarlyON Northumberland. Current activities include outdoor hiking programs on County trails as well as story time, new parent programs and play-based learning. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, EarlyON facilitated mobile programming in Hamilton Township at the Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Baltimore Recreation Centre.

Details about drop-in and registered EarlyON activities are shared on a [dedicated Facebook page](#) for EarlyON Northumberland. There are also drop-in family story times and other activities for young children delivered through the Cobourg Public Library at the Township's two branches.

Households who participated in the telephone survey did not appear aware of (or to be using) this existing programming for young children, because their second-highest interest for non-sport activities was play programs for preschoolers. Online survey participants echoed their interest in participating in additional children's recreational programming. Discussions with EarlyON and the Cobourg Public Library indicated that prior/existing programming in Hamilton has not reached full capacity.

An interview with the County's Early Years Coordinator indicated that a hybrid model of in-person and virtual programming will likely continue post-pandemic. EarlyON Northumberland anticipates hiring additional educators in the short term to achieve its full complement of staff. There is an openness for future partnerships with the Township and library in cross-promoting and delivering

programming for children and families, including using dedicated Township space for regular structured activities. Section 6.2 discusses partnerships and collaboration in further detail.

P&E 7: Work with public providers like EarlyON and the library to better promote/deliver programs for preschoolers and young children in the Township.

Tourism Activities

Section 2.4 outlines recent trends in cultural tourism through place-based attractions. Participants in the stakeholder interviews believed Hamilton Township could encourage recreation tourism through day activities. Indeed, the Township's Official Plan states that an increase in tourism is expected through a strategy focused on natural, historical and cultural attractions, and the County's Integrated Economic Development Master Plan cites an intention to highlight cultural and outdoor experiences through supporting greater collaborations and partnerships between businesses and government organizations.

Hamilton Township's Strategic Plan prioritizes working in collaboration with the County "to explore opportunities to bring the tourism sector together and develop municipally-wide tourism experiences and packages and approaches." There is interest in "promoting the Township of Hamilton to tourists – preserving the cultural heritage and history of the area." One objective in the Strategic Plan includes evaluating the efficiencies of combining countryside tours with the "Buy Local, Buy Fresh" movement. Elgin County has adopted such an activity, producing digital maps of [local food offerings](#) and [artisans](#) that are targeted to day visitors in the region.

Discussion with Northumberland County's tourism staff indicated potential for the

Township to grow its outdoor tourism offering. The Township should explore hosting programming/events in all seasons, including outdoor recreation activities in the shoulder season (i.e., November-April) such as skating or ice fishing at Gores Landing. It was also suggested that as high-speed Internet connectivity (broadband) is expanded throughout the County in the years to come, there may be potential for new trails programming using interpretive signage/wayfinding (e.g., QR codes, storytelling trail walk).

County tourism staff emphasized the importance of having a consistent Township staff member to serve as a key contact when planning and facilitating tourism-related events. Recommendations regarding a new staff position and improvements to the Township's communications methods are further discussed in section 6.0 on Service Delivery.

P&E 8: Partner with tourism initiatives in Northumberland County to promote/deliver programming and events unique to Hamilton.

Short Duration Programming

As noted above, participants in community consultation indicated that there are additional recreation programs and activities they would like to see provided at recreation facilities in the Township and that they would use them. It was mentioned that there is currently a gap in arts, culture and non-sport programming. Common to both household telephone survey and online survey respondents was an interest in wellness programming; the two survey groups differed in their degree of interest in visual arts, artisanal, performing arts and social/club activities.

Short-duration programming (e.g., workshops, lesson series) is an effective way to help ensure resources are dedicated to activities where there is interest, uptake and success in the Township. This model of programming allows community members to explore different topics; for some, it could be the first step to engaging in an activity that captures their interest. It is ideal for learning new skills and is appealing to many adults, as an ongoing commitment is not required upfront. This approach also makes use of local knowledge and skills and is an opportunity for local artists, artisans, teachers and experts to increase their exposure, share their knowledge, build awareness of their skills and serve a broader market.

By testing out new programs using a “try it” model, the municipality can also gauge community interests in particular areas before dedicating greater resources to long-term programming. If a short-duration program is successful and participants want to engage further, the municipality can then explore opportunities for longer-term extension.

Case Study:

[Westboro Brainery](#) in Ottawa is a successful model for this type of short-duration, citizen-led programming delivered with limited municipal resources. Single-session classes up to 3 hours in length are offered at affordable prices (\$0-\$60) for community members aged 14 years and up, led by local instructors ranging from seasoned professionals and quasi-experts to passionate enthusiasts. Those with little to no teaching experience deliver their first class pro-bono and receive access to a free class by another instructor as compensation. Provided the class is generally well-received and there is interest in additional sessions, future teaching is compensated at an hourly rate.

Classes are typically held at community centres, municipal facilities, music schools, parks, cafés, pubs and churches. Members of the public are encouraged to contribute ideas for new classes and sign up to share their own skills or knowledge. Past classes at the Brainery have included:

- Intro to Crocheting
- The 5 Rs of a Zero Waste Life
- How to Make Seriously Good Pie
- Foraging Fundamentals
- Homeschooling 101
- Bullet Journaling
- Handmade Holiday Cards
- Food and Menu Planning for Summer Camping
- Intro to Improv
- How to Start Your Own Podcast
- Pickling 101
- Bead and Tassel Necklace Workshop
- Calligraphy 101
- Artisan Bread Basics
- Cross Stitch 101
- Henna Art DIY
- Dairy-Free Foods Workshop
- The Art of the Butter Tart
- Gnocchi Workshop
- How to Green Clean Your Home
- Intro to Collage
- Sketching Fundamentals

Modelled on the vision of the [Brooklyn Brainery](#) in Brooklyn, New York, the Westboro Brainery is a program initiative of the Dovercourt Recreation Association (DRA), a non-profit, charitable organization formed in 1977. For 35 years, the DRA has managed the Dovercourt Recreation Centre through a service agreement with the City of Ottawa. This fully accessible facility is part of the City's recreation system and serves 15,000 clients each year. The DRA is empowered to select programs that suit the Westboro community's needs and deliver them both at the Centre and in satellite facilities. The DRA is supported by in-kind and cash funding from the City of Ottawa as well as sponsorship from local businesses, government grants, fundraising and partnerships with community groups and volunteers.

Hamilton Township should respond to community interest by beginning with short-duration wellness programming (e.g., yoga, tai chi, aerobics, Zumba, Pilates, mental health) as well as learning/self-improvement activities (e.g., nutrition, local heritage, computer skills, coding). Other possible topics could include painting, cake decorating, kids' cooking, gardening, knitting/crochet, quilting, pottery, collage, improv, memoir/creative writing, genealogy, dance, choir, photography, etc. Classes should be accessible to multiple age groups (e.g., children's programming designed for ages 6 to 12 years; adult programming designed for ages 13 and up so that youth, adults and seniors are all welcome).

Following the delivery of each workshop or lesson series, the program should be evaluated to determine its success and community interest in repeated delivery, as well as any potential for expansion to a longer-term structure (e.g., recurring classes, seasonal programming). Key considerations include community interest (i.e., how many people participated or indicated a desire to participate in that program topic and time of day) and capacity (e.g., availability and expertise of instructors, availability and use of Township facilities).

P&E 9: Expand supply by piloting new programs in existing Township facilities using a short-duration model.

P&E 10: Evaluate short-duration activities to measure their success in serving particular markets, and to determine any potential for extension as long-term programming, camps, etc.

Intergenerational Programming

Intergenerational programming convenes people of different age groups (e.g., youth and seniors) to experience shared activities together and/or exchange knowledge, skills and resources. Academic research indicates that the most successful intergenerational programs involve at least two non-adjacent generations and provide mutual benefits to participants.¹ Evidence of higher self-esteem, better academic performance, improved social skills and increased motivation to learn has been found in young people, while the benefits for seniors include improved health and self-esteem, reduced loneliness and social isolation² and increased feelings of well-being and life satisfaction.³

Participants in the focus groups suggested that intergenerational programming be initiated in Hamilton Township. Given the Township's high population of seniors (and projected growth in this age category) and expressed interest in more non-sport programming for diverse age groups, this may be an opportunity to build community, strengthen networks and use existing Township parks, trails and facilities.

To facilitate programming, the Township and collaborators might refer to existing resources such as the BC Care Providers Association's [Creating Caring Communities](#) guide and the City of Edmonton's [Intergenerational Programming Toolkit](#). These resources outline projects of various sizes and scales as well as key considerations. For example, the Creating Caring Communities guide notes that, "Seniors who reside in care tend to have more energy earlier in the day and fatigue easily in the afternoon. In general terms, seniors' time

tolerance ranges from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours depending on their state of wellness and if they are required to take certain medications which cause drowsiness" (p.11). Discussions with Cobourg Public Library indicated that many youth in Hamilton Township return home from school late in the afternoon or early evening due to after-school extra-curricular activities and school bus scheduling. It may be that weekend mornings are the opportune time for intergenerational programming; however, it is essential that participants are available, interested and committed.

Seniors and youth should both be consulted to brainstorm intergenerational programming plans and gauge areas of interest. For example, activities could focus on:

- Food (e.g., cooking, baking, pizza making, food literacy);
- Reading (e.g., library buddies, book club);
- Environment (e.g., walks, gardening, stewardship);
- Needlework (e.g., knitting, crochet);
- Technology (e.g., photography, computers, iPads, online shopping, TikTok);
- Games (e.g., Bingo, trivia, cards, board games, puzzles); and
- Conversation (e.g., mentorship, memoir-writing, friendly calls, learning ASL)

Indoor activities should take place in community halls and kitchens at Baltimore Recreation Centre, Bewdley Recreation Centre Hall, Cold Springs Hall and Old Camborne Schoolhouse in order to optimize existing, underutilized Township facilities (see section 4.4).

- 1 Martins, T., et al. (2019) Intergenerational programs review: Study design and characteristics of intervention, outcomes, and effectiveness. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, 17(1), 93-109. DOI: 10.1080/15350770.2018.1500333
- 2 Murayama, Y., et al. (2015) The effect of intergenerational programs on the mental health of elderly adults. *Aging & Mental Health*, 19(4), 306-314. DOI: 10.1080/13607863.2014.933309
- 3 Seefeldt, C. (1989) Intergenerational programs - Impact on attitudes. *Journal of Children in Contemporary Society*, 20(3-4), 185-194. DOI: 10.1300/J274v20n03_19

P&E 11: Explore opportunities to develop intergenerational programming in partnership with volunteer groups.





Figure 4-1: Bewdley Community Centre

4.0 Facility Needs

4.1 Introduction

This section of the Master Plan considers facility needs in the Township of Hamilton over the next ten years. Factors and underlying assumptions that establish the framework for the facilities needs assessment include:

- The Township has an existing supply of recreation facilities that is both diverse and well maintained and has considerable potential to accommodate additional use before considering additions to supply.
- The Township is part of a larger, regional market that includes other municipalities in Northumberland County and beyond, with the Towns of Cobourg and Port Hope comprising its primary core.
- Residents and organized community groups within this market will continue to regularly use facilities in each of its municipalities.
- Facilities in each of the municipality's communities can contribute to growing and diversifying future recreation service development that benefits both local and non-local residents of Hamilton Township.

4.2 Existing Supply

Figure 4-2 illustrates the distribution of parks and facilities throughout the Township of Hamilton. Except for Davidson's Corners, each community within the Township has access to recreation facilities and/or parks.

Table 4-1 summarizes indoor and outdoor municipal recreation facilities in the Township that are scheduled for organized use. There are no formal outdoor rectangular sports fields in Hamilton Township, although open green space at Baltimore Recreation Centre is used for organized lacrosse. Municipal facilities available for casual use - including 2 basketball and 2 volleyball courts, and 3 multi-purpose pads - are considered in the parks discussion in section 5.0.

Table 4-1: Indoor and Outdoor Scheduled Facilities

Facility Type	Ownership			Total
	Municipal	School Board	Non-Profit	
Arena	2 (single pad)			2
Indoor Turf	1			1
Fitness Centre	1			1
Hall/Community Room	5		3	8
Meeting Room/Lounge	3			3
Kitchen	4		3	7
Concessions	2			
Gymnasium		4		4
Library	2*			2*
Ball Diamond	9 (1 lit)	4	1	14
Tennis Court	3			3

* one library is located in a building owned by a not-for-profit organization; both are branches of the Cobourg Public Library

** two are dual tennis/basketball courts

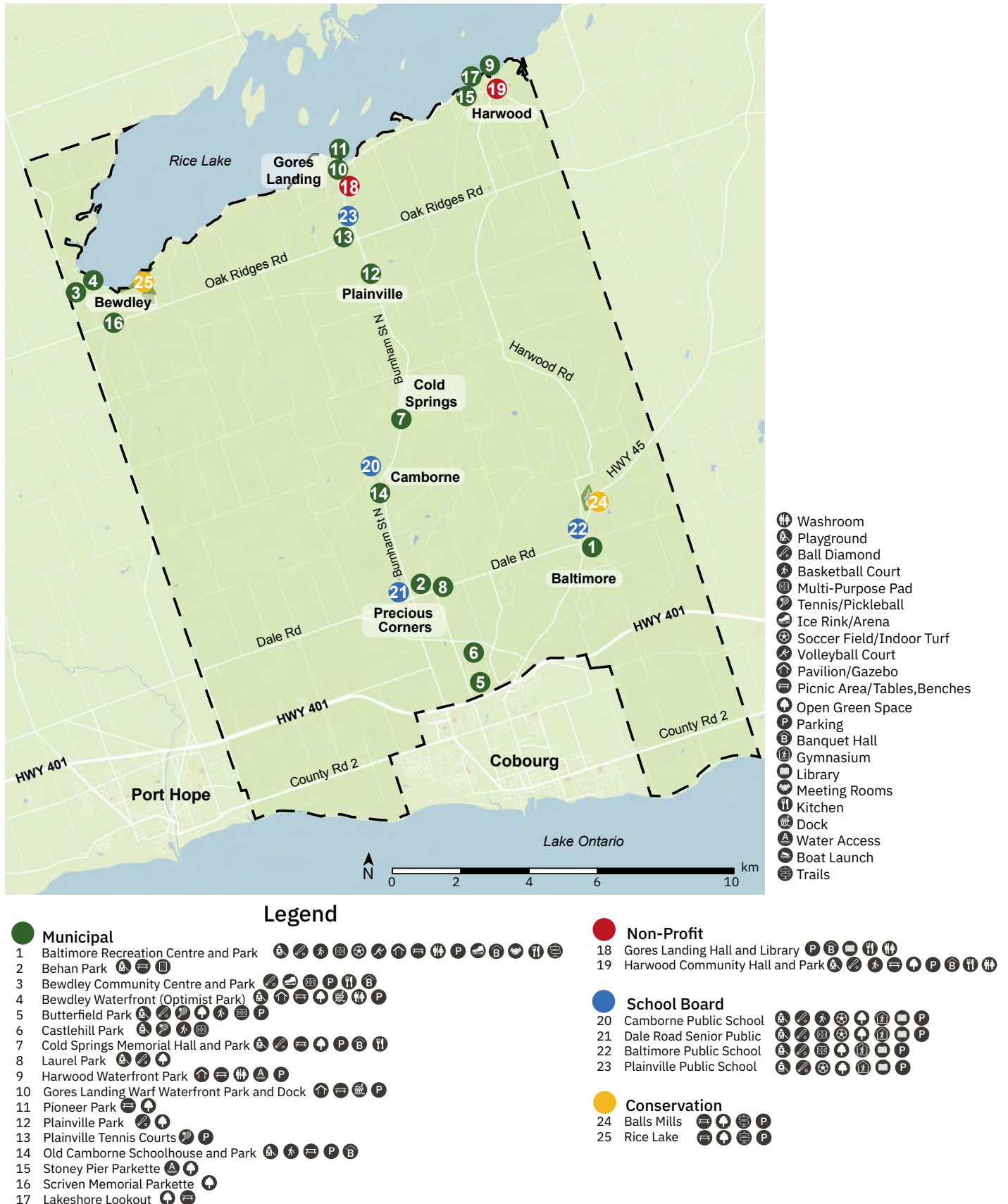


Figure 4-2: Township of Hamilton Parks and Facilities Distribution Map

4.3 Interest and Demand: What We Heard

Residents

Table 4-2 is a visual representation of 180 online survey respondents' answers when asked about the facilities or features their households use at specific community centres and parks. (Harwood Hall and Gores Landing are non-municipal facilities).

Table 4-2: Use of Facilities by Online Survey Respondents

	Baltimore Recreation Centre	Bewdley Community Centre	Cold Springs Memorial Hall	Old Camborne School house	Plainville Park/ Courts	Bewdley Optimist Park	Gores Landing	Harwood
Arena Ice								
Arena Floor								
Ball Diamond								
Artificial Turf Field								
Tennis Court	*					*	*	*
Hall								
Library								
Pickleball courts					*			

Legend:



Note: hatching indicates locations where the facilities in the list do not exist; colour blocks with an asterisk (*) indicate reported use where facilities in the list do not exist; respondents likely use courts or multi-purpose pads for various activities

Among random telephone survey respondents, the 78% (312) that reported participating in recreation (pre-COVID) in the Township of Hamilton, most frequently indicated using Baltimore Recreation Centre (27%), Bewdley Community Centre (23%), Old Camborne Schoolhouse (18%), Harwood Hall (16%), Cold Springs Memorial Hall (15%). In three of five instances, however, the proportion of those using a Centre or Hall was considerably lower than those found in the online survey.

Collectively, the results of the two surveys show that indoor and outdoor facilities at the Baltimore Recreation Centre are used by noticeably larger proportions of responding households than those at other locations.

Volunteer Sports and Recreation Groups

Forty-one organizations were invited to complete the survey via a letter of invitation from the Township that included a link to the online platform. Fourteen responded. Among the 14 responding groups, 79% (11) indicated they use indoor facilities, and 29% (4) indicated they use outdoor facilities in Hamilton Township to run their programs/activities or events. Table 4-3 shows specific facilities used by the groups. Although not all organized facility users in Hamilton Township responded to the survey, those that did largely mirror the results of the resident surveys. Their use of Township facilities is largely centred at Baltimore Recreation Centre.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Table 4-3: Use of Facilities by Volunteers Sports and Recreation Groups

	Arena Ice	Arena Floor	Artificial Turf Field	Hall/ program space	Meeting room	Ball Diamond	Multi-Purpose Court	Pickleball Court
Baltimore Recreation Centre	71% 5	29% 2	57% 4	14% 1	14% 1	75% 3	25% 1	25% 1
Bewdley Community Centre	50% 2	0	NA	50% 2				

Baltimore Recreation Centre has separate outdoor volleyball and basketball courts. Groups indicated using a multi-purpose court and a pickleball court at this site, which is assumed to mean they use the single court for various activities. Several groups also reported using the gazebo/picnic area, open green space and the playgrounds on the Recreation Centre grounds.

None of the groups reported using any of the other indoor or outdoor facilities listed at the following locations: Cold Springs Memorial Hall, Old Camborne Schoolhouse, Harwood Hall (non-municipal), Bewdley Community Centre (outdoor), Plainville Tennis Courts, Bewdley Optimist, Laurel, Behan, Castlehill, Butterfield and Plainville Parks.

For both indoor and outdoor facilities, all groups that responded to these questions indicated that the Township facilities they use are well suited to their group's program/activity or event requirements.

Eight groups use a variety of facilities outside of Hamilton Township including ball diamonds, outdoor soccer fields, indoor turf and gymnasiums. Three groups indicated they would be interested in transferring at least some of this use to facilities in Hamilton Township for regular season or tournament activity, and two noted the following requirements for use to be transferred to the Township of Hamilton:

- Northumberland Minor Lacrosse noted additional floor/turf access for both regular season and tournament activity
- Northumberland Baseball Association indicated the need for prime time scheduling during the regular season and diamond availability on weekends for tournaments.

Over half of 13 groups (54% or 7) anticipate up to 10% growth in participation in the next five to ten years. Two groups expect growth in excess of 20%. Two groups anticipate growth will require additional access to facilities in the next five to ten years, including arena floors, ball diamonds and gymnasium. The majority of the groups (69% or 9) indicated no additional facility access will be needed, and 15% (2) were uncertain in this regard.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Camborne Schoolhouse was identified as a popular municipal facility that is often used to host programs and events (e.g., yoga classes, fiddle jams, etc.) and there is also a popular playground on the property. It was noted as being small, in poor condition and understaffed.

Harwood Hall was identified as a popular non-municipal facility in the Township that is owned and operated by a volunteer group.

It was indicated that there is a need to invest in improving the Township's infrastructure (e.g., more parking at parks, AODA improvements at facilities, etc.). It was generally thought, however, that new facilities are not needed in the Township because those in nearby municipalities also serve residents.

It was noted that Township could encourage more recreation tourism, and especially day visitors, in Hamilton Township through the promotion and use of facilities for sports and events.

Local and Regional User Groups

Table 4-4 lists the groups that use facilities in the Township and were requested to complete the survey. As shown in the table, 16 of the organizations are based outside the community. This reflects the regional nature of the market and the importance of non-local use to Township facilities.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Table 4-4: Hamilton Facility User Groups

Based In Hamilton Township	Based Outside Hamilton Township
Cold Springs Ball League	Northumberland Soccer
Baltimore Ladies Slow Pitch	Northumberland Ball Association
Baltimore Figure Skating Club	Northumberland Minor Lacrosse
Baltimore Sr Men's Hockey	Cobourg Men's Slo-Pitch
Baltimore Thursday Night Men's League	Early Years Pre-School County Community and Social Services
Bewdley Skating Club	Cobourg Home School
Bewdley Monday Night Old Timers	Northumberland Nighthawks Minor Hockey
Bewdley Sunday Night Men's League	Peterborough Ice Kats
Bewdley Wednesday Night Pickup	St. Mary High School
Bewdley Tuesday Night Pickup	Millbrook Minor Hockey
Bewdley Thursday Night Pickup	Rice Lake Oilers
Bulldogs Special Needs Hockey	Puck It - Hockey Development
Harmony on Ice	Mooresey Hockey Development
Friday Mixed Soccer	United Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
Lakeshore Oldtimers Ball	Overtime Hockey
Friday Mixed Lob Ball	Sledge Hockey
Jim Jubenville over 50 Hockey League	
Keith Lamb Pickup	
Andrew Patton Pickup	
Saturday Pickup	
Ball Hockey	
Yoga	
Lions Club	
Line Dancing	
Community Works	

4.4 Assessment and Recommendations

Overview of Facility Conditions and Programming Potential

As noted above, a key objective of the Master Plan is to increase recreation programming, activity and events using existing municipal assets. Indoor facilities, in particular, provide considerable potential to grow and diversify these services - the specifics of which are discussed in section 3.0. Township-owned indoor facilities comprise two major hubs (Baltimore Recreation Centre and Bewdley Community Centre)- and two smaller centres (Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Cold Springs Memorial Hall).

Baltimore Recreation Centre and Bewdley Community Centre

A visual tour of Township indoor facilities showed both Centres to be spacious, in good condition and very well maintained. Structural condition assessments for both Centres were conducted in 2014 (see Section 2.3). The reports indicated the facilities were in good condition except for recommending attending to a building foundation crack at the Baltimore arena and extensive deterioration on the east exterior arena wall at Bewdley Community Centre. Our understanding is that work was undertaken to seal the cracks at Baltimore and that the condition of the wall at Bewdley is being monitored. No new structural issues have emerged in the years since the assessments were completed.

Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Cold Springs Memorial Hall

Both buildings are small, locally serving community spaces. Although the surveys revealed minimal use of these facilities by residents/user groups, the focus groups indicated that both - and particularly the Schoolhouse - are well used as such.

Both buildings are old structures, and the Old Camborne Schoolhouse is a designated historic building. It is recommended that comprehensive building conditions assessments be prepared for each of these facilities, while recognizing that AODA requirements for historic buildings vary from the legislated standards.

AODA Improvements

Community consultation results indicated a general concern about the need for AODA upgrades at Township facilities. The Township's Accessibility Plan (2018 update¹; see Section 2.3) and annual updates outline the municipality's intent and annual accomplishments in relation to implementing AODA legislation and show steady progress over the years, including ongoing audits of work remaining. Accomplishments for 2020-21 included both infrastructure and service delivery improvements:

- Cold Springs Hall Washroom Renovations (push button, tap handles, grab bars installed and the widening of doorways)
- Installation of emergency cardiac kits and additional signage at the Baltimore Recreation Centre
- Funding received for four accessible doors to be installed at the Township Main Office

1 <https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/township-office/resources/Documents/Accessibility-Plan-2018-update.pdf>

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- Planning for an Accessible Trail at the Baltimore Recreation Centre in development
- Installation of wheelchair accessible picnic tables at the Baltimore Recreation Centre.
- Keyless entry security mechanisms installed at the Township Main Office
- Staff training on the creation of accessible Word and PDF documents, web and social media content
- Standard stylized accessible document templates created for corporate-wide use

The Township will continue to implement AODA improvements on an incremental basis and as opportunities arise in conjunction with larger projects.

- F1: Prepare comprehensive building conditions assessments for Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Cold Springs Memorial Hall.
- F2: Continue work to further AODA improvements and monitor general facility conditions as need and opportunity arises.

Arena Ice

Based on the 2019 ice scheduling calendar, ice-in operating hours for Baltimore and Bewdley Arenas are Monday through Sunday, 8:00 am to 11:00 pm. Within total operating hours, prime time comprises Monday through Friday from 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm. Non-prime time (the balance of operating hours) comprises Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. One operating week, therefore, totals 105 hours, of which 65 hours are prime time and 40 hours are non-prime time.

The 2019 ice scheduling calendars were used to select the most heavily booked week in each full month of the ice-in season: January, February,

March, September (Baltimore only), October, November and December. The schedules are visually depicted in Appendix A.

The overall busiest weeks in each of the above-noted operating months were used to determine the proportions of prime and non-prime time ice use at each arena. These calculations are shown in Tables 4-5 and 4-6.

Using the average hours of prime time use per week for the six weeks, neither ice pad is approaching capacity use. At the same time, there is considerably more total prime time use than could be comfortably accommodated on a single pad. Using the current definition of prime time, an additional 23 hours per week would be needed to accommodate all use on a single pad. The 2013 Parks and Facilities Review indicated 1.33 ice surfaces as sufficient to meet demand in the Township at the time of the study. The two averages from the above tables total 88.3 hours of prime time. Based on 65 hours of prime time per pad, 1.35 pads are sufficient to meet demand - indicating relative stability in ice needs since 2013.

Limited anticipated population during the Plan's term along with an aging population suggests that any additional demand that results from local growth will be easily accommodated with existing facilities. Both arenas, and particularly Baltimore, may benefit from growth in other area municipalities (e.g., Cobourg, Port Hope) if unmet demand for ice time should emerge in these communities. As noted above, Hamilton Township is part of a regional recreation services market and will continue to rely on this use to support its facilities. Use from beyond the current market should also be sought as GTA area communities grow. Future opportunities to continue accommodating the needs of smaller organizations such as sledge hockey should also be pursued. Ice-based events are also a possibility to consider, either as Township-hosted or through rental packages (e.g., school community skating parties, birthday parties, etc.).

Table 4-5: Baltimore - Use of Prime and Non-prime Ice Time in 2019

Week in 2019	Prime Time Hours Used (total 65)		Non-prime Time Hours Used (total 40)	
	#	%	#	%
	47.0	72.3%	6.5	16.3%
week of February 17	44.5	68.5%	16.0	40.0%
week of March 10	39.0	60.0%	21.5	53.8%
week of September 22	33.0	66.0%	3.5	8.8%
week of October 20	49.0	75.4%	4.5	11.3%
week of November 24	50.0	76.9%	5.5	13.8%
week of December 8	58.0	89.2%	6.5	16.3%
total for six weeks	320.5	-	52	-
average per week	45.8	70.4%	7.4	18.6

Table 4-6: Bewdley - Use of Prime and Non-prime Ice Time in 2019

Week in 2019	Prime Time Hours Used		Non-prime Time Hours Used	
	#	%	#	%
week of January 6	46.5	71.5%	7.0	17.5%
week of February 17	40.0	61.5%	9.5	23.8%
week of March 3	43.0	66.2%	3.5	8.8%
week of October 20	39.0	60.0%	0	0
week of November 3	41.5	63.8%	0	0
week of December 8	45	69.2%	1.0	2.5%
total for six weeks	255.0	-	21.0	
average per week	42.5	65.4%	3.5	8.8%



Figure 4-3: Baltimore Arena Ice Rink

Section 2.4 of the report discusses an innovative food service venture by Dufferin Community Living. The arena food concession at Baltimore Recreation Centre could be a candidate for this type of arrangement. Alternatively, the Township could consider issuing a RFQ for a contracted food service operator to run the concession. Another option, which is becoming more widely used by municipalities, is contracting mobile food vendors at popular locations for seasonal (e.g., beaches in the summer) or periodic uses (e.g., tournaments, events).

- F3: Retain both indoor ice pads: Two indoor pads will remain sufficient to meet needs for ice over the term of the Master Plan, along with available prime and non-prime time to accommodate expanded use.
- F4: Continue to seek opportunities to accommodate the needs of ice users in the market area and beyond, and to develop ice-based events.

Arena Floor

Pad 1 at the Baltimore area is available for April, May and June each year during ice-out for floor use. Scheduling information for 2018, 2019 and 2022 was used to identify use patterns and levels in relation to capacity pre-and-post COVID restrictions. As shown in Figure 4-4, scheduling for 2022 includes new floor uses by Waves Ball Hockey and the Rollerskating Collective, as well as a considerable jump in hours of use for lacrosse. At 218.5, total hours in 2022 represent an increase of 160 hours over 2018 or more than 2.5 times as much use. Moreover, these bookings are occurring in the immediate aftermath of COVID, which suggests that recovery may not be as slow as some commentators suggest.

Based on the scheduling calendar, the earliest start time for arena floor activity on weekday evenings is 5:00 pm or one hour less per day than ice prime time. If the same weekend prime time hours as ice-in are applied to floor use, weekly prime time totals 60 hours. Using this figure, the average weekly prime time use in 2022 was 17 (218.5/13 weeks), which represents 28% of available weekly evening and weekend hours. Increases in total use and the variety of uses looks promising for a continuing trend in this direction. However, there is still a considerable amount of prime time available to accommodate more activity. The programming recommendations in section 3.0 identify interest in a number of activities that can be accommodated using the arena floor including gymnasium sports such as basketball, pickleball and volleyball.

F5: Continue to promote and develop use of the arena floor, including new uses such as pickleball.

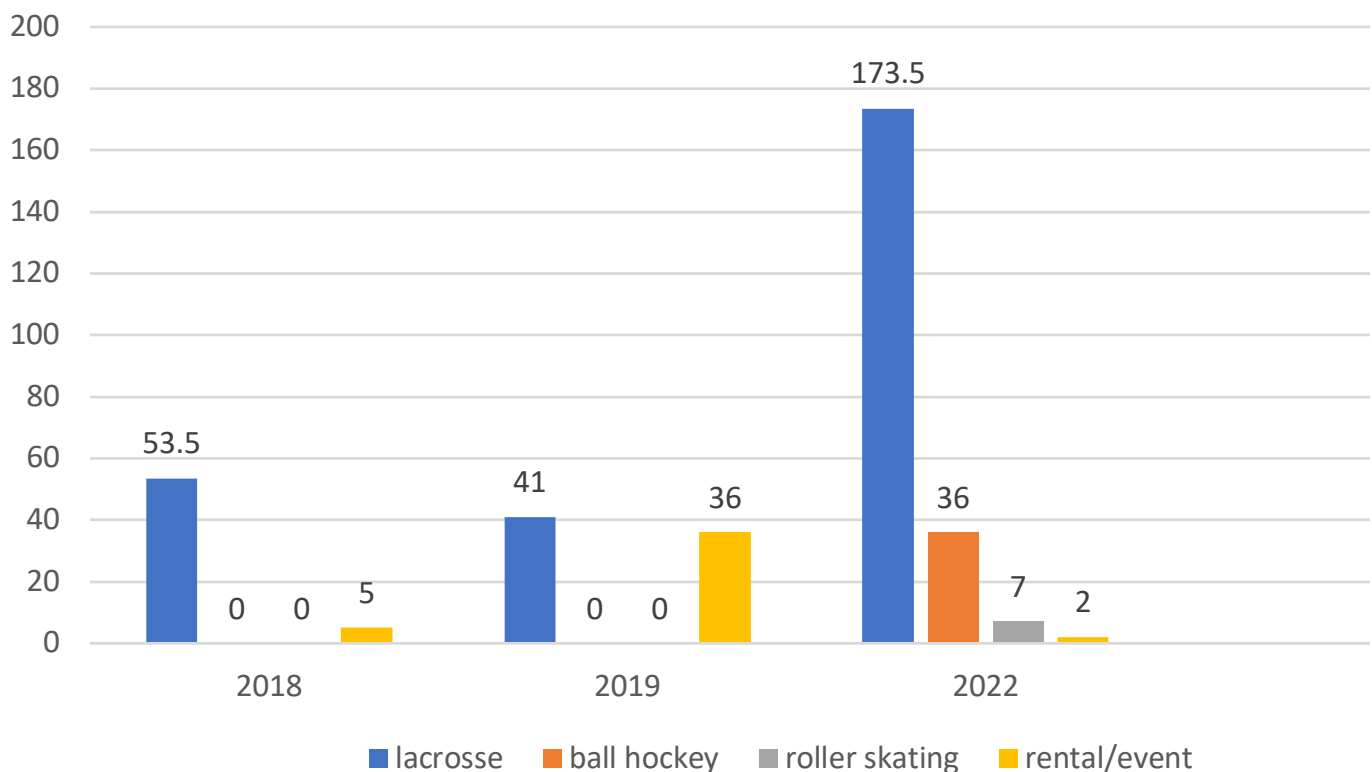


Figure 4-4: Baltimore Arena Hours of Floor Use by Type

Sabic Indoor Turf

Fall/Winter Season

The primary turf season at Baltimore Recreation Centre runs from September to May when outdoor field sports come indoors for the winter. Figures 4-5, 4-6 and 4-7 show hours of prime and non-prime time use in three seasons (2018-19, 2019-20 and 2021-22). Three periods (April-May 2019, September-October 2021 and January 2021) show no hours of use due to COVID shut-downs. As a result, hours of use across the three seasons are not directly comparable, since not all months were operating.

The periods from February through May, however, can be compared for the 2018-19 and the 2021-22 seasons. In the 2018-19 season, turf use totaled 491 for the four months, compared with 556 scheduled for the current (2021-22) season. This represents a 13.2% increase, which is likely due in large part to Northumberland Soccer's addition of gym scheduling to existing hours of turf use at the Baltimore Recreation Centre. The organization's website notes the following:

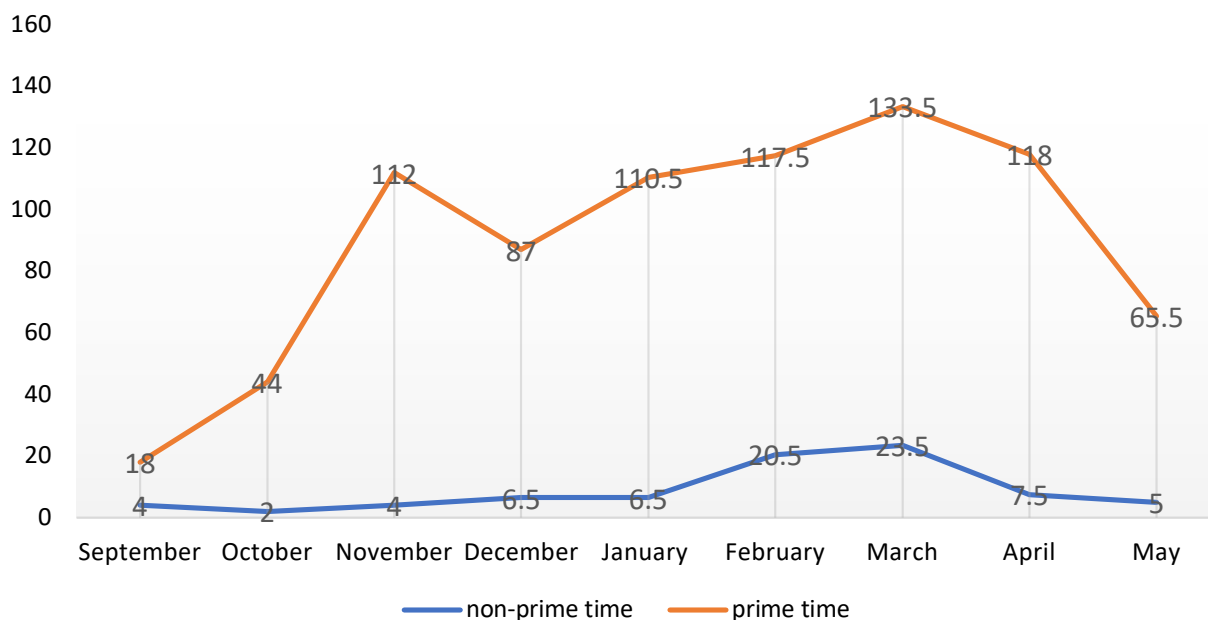


Figure 4-5: Indoor Turf Schedule 2018-2019

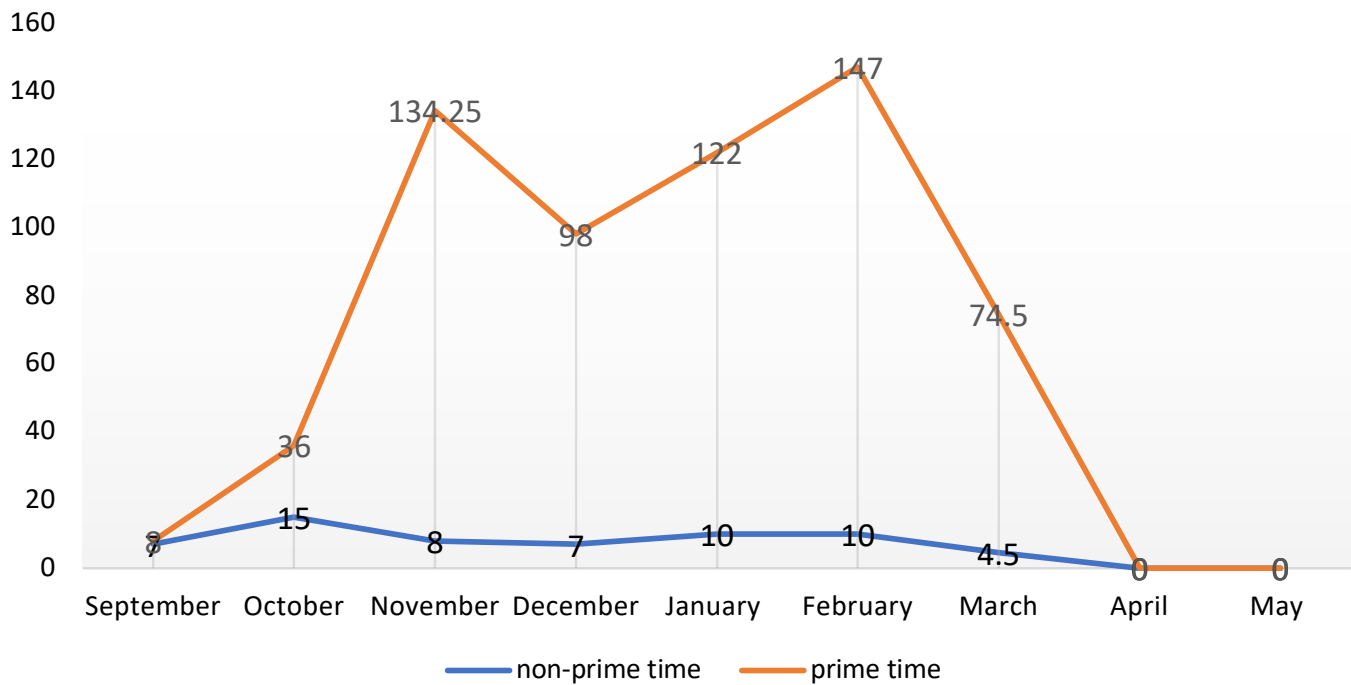


Figure 4-6: Indoor Turf Schedule 2019-2020

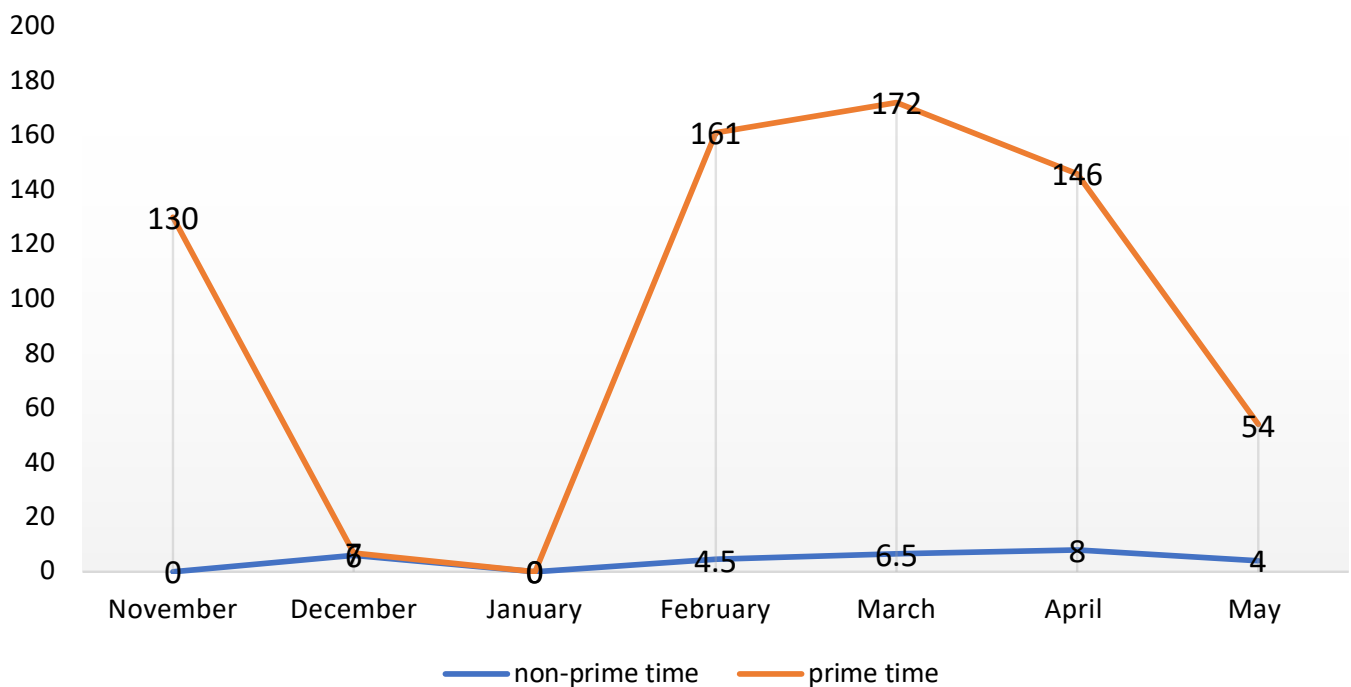


Figure 4-7: Indoor Turf Schedule 2021-2022

Northumberland Soccer

Indoor Soccer 2022 – 2023

****All divisions will be playing on the turf field in Baltimore - no more gym floors but actual simulated grass turf for all!****

Youth from ages 4 to 18

Adults from age 18 and up

As with the trend in arena floor use, an increase in use of the turf is a strong sign that COVID recovery may be faster than anticipated in common discourse on the topic.

Figures 4-8, 4-9 and 4-10 show the proportionate distribution of turf use by type for each of the busiest (i.e., most heavily booked) months in 2019, 2020 and 2022. The diagrams show the relative amount of use by type in relation to total use. They do not represent total available time or prime time. At the same time, the figures illustrate a progressive proportionate increase in soccer activity and corresponding decreases in other uses.

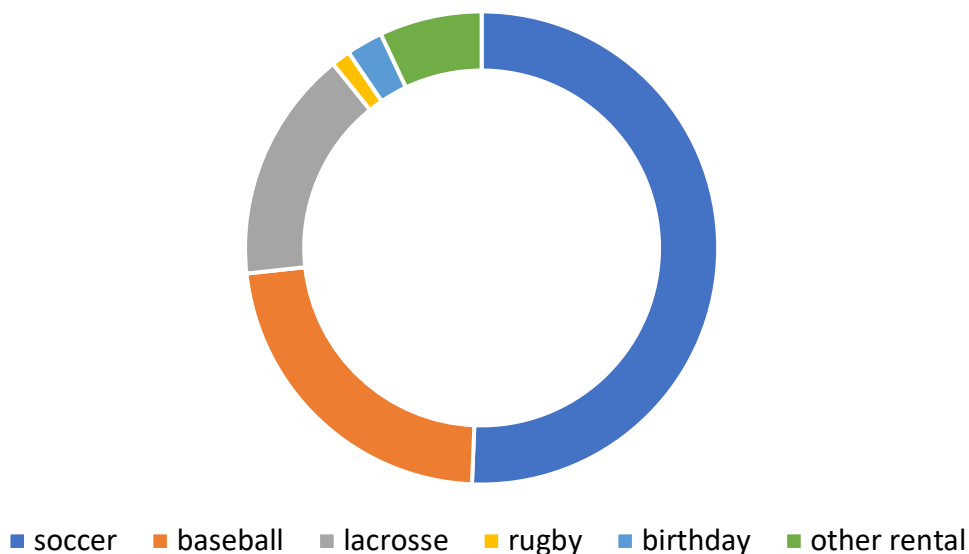
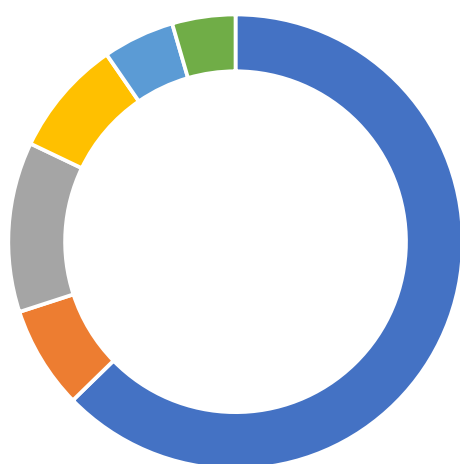


Figure 4-8: Proportionate Turf Use by Type March 2019



■ soccer ■ baseball ■ lacrosse ■ rugby ■ birthday ■ other rental

Figure 4-9: Proportionate Turf Use by Type February 2020

March 2022 is the most heavily scheduled month of the three. When use is viewed collectively, the prime time “window” does not approach capacity use. Using various definitions of weekday evening prime time, and the average of 3.2 hours of prime time use per weeknight (74 hours total for March/23 weekdays), produces the following:

- assuming 35 hours of prime time use (as per the arenas), 9.1% (3.2/35) of weekday prime time is used;
- assuming 30 hours of prime time use, 10.7% (3.2/30) of weekday prime time is used; and
- assuming 25 hours of prime time use, 12.8% (3.2/25) of weekday prime time is used.

Weekend prime time use averages 9.1 hours per day (72.5 hours total for March (8 weekend days). At 30 hours of weekend prime time, this represents 30.3% capacity use on weekends.

Although averages do not reflect variations in use by day that occur as a result of users’ scheduling requirements or requests, they indicate the potential to adjust scheduling to use time more efficiently. This becomes particularly important when demand for time by different users cannot be accommodated due

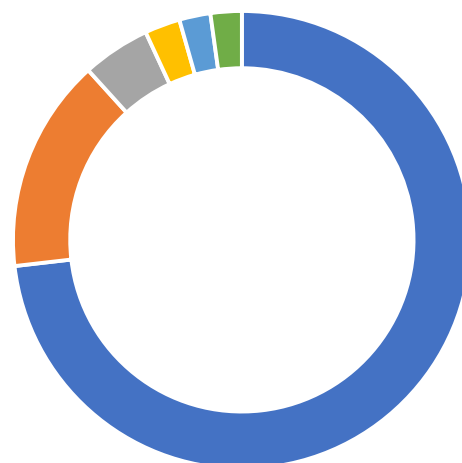


Figure 4-10: Proportionate Turf Use by Type March 2022

to factors other than capacity use of available time. As noted above, both Northumberland Minor Lacrosse and Northumberland Baseball Association indicated a need for more time, and especially prime time, on the turf. At the same time, the proportion of time allocated to these uses has shrunk over the last few years.

From a community service perspective, it is important for municipalities to foster a variety of opportunities for recreation and equitable access to facilities for groups to operate their programs. The Baltimore Recreation Centre indoor turf is the only such facility in the immediate area and, therefore, demand for preferred scheduling during prime time is high among those groups seeking suitable winter accommodation. An allocation policy similar to that for ice is likely needed for the indoor turf to help ensure an equitable distribution of prime time and to improve scheduling efficiency.

In consultation with Northumberland Soccer (as the priority user) and other major turf users, the Township should prepare a policy comparable to that for ice time which, in addition to defining prime/non-prime time hours, considers the following:

- the need for each major user group to be allocated a minimum number of consecutive hours of prime time on weeknights and on weekends, with weekend allocations factoring in tournament scheduling; and
- the requirement that scheduling from early to late evening hours aligns with players' ages.

Although rentals for birthdays and other purposes do not comprise a major component of turf use, a discounted rental rate during late weekday afternoons (e.g., 4 pm to 6 pm) might encourage both greater use of non-prime time as well as freeing up more prime time for consecutive scheduling.

Spring/Summer Season

Demand for access to the indoor turf is essentially non-existent from May to September, and so presents a major opportunity for program development. While the primary purpose of this type of facility is to accommodate field sports, communities without municipal gyms are increasingly using indoor turf facilities for other active indoor programming. Section 3.0 discusses community interest in expanded programming, some of which could be offered during the spring/summer season using the Sabic field. Examples of uses in these types of facilities include multi-sport courts (e.g., tennis, badminton, pickleball), an area with workout equipment for personal training, community programs (e.g., yoga, fitness, parent-tot drop-in, etc.) Some municipalities provide indoor driving ranges on artificial turf facilities as revenue-generating uses.

- F6: Develop an allocation policy for use of the Sabic indoor turf to promote equitable access to facility users during the high demand fall/winter season.
- F7: Consider a discounted rental rate during late weekday afternoons (e.g., 4 pm to 6 pm) to encourage both greater use of non-prime time (e.g., for birthday parties), as well as freeing up more prime time for consecutive scheduling.
- F8: Actively develop expanded spring/summer use of the indoor turf.

Program Space

Municipal

Township-owned program space comprises three large hall/kitchen combinations and an historic schoolhouse. Halls in Bewdley and Baltimore are part of the recreation centres, with capacities of up to 300 and 200, respectively. Cold Springs Hall is a stand-alone facility with a capacity of 110 to 175. All three facilities are available for community use and are scheduled through the Township. The Old Camborne Schoolhouse is a designated historic building, comprising a small room and a washroom. Scheduling is handled by a volunteer.

Halls:

Tables 4-7, 4-8 and 4-9 summarize use for 2019 in general categories for each hall. The 2019 schedule was used as the most representative complete year of bookings pre-COVID and were used to allocate uses to the categories². The individual halls accommodated a variety of uses categorized as recurring programs, which are described for each facility. For all three halls, rentals included private parties, community group dinners, etc. Township uses included municipal, fire department and committee meetings, training sessions, etc. “Other” uses included County rentals, election polls, outside agency training programs, etc.

Baltimore Hall programs included square dancing, EarlyON, yoga, Community Care, volunteer appreciation, a soccer clinic and the junior firefighter camp. As shown in Table 4-7, bookings totaled 105 for the year, and programs represented over half of all uses and hours.

Table 4-7: Baltimore Recreation Centre Hall Use 2019

Baltimore RC Hall 2019	Number of Bookings (#)	Proportion of Bookings (%)
total bookings	105	100.0
programs	58	55.2
rentals	38	36.2
Township	8	7.6
other	1	1.0
total hours	507.85	100.0
program hours	182	57.7

² For 2022, to date Bewdley has 29 bookings, of which ten are for the provincial elections and one is for the municipal elections. Cold Springs has 12 bookings, of which two are for the provincial elections.

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Bewdley Hall programs included the library, junior firefighter camp, Community Works, Lions and snowmobile clubs and sledge hockey meetings. Table 4-8 shows a total of 132 bookings for the year, of which the majority were rentals. Just over one quarter were programs.

Table 4-8: Bewdley Community Centre Hall Use 2019

Bewdley CC Hall 2019	Number of Bookings (#)	Proportion of Bookings (%)
total bookings	132	100.0
programs	34	25.8
church	0	0
rentals	90	68.2
Township	5	3.8
other	3	2.3
total hours	559.75	100.0
program hours	169.5	30.3

Cold Springs Hall programs included Girl Guides, euchre, Over 60, 4-H and Community Care. The Bethlehem Walk, an annual outdoor event, is based at the Hall for three full days. Rentals included 40 church events. Table 4-9 shows a total of 134 bookings for the year. Programs and rentals comprised comparable proportions.

Table 4-9: Cold Springs Hall Use 2019

Cold Springs Hall 2019	Number of Bookings (#)	Proportion of Bookings (%)
total bookings	134	100.0
programs	58	43.3
rentals	66	49.3
Township	6	4.5
other	4	3.0
total hours	832.75	100.0
program hours	212.5	25.5

Old Camborne Schoolhouse:

Bookings for 2019 totaled 144, as shown below in general categories:

- group celebrations (birthday parties, family gatherings, showers, etc.): 61 (42.4%)
- recreation/wellness programs (yoga, mindful movement, martial arts): 40 (27.8%)
- music/arts activities: 18 (12.5%)
- EarlyON: 20 (13.9%)
- group meetings: 5 (3.5%)

These findings indicate that the Township's halls are considerably underutilized for community programming and events. Assuming eight days of closure for statutory holidays³ leaves 357 available days per hall each year. While each booking does not necessarily occupy an entire day, a simple calculation equating each use to one day indicates the following minimum levels of use for the halls in relation to this measure of capacity: Baltimore - 29.4%; Bewdley - 40%; Cold Springs - 37.5%; Old Camborne Schoolhouse - 40.3%.

The 2013 Facilities and Parks Review (see Section 2.3) recommended the purchase of recreation management software to plan, monitor and track program and facility use. Activenet was selected and operationalized in response to this recommendation and, as a result, information for this assessment was readily available. The 2013 study also recommended improving marketing of community halls and optimizing revenue generation by reviewing rental rates to ensure they are comparable and competitive with other similar facilities within the Township and throughout market area, and matching rates to characteristics and quality of each facility. Both tasks are now undertaken on an ongoing basis.

Given the absence of these tools and activities before the 2013 review, it is not possible to compare “before and after” hall use levels. At the same time, the results of the Master Plan assessment show there is considerable opportunity to increase the use of these spaces. While private rentals will remain an important part of the halls' service mix, the Plan looks to grow the program and event component of the Township's role in parks and recreation. Going beyond accomplishments to date and rebuilding use post-COVID will require a focused, proactive approach to program/event development, as discussed in section 6.0.

The 2013 Recreation Facilities Review noted that none of the Township's facilities have a sprung floor, which is the preferred surface for activities such as dance, fitness, etc. These floors combine shock absorption and traction for users, and are suitable for installation in multi-purpose spaces to be used for aerobics, Pilates, yoga, tai chi, dance, performing arts, physical therapy, etc. The recreation centre halls are spaces that should be used to develop these types of programs. To this end, the Township should purchase portable dance mats for use in the short-term. Based on the response to new programs, investment in a permanent sprung floor to occupy a portion in one hall (e.g., 1,000 square feet) should be considered.

- F9: Develop indoor programming suitable to Baltimore and Bewdley Halls and Old Camborne Schoolhouse.
- F10: Purchase portable dance mats for use at Baltimore or Bewdley Hall.
- F11: Based on response to new programming, determine the need to install a permanent sprung floor at one of the Centre halls.

³ The total number of days unavailable to book was not clear from the schedules.

Kitchens:

The Baltimore Recreation Centre and the Bewdley Community Centre have kitchens that should be considered for programming other than uses attached to rentals for social events. A [Health Unit-certified](#) kitchen can be used for a variety of food and nutrition programs, as well as projects/activities related to communal and/or commercial use of the kitchen.

The Township of North Glengarry is a small Ontario community that has partnered with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit to launch a new pilot project that “will enable food producers to rent time at the [North Glengarry Community Kitchen](#), located at the Maxville & District Sports Complex (25 Fair Street, Maxville) so that they can produce food items for resale. The cost is \$50 per day and food producers are required to have their Food Handlers Certificate and have their recipe validated by the EOHU.”

Other provinces appear to be considerably farther ahead in this area. The Government of Manitoba lists approximately 60 locations to, “Rent a local commercial community kitchen to help further develop your food product idea. All these locations have a Food Service Establishment permit issued by Manitoba Health.”⁴

[Second Harvest](#) offers food-related programming to not-for-profits and businesses that could be facilitated by the Township for in-situ provision. Existing one-hour workshop examples include “Eating Well on a Budget,” which teaches participants how to eat well on a budget without compromising nutrition, and “Food Date Labelling,” which is designed to clear up the confusion about expiry and best before dates, a major cause of food waste in Canada. Programs are \$200 for not-for-profits and \$500 for business. If local groups expressed interest in hosting these types of events, the Township could assist with organization and facility space.

F12: Consult with Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit to investigate the potential to use community centre kitchens for programming and food producer rentals.

F13: Pilot a “community kitchen” project.

Non-Municipal

There are two small, non-municipal community halls in Hamilton Township: Gores Landing Hall and Harwood Community Hall. Both are owned and operated by community-based volunteer committees/boards. The Gores Landing Hall is located on municipal property. It also contains the local branch of the Cobourg Public Library. The Township is not involved in the programming and use of these halls, which largely serves their immediate communities. At the same time, there may be opportunities to work with owner/operators to meet needs for community-based programming at these locations.

F14: In consultation with owner/operators, focus on proactively developing community-serving programs and events that are compatible with non-municipal halls/spaces when they are available.

4 Source: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/online-resources/community-kitchens-listing.html>

Ball Diamonds

There are nine (9) municipal ball diamonds in the Township. Four (4) of these are located at the Baltimore Community Centre, one (1) of which is lit. The remaining five are located singly at Bewdley Community Centre, and the following parks: Butterfield, Laurel, Plainville, and Cold Springs Memorial. Based on park site visits, the five community centre diamonds are rated as “good condition,” and all park diamonds were rated “poor condition.”

The diamonds at Baltimore Community Centre are the only facilities scheduled for organized use. The 2022 schedule was used to assess use in relation to capacity for these diamonds. Table 4-10 shows available prime time estimates for the four diamonds, which were calculated based on booking patterns, lit/unlit fields and 22 full weeks of scheduling in 2022.

Table 4-10: Available Prime Time at Baltimore Community Centre Ball Diamonds 2022

	Prime Time	Hours/ Diamond	Hours/Per week	Hours/Season (22 weeks)
Diamond 1 (lit)				
weekday	6 pm - 11pm	25	25	550
weekend	8 am - 11 pm	30	30	660
Diamonds 2, 3 and 4 (unlit)				
weekday	6 pm - 8 pm	10	30	660
weekend	8 am - 8 pm	24	72	1,584
Totals		89	157	3,454

Collectively, diamond use is concentrated on weekends. Tuesdays and Wednesdays (and Thursdays on Diamond #4) are not scheduled. Of total time scheduled, 500 hours are allocated to the Northumberland Softball Association with diamonds regularly scheduled for 10-hour periods on Mondays, Fridays and weekends.

Total time scheduled for the 2022 season is 1,001.25 hours, of which 120 occur outside prime time. Prime time use, therefore, totals

881.25 or approximately 26% of available capacity. As such, there is considerable potential to increase the use of the Baltimore Centre diamonds, which are the focus of organized activity and should remain so. Four diamonds at a single location, especially when co-located with indoor facilities (e.g., washrooms, concession) and play areas for participants' siblings have greater potential to attract tournaments, which typically occupy several diamonds for up to two full days and

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largely on weekends. While there is very limited capacity to accommodate more weekend activity at the Baltimore diamonds due to tournament use, there is time available on weekdays.

Based on the findings of the 2013 Parks and Recreation Facilities Review Hamilton Township (see Section 2.3), use levels at the Baltimore diamonds have remained essentially the same in the intervening years. However, the quality of the diamonds and the four-field configuration are assets to be promoted. Population growth alone in the GTA and surrounding communities may generate unmet demand for access to good facilities. Reaching out beyond the Northumberland region and to non-typical users could also result in increased use of these fields during the week when time is available. The emphasis, therefore, should be on connecting with organizations that are more likely to use facilities on weekdays.

While the particulars regarding criteria for hosting and expectations regarding fees and services would need to be verified with these organizations, both the Ontario Senior Games and the Ontario Federation of Secondary School Associations (OFSAA) include baseball, softball and/or slo-pitch in their programs. Hamilton Township is within the Ontario Senior Games Central Region, District 12: Kawartha Lakes/Peterborough/Northumberland.⁵ Slo-pitch is one of the sports included in the Games. OFSAA covers a broad range of secondary school sport competition including baseball, softball and slo-pitch, and much of the program occurs during academic hours. Hamilton Township is in OFSAA's Central Ontario Region.⁶ As discussed in section 6.0, Special Olympics Ontario (SOO) is actively seeking partnerships with municipalities for their programs - one of which is softball. The Township of Hamilton is in SOO's Central Ontario region.

The 2013 report recommended removing the fifth diamond at Baltimore Recreation Centre and those in Laurel and Butterfield Parks and potentially removing the diamond in Plainville Park. In terms of distribution, this approach would leave diamonds in the northwest, central and southeast areas of the Township (Bewdley and Baltimore) for pick-up play. The Baltimore diamond was removed, while Butterfield, Cold Springs, Laurel and Plainville Park diamonds remain and are essentially unused.

F15: Actively promote the four diamond ball field complex at Baltimore Recreation Centre to areas beyond those currently captured in its market and to non-typical users.

⁵ <https://district12.osga55plus.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/02/D12-769x1024-1.jpg>

⁶ <https://www.cossa.ca>

Rectangular Playing Fields

There are no designated outdoor rectangular playing fields in the Township, although green space at Baltimore Recreation Centre is currently used for field lacrosse. It is unusual for municipalities to have no outdoor playing fields. As part of a regional network of both service providers and users, however, it is likely that Northumberland-wide need for playing fields is largely met in nearby communities such as Cobourg and Port Hope. At the same time, use of undesignated space for a field sport indicates actual demand for a facility. Depending on the extent of use now, and the potential for future use of a multi-use playing field for a variety of organized activities, the Township could consider formalizing the field at the Recreation Centre. In advance of this possibility, use of the field and other expressed demand for/interest in field access, should be monitored to determine the likelihood of supporting an outdoor multi-purpose sports field to near capacity prime-time use.

F16: Monitor use of informal field to establish demand for construction of a regulation field.

F17: Consider providing a formal outdoor multi-use playing field at the Baltimore Recreation Centre in response to verified demand.

Tennis and Pickleball Courts

The Township has four tennis courts: two at Plainville Tennis Courts, one at Butterfield Park and one at Castlehill Park. The latter two locations also have basketball standards for use with the courts. The visual site tour revealed the Plainville courts to be in good condition, and the other two are in fair condition. The Plainville courts were repaired and resurfaced in 2019 in response to the 2013 Parks and Recreation Facilities Review report's recommendation to decommission them due to significant deterioration and develop a new two-court pad at Baltimore Recreation Centre.

In both resident surveys, participants expressed interest in court sports (e.g., tennis, pickleball) with the online survey indicating a relatively strong response. At the same time, interest in pickleball - which is currently overwhelming in some communities - did not emerge as a noticeably, specific demand. There are no dedicated pickleball courts in the community, although respondents to the resident survey indicated playing pickleball (and tennis) at the Baltimore Recreation Centre.

There are no organized tennis or pickleball leagues in the Township, and facilities are not scheduled. Actual use is not known and, therefore, cannot be related to supply or unmet demand. As discussed in section 6.0, there is merit to monitoring activity on unscheduled facilities like tennis courts and other multi-use pads to establish trends in use. This information can be used to help verify demand for possible capital investments to upgrade existing facilities or add to supply.

Should interest in pickleball become apparent, before considering outdoor courts, the Township could "test" demand by providing lines and portable nets on the arena floor or another indoor area with sufficient space. If verified demand materializes, an option to meet the need for outdoor activity is to repurpose tennis courts to either dedicated pickleball or dual-

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purpose courts. The decision to repurpose existing tennis to pickleball courts, however, should be taken only upon demonstrated demand for both sports - to ensure an appropriate balance in supply is achieved.

Trends indicate that tennis is experiencing a resurgence in participation, according to Tennis Canada statistics. As shown in Table 4-11, data from a 2018 study on frequent players⁷ show the appeal of tennis to youth and young adults, as well as its potential to engage newcomers to Canada in community sport.

Table 4-11: Canadians Playing Tennis at Least Once a Week During the Tennis Season (i.e., Frequent Players)

Canadians That Played Tennis At Least Once A Week During The Tennis Season (i.e. Frequent Players)					
2,936,00 Canadians			8% of Canadians		
Breakdown by Gender					
Male:	58%		Female:	42%	
Breakdown by Age Group					
6 to 8	9 to 11	12 to 17	18 to 34	35 to 49	50+
2%	5%	25%	38%	22%	7%
Additional Facts					
67% of participants over 18, have children under 18 at home					
18% were born outside of Canada					

⁷ <https://www.tenniscanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/04.-Tennis-Participation-Data-and-Statistics-to-Assist-in-Facility-Planning.pdf>

Given this consideration, ideally the Plainville Tennis Courts should be retained for tennis only. It is the only location with more than one court, which can better support organized play, and both are in good condition.

An additional consideration when providing pickleball courts is location. Many municipalities are receiving noise complaints from residents who live in proximity to pickleball courts, as the paddle/ball combination is loud. “Many pickleballers play their sport on reconfigured outdoor tennis courts. The sport has ties to tennis, but uses a paddle instead of a racket, and a hard ball instead of a fuzzy tennis ball. The results can be noisy.”⁸ Distancing pickleball courts from residences and prohibiting night play or limiting play to indoor spaces are potential solutions to accommodating these concerns while providing facilities.

- F18: Monitor use of tennis courts and multi-purpose pads for trends in tennis and pickleball activity.
- F19: Before considering outdoor courts for pickleball, “test” demand by providing a portable facility on the arena floor or another suitable indoor space.
- F20: Ideally, retain Plainville courts as dedicated tennis-only facilities.
- F21: Consider repurposing other tennis or multi-use courts for single or dual-purpose pickleball facilities based on demonstrated demand and proximity to residential areas.

8 <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/pickleball-noise-complaints-1.6357053>





Figure 5-1: Castlehill Park

5.0 Parks and Trails Needs

5.1 Introduction

This section presents the needs assessment and resulting recommendations for parks and trails in the Township. The section is broken down as follows:

- Park classification, supply and distribution
- Trails
- Boat Launches
- Results of community consultation
- Guiding principles
- Considerations for “big ticket” items
- General and park-specific recommendations

5.2 Park Supply and Classification

Inventory

Hamilton has 17 municipal parks, one non-profit park and three conservation areas. The parks feature open green space, playgrounds, pavilions, basketball courts and baseball diamonds. They may also include soccer fields, tennis/pickleball courts and multi-sport courts (discussed in section 4.0). Hamilton residents also have access to playgrounds and fields at four public schools, and trails and natural space at three conservation areas. The facilities provided at each location are summarized in Appendix B.

Park Classification and Distribution

Classification

A parkland classification system encourages adequate and appropriate supply of parks in the Township by outlining for each park type a description, list of features and amenities, the number of hectares currently provided and target uses/users. Table 5-1 details a recommended park classification system for Hamilton based on implementation of the Master Plan's recommendations. The inventory of parks is organized by five proposed park type categories: Recreation Hubs, Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes.

Table 5-1: Recommended Parkland Classification System for Hamilton Township

Type	Description	Examples of Design, Facility and Program Considerations	Existing Township Parks in this Category
Recreation Hub	A park or group of closely connected parks with amenities or facilities that serve the whole Township as well as visitors. May share a site with or abut a recreation facility or school. Generally 2.5 ha in size or larger.	Mix of manicured, natural and hardscape. Can include sports fields fit for league play, net sport or multi-use courts, play structures, skateboard parks, pump tracks, passive space, trails, gardens, lighting, seating. Has washrooms and parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baltimore Recreation Centre Park • Bewdley Recreation Centre Park
Community Park	A park that serves multiple neighbourhoods and serves a limited community-wide function. Has some specialized facilities and supporting amenities. May be near major roads or have prominent street frontage, may share a site with or abut a school. Ranges in size.	Mix of manicured, natural and hardscape. Can include sports fields fit for league play, net sport or multi-use courts, play structures, skateboard parks, pump tracks, passive space, trails, gardens, lighting and seating. May have washrooms and parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bewdley Optimist Park • Cold Springs Memorial Park • Harwood Waterfront Park • Gores Landing Park • Plainville Park • Behan Park
Neighbourhood Park	A park intended to serve the needs of residents within a 5- to 10-minute walking distance, and serves as a neighbourhood focal point. Central to a neighbourhood, may be adjacent to schools or other institutions.	Mix of manicured, natural and hardscape. Informal sports fields/courts, play structures, passive space, trails, gardens, lighting and seating. May or may not have parking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pioneer Park • Butterfield Park • Laurel Park • Plainville Tennis Courts • Old Camborne Schoolhouse Park
Parkette	A small park that can be located in any part of the Township, including along trails. Depending on amenities and location, can serve different purposes. May be integrated with natural areas, trails and/or historic attractions; with scenic views and mixed-use areas. Generally less than 0.1 ha in size.	Mix of manicured, natural and hardscape. Generally used for passive activities. Can include passive space, gardens, lighting and seating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scriven Parkette • Stoney Pier Parkette

Distribution

Each of the Township's settlement areas is currently supplied with at least one park as shown in Figure 5-2. Of all the areas, Cold Springs has the least parkland and public recreation opportunities, with only a small playground and baseball diamond at Cold Springs Hall and Park. However, residents in Cold Springs are only a short drive to both Plainville and Camborne.

The issue of park supply and distribution must be considered in Hamilton's specific context. What is considered good planning practice is often based on densely developed urban areas, and is not necessarily applicable to a low density, dispersed community like Hamilton. For example, park provision standards for urban communities consider the physical and mental health needs for residents in homes with little or no private outdoor space. This differs considerably from many residents in Hamilton Township who have access to more private recreation space (e.g., large lots, waterfront properties). Therefore, the need to supply public greenspace is not as pressing in Hamilton Township from a physical and mental health perspective. At the same time, not all residents have adequate access to private outdoor space. Moreover, public green spaces and parks offer more than individual physical and mental health benefits to residents. This includes supporting placemaking and community-building by providing places for people of all ages to come together and recreate. For this reason, the Township should continue to invest in improvements to existing parks to make them accessible and appealing to all residents.

Given the current supply of parks, which is supplemented by access to private outdoor space, the Township does not need to add any new parks in the near future. However, with any new upcoming developments, the Township should ensure that adequate parkland is supplied to new subdivisions and that any new parks are connected by pedestrian trails or pathways to existing parks, trails and amenities.

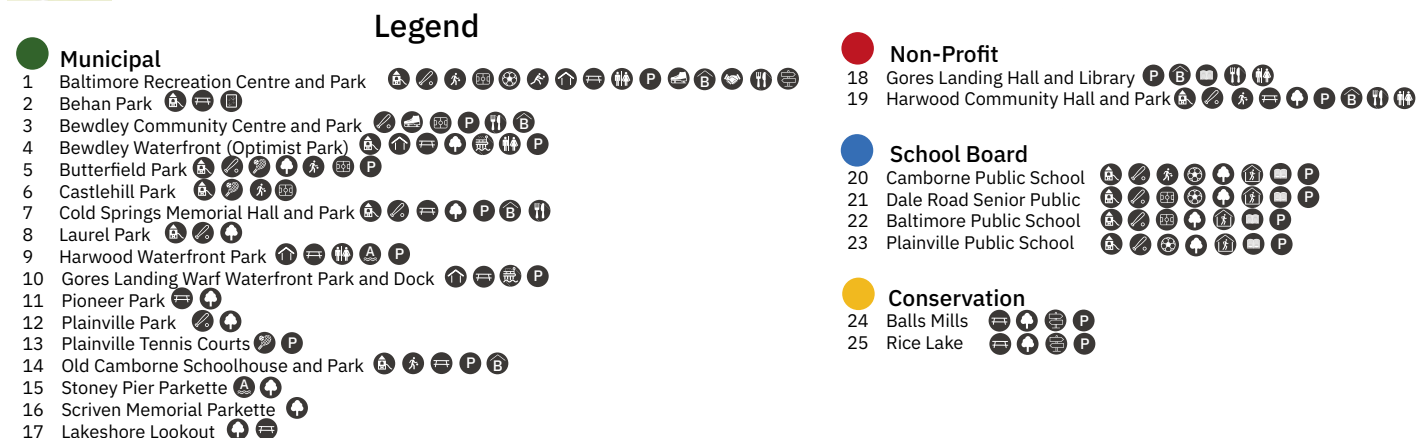
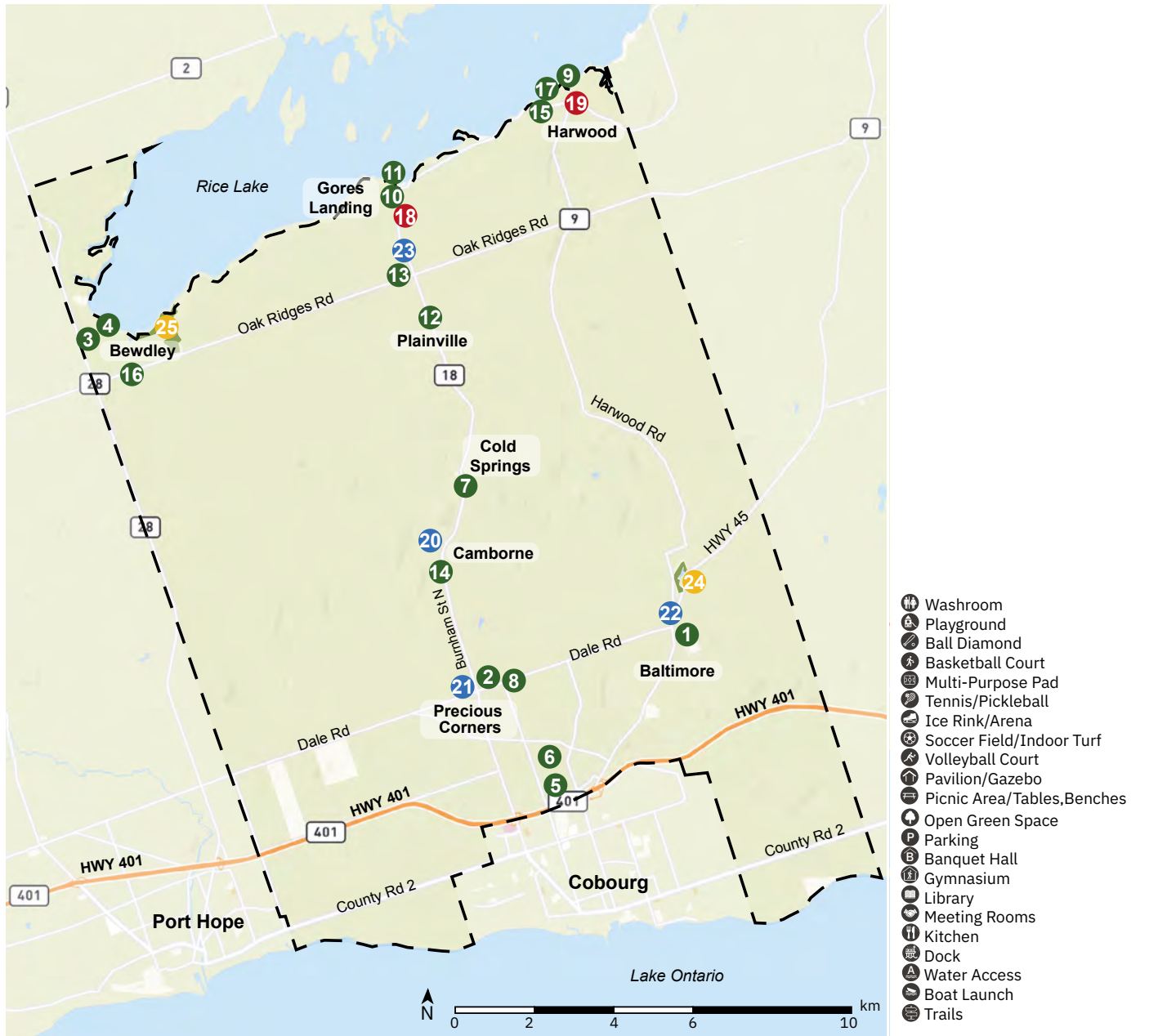


Figure 5-2: Township of Hamilton Parks and Facilities Distribution Map

Trails Supply

Inventory

While the Township does not have a large trail system, it does have a number of smaller trails and loops, as well as one important on and off-road trail that passes through its borders: the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail. The Oak Ridges Moraine extends over 160 kilometres, stretching from Orangeville to Trent Hills. Within Hamilton Township, the trail follows both on-road and off-road conditions, making it more ideal for the average hiker.

The following section provides an inventory and assessment of Hamilton's trail systems to help understand the level of service provision and existing conditions.

Formal Trails

The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail

The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail is located within the Oak Ridges Moraine, an environmentally sensitive, geological landform positioned within the Ontario Greenbelt. The trail is monitored by the Oak Ridges Trail Association, a non-profit organization with a mandate to build and maintain a public hiking trail system on the Oak Ridges Moraine. The trail spans approximately 21 km through Hamilton Township. Originating in Orangeville, the trail enters Hamilton Township in Bewdley at Dieppe Road and crosses east through Hamilton, exiting to meet the Northumberland County Forest.

In the Township, the trail consists mostly of on-road portions with small sections of off-road portions consisting of gravel or natural terrain. The trail is primarily for hikers as some off-road portions are not ideal for cycling. There is little to no signage at the various trail locations, making it difficult to differentiate the trail from private property at its off-road portions.

Laurie Lawson Trail

Located at and operated in partnership with the Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre, this trail is located within a red pine forest planted in 1968. The trail is a loop approximately 2.1 km in length, journeying across wetlands, a pine and aspens forest and crossing Cobourg Creek.

Hazel Bird Nature Reserve

This trail is a 4.2 km loop within the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve, a nature reserve part of the Rice Lake Plains' tall grass habitats. With rolling hills covered in meadows, this is a popular trail for birding, cross-country skiing and hiking.

Informal Trails

Majestic Hills Trail

This trail is located north of County Road 74 and begins on a road allowance just west of the Hamilton Township Office parking lot on County Road 18. The trail is 1.5 km of unmaintained road and natural conditions. The small trail crosses a number of small creeks and has points of steeper terrain. Ideal activities along this trail include walking, hiking and snowshoeing.

Rice Lake Trail

Rice Lake Trail is a 2.6 km out and back trail at the Rice Lake Conservation Area. The trail currently lacks appropriate signage and closes seasonally due to high water and ice dangers. The trail is ideal for fishing, hiking and paddle sports.

Lime Kiln Trail

A small 0.5 km section of trail that connects into the Ball's Mill Conservation area, this trail begins at a cedar-lined trail from Community Centre Road and continues to meet Lime Kiln Trail (Road), leading to Ball's Mill Conservation Area.

Ball's Mill

Ball's Mill Conservation Area offers woodland trails and a pond for exploring and fishing. It is closed from mid-October through May.

5.2.4 Boat Launch Supply

Inventory

Hamilton Township is bordered by two large water bodies: Rice Lake and Lake Ontario. The southern edge of Hamilton Township resides on Lake Ontario, with no formal boat launches for residents' use. Active boat launches reside in Cobourg.

The Township owns and operates two boat launches on Rice Lake, with an additional two water access points. There are also five privately-owned marinas along Rice Lake. The Township's two boat launches are vastly different: one of modest design, a gravel path that descends into the water; the other a large, paved area leading into the water. Bewdley dock has parking available but little space for boat trailers. Due to their rural surroundings, these launches only have roadside shoulder parking. Table 5-2 lists the municipal launches, their locations and amenities.

Table 5-2: Inventory of Municipal Boat Launches

Lake	Location	Amenities
Rice Lake	Bewdley Public Dock, 5033 Rice Lake Dr. N, Bewdley, ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asphalt launch • Small parking lot (Bewdley Optimist Park) • Washrooms (Bewdley Optimist Park) • Boat rentals (797-Boat Rentals)
Rice Lake	Gores Landing Wharf, 5310 Plank Rd, Gores Landing, ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small gravel launch • Fishing dock • Picnic areas

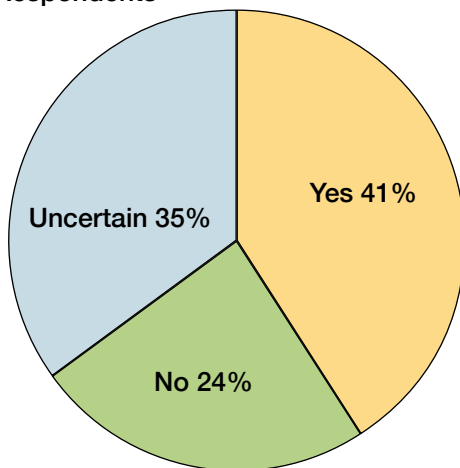
5.3 Interest and Demand: What We Heard

Parks

Improvements

In both an online survey (134 respondents) and a random telephone survey (400 respondents) residents (72 online respondents: 41%; 209 telephone respondents: 52%) indicated they think Hamilton Township parks require improvements (Figure 5-3).

Online Respondents



Telephone Respondents

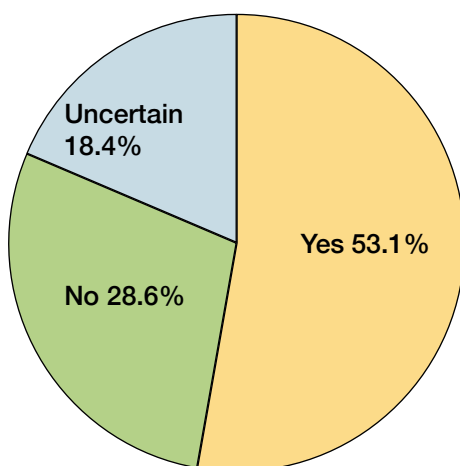


Figure 5-3: Do Hamilton Township parks require improvements?

Table 5-3 shows survey respondents' interests in improvements to Township parks.

Table 5-3: Types of Park Improvements Needed

Answer Choices	Online Respondents	Telephone Respondents
Water Play Features	57.5% (42)	56% (115)
More shade seating, lighting, etc.	45.2% (33)	32% (67)
Washrooms and water fountains	45.2% (33)	52% (109)
More walking paths to/within parks	38.4% (28)	22% (46)
New/improved play equipment	32.9% (24)	42% (88)
Beautification	28.8% (21)	24% (50)
Outdoor playing fields	27.4% (20)	48% (100)
Gym/Fitness stations	26% (19)	16% (33)
Multi-purpose play courts	23.3% (17)	35% (73)
Other (please specify)	23.3% (17)	-
Covered areas for markets, picnics, etc	21.9% (16)	7% (15)
Food/wildlife gardens	20.6% (15)	4% (8)
Increased maintenance/clean up	19.2% (14)	46% (96)
Concrete pads for wheel sports	12.3% (9)	18% (38)
Bicycle repair stations	8.2% (6)	4% (8)
AODA accessibility improvements	5.5% (4)	2% (8)

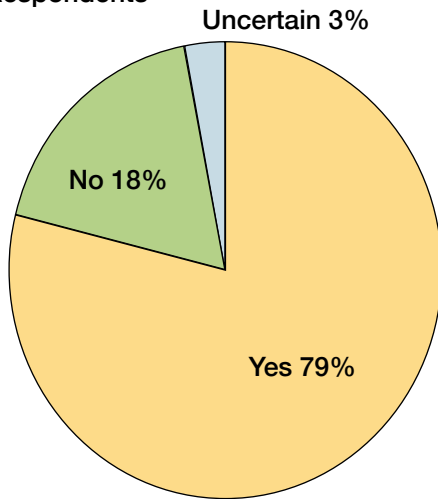
5.3.2 Trails

Improvements

Among 177 online respondents and 400 telephone respondents, 79% of online respondents and 62% telephone respondents indicated they use trails in or around Hamilton Township (Figure 5-4).

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Online Respondents



Telephone Respondents

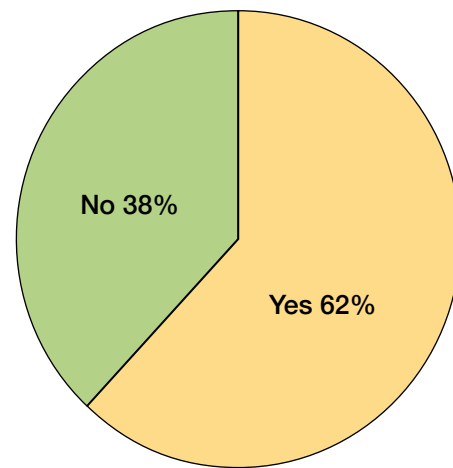


Figure 5-4: You or members of your household use trails in the Township?

When asked about the types of improvements needed to local trail systems, the most common response was more/improved trail heads (see Table 5-4).

Table 5-4: Types of Trail Improvements Needed

Answer Choices	Online Respondents	Telephone Respondents
More/improved trail heads (e.g., Parking, trail maps/details, washrooms)	46.3% (25)	66% (174)
Amenities along trails (e.g., Washrooms, benches, picnic spots, bike repair stations)	46.3% (25)	46.3% (122)
Information about the trail system as a whole	44.4% (24)	44.4% (117)
Signage and wayfinding along trails	42.6% (23)	42.6% (112)
More connections to trails in surrounding municipalities	35.2% (19)	35.2% (93)
A better internally networked trail system	33.3% (18)	33.3% (88)
Better trail maintenance	31.5% (17)	31.5% (83)
Educational/stewardship initiatives	24.1% (13)	24.1% (64)
More patrols/monitoring	20.4% (11)	20.4% (54)
Other (please specify)	14.8% (8)	14.8% (39)
Better AODA accessible segments	3.7% (2)	3.7% (10)
None	1.9% (1)	1.9% (5)

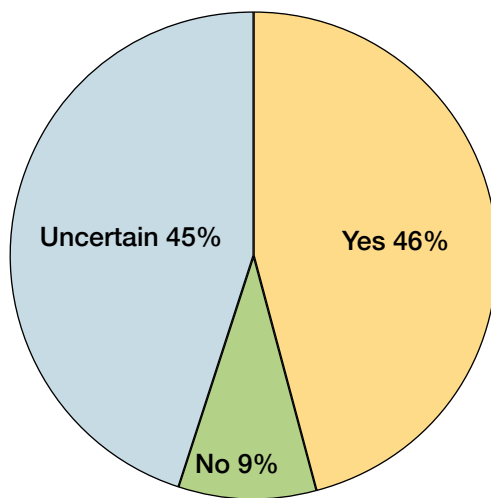
5.3.3 Waterfront

Improvements

When asked if waterfront recreation areas in the Township require improvements, among 182 online respondents and 400 telephone respondents, the results varied significantly in the uncertainty category at 45% for online respondents and 20% for telephone respondents (Figure 5-5). When asked about

the types of improvements needed to waterfront recreation areas, the most common responses were more parking and dock/boat launch improvements (see Table 5-5).

Online Respondents



Telephone Respondents

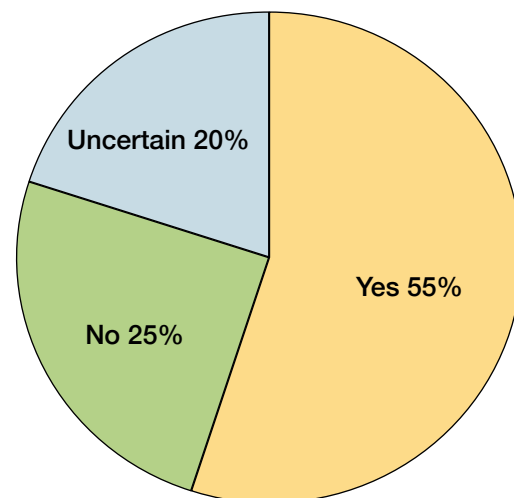


Figure 5-5: Do waterfront recreation areas require improvements in the Township?

Table 5-5: Types of Waterfront Improvements Needed

Answer Choices	Online Respondents	Telephone Respondents
More parking	65.9% (54)	33% (73)
Dock/Boat launch improvements	63.4% (52)	55% (121)
Washrooms	48.8% (40)	12% (26)
Increased maintenance/clean up	47.6% (39)	19% (42)
Educational/stewardship initiatives	30.5% (25)	14% (31)
Lighting	29.3% (24)	12% (26)
Signage	20.7% (17)	10% (22)
Other (please specify)	15.9% (13)	-

Needs

Parks and trails were identified as popular and important amenities in Hamilton Township and there is a significant desire to increase existing parkland and trails.

Popular amenities within Township parks include baseball diamonds and playgrounds. Many respondents indicate there is a need to improve signage, seating, shading, trees, beautification, pavilions, washrooms and accessibility at the various park locations. Among residents, there is also interest in a dog park and children's splash pad.

Trails have been indicated as being used by both residents and visitors, with municipal trails well maintained year-round by the Township. There are limited sidewalks or adequate shoulder space along roads. While trails are well used, there may not be interest in greater trail development due to potential impact on the farming/agriculture of the area.

Three popular waterfront areas for residents and visitors identified were Gore's Landing, Bewdley Park and Harwood Waterfront Park. While Gore's Landing and Bewdley Park have boat launches, Harwood Waterfront has a dock that is popular amongst residents and visitors for fishing. Currently these waterfront locations are not equipped for large crowds or intense recreational activities. In general, an increase in parking at all waterfront locations is greatly desired. Finally, Friends of the Harwood Waterfront have taken initiative to restore Harwood station to its original location at Harwood Waterfront Park. They are hoping to install the historical station, open a museum and investigate the reconstruction of the causeway at the Harwood Dock.

Park, trail and waterfront improvements can potentially increase residents' overall use of these assets and may encourage more users to become active participants in the various parklands and trails. Furthermore, Council

has indicated interest in acquiring more waterfront properties for the use of public parks but a key factor in these decisions is the financial implications. These considerations were taken into account in developing the recommendations provided in this section.

5.4 Assessment and Recommendations

Guiding Principles

This section describes underlying principles to guide park, trail and waterfront provisions over the next 10 years. These were identified as important to the community and have been applied as key considerations in this assessment and the resulting recommendations.

Access and Accessibility

Parks need to be upgraded over time to address the need for accessible and safe paths of travel, connections and entrances to on-site buildings (e.g., washrooms, change rooms) and other amenities. Infrastructure must meet AODA requirements regarding seating (benches and picnic tables), playground equipment, playground safety surfaces and pavement surfaces/paths of travel (including tactile warning strips, handrails and ramps).

Priority should be given to improvements to parks based on public/user safety and accessibility as per the Canadian Standards Association's requirements (CSA) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements. This includes but is not limited to:

- Playground safety (protective fall surfaces and CSA approved equipment)
- Accessible routes through parks
- Seating (location and configuration)
- Wayfinding and user information

The Township is in the process of making some accessibility upgrades to an existing playground with a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Signage and Wayfinding

As a general rule, signage should be provided along major routes, at parks, heritage sites, trails, boat launches/docks, paddle routes and facility entrances, and throughout the sites as needed. Signs should be AODA compliant. Aside from increasing awareness and user experience, signs contribute to building the community's sense of place when consistent, unique signage is used throughout the Township. The Township should develop a consistent sign design for parks, trails, boat launches, facilities and heritage sites that reflects its brand.

A signage and wayfinding strategy should be developed that outlines a hierarchy of signs, content, where they should be located, graphic standards (e.g., fonts, colours, icons, etc.), materials and installation details. The strategy should be developed in consultation with stakeholders where the signs will interface with other jurisdictions, landowners and public authorities to ensure a coordinated approach.

The strategy should:

- Provide the location, hierarchy and graphic design/style for all trail signage including but not limited to directional signs, trail markers and trailhead signage
- Provide directional signs at all parks highlighting adjacent trail connections (where applicable), nearby recreational facilities, important publicly accessible amenities such as washrooms, and culturally and/or historically significant features
- Prioritize road highway signs for more remote destinations such as canoe route access points
- Include a trail map that can be used for both online and on signs at trailheads, to be regularly updated and revised to address improvements to the trail network as the Master Plan is implemented

- Include road and highway directional signs to allow easy navigation to local and regional destinations including signage along Highway 2, Highway 28 and Highway 401
- Incorporate the Township's logo and associated branding

Once the strategy is in place, signs would be fabricated and installed in a phased approach and as part of separate projects and initiatives, many of which are described in this Plan. This could include, but is not limited to, parks, trails, boat launch improvements, trailheads and other municipal infrastructure improvement projects.

“Environment First” Park and Waterfront Policy

The peace and quiet of the natural environment in Hamilton Township attracts residents and visitors as much as recreational activities within these spaces do. It is essential, therefore, that environmental well-being dictates the type and extent of human activity that can occur in natural spaces. An “environment first” policy could include a vision statement for the Township, affirming its commitment to environmentally focused park development and management and acting as a guide for future decisions. Such a policy should be developed in consultation with the community and Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, who are already monitoring and managing Hamilton's natural resources to ensure local environmental concerns are addressed. The development of the policy is also an opportunity for education and buy-in for environmentally responsible practices.

Active Hamilton

Residents in the Township value outdoor recreation opportunities in all seasons, aligning with the trend discussed in section 2.4. Some municipalities help support all-season recreation by offering free outdoor recreation activities for children and adults at local parks. Programming in Hamilton Township is discussed in section 3.0. Organizations dedicated to parks and outdoor recreation such as Outdoor Play Canada and Park People regularly share resources and funding opportunities to support Canadian communities in their efforts to foster more outdoor play and recreation.

The following amenities and attractions are key considerations in order to accommodate activity year-round:

- Shelter from sun and rain
- Washroom access
- Drinking water sources
- Lighting
- Seating
- Winter events and programs
- Snow clearing
- Designated trailheads

Ensuring that there is ample opportunity for residents to be active year-round through various park facilities and amenities should be a top priority for Hamilton Township.

Partnerships

Through analysis and investigation, it is apparent that there is a general lack of soccer, lacrosse and football fields at the Township's parks. As well, many of the existing parks do not have adequate space to accommodate the installation of a soccer field or multi-sport field.

It would be beneficial for the Township to investigate partnership opportunities with the

Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board in order to facilitate more outdoor recreational activities. This partnership could include the redesign of existing field conditions or the construction of a new multi-sport field.

The Town of Aurora, for example, is partnering with the York Region District School Board to construct a new artificial turf multi-sport field. The school will have exclusive use during school hours and community sport organizations will be able to permit the fields through the Town on evenings and weekends. This kind of shared programming is seen in many municipalities throughout southern Ontario and could provide significant benefit to Hamilton Township.

- P&T 1: Make accessibility upgrades to parks.
- P&T 2: Develop a Township-branded signage and wayfinding strategy to be implemented at Township parks, trails, boat launches, facilities, heritage sites and main arterials.
- P&T 3: Develop an “environment first” policy, focusing on the support of the local ecology and waterfront development and management.
- P&T 4: Develop an “Active Hamilton” policy, focusing on the support and improvement of outdoor sporting activities and facilities.
- P&T 5: Consider building partnerships with local school boards for community use of sporting facilities, or joint development if providing a new facility.

Trail Specific Recommendations

Trail Connectivity

The Oak Ridges Moraine Trail (ORMT) that passes through Hamilton Township provides an excellent foundation for making the Township well connected for trail users from a recreational and active transportation perspective. While the ORMT is the only trail that crosses the entirety of the Township, it sets a foundation on how Hamilton could provide a North-South trail connection to Cobourg.

The majority of Hamilton is underserved with trails. Given the size of the Township, and the limited amount of land in public ownership, a strategy is required to help further develop a trail network over the long term that will serve residents and support tourism. This trail strategy will help direct the establishment of new trail connections across the Township, including both on- and off-road linkages, trailheads and other associated amenities over the long term. A strategy will provide staff with the guidance and tools necessary to secure these new connections and trailheads as opportunities present themselves through the land development/subdivision process. Trail connections that support the strategy would be secured by requiring developers to provide open space connections. Strategic securement of trails and pathways will better connect Hamilton’s settlements both internally and to each other, as well as support healthy active living and tourism.

Trailheads

Trailheads are the primary starting points to the trail network, designated as either minor or major depending on space available and anticipated level of use. Through signage, trailheads should inform the public about safe trail use, provide a map of the network and share trail etiquette. Other suitable regulatory and wayfinding signage should also be

provided. Trailheads should be made known online through the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail community and the Township website.

Major trailheads should include parking, signage, garbage receptacles, mapping and seating. Minor trailheads may also contain these features but will likely be fewer due to anticipated lower levels of use. At a minimum, minor trailheads may be provided at locations where trail users might join the trail from another connecting trail or where it connects to the adjacent community. Due to limited servicing and maintenance, washrooms cannot be installed along the trails.

Signage and Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding for Hamilton trails should follow the strategies outlined in section 5.4. Many trails in the Township currently lack signage that directs users to trails or adjacent amenities. For example, since public restrooms and bike repair facilities cannot be introduced along a trail due to management and servicing reasons, it is important to highlight when these amenities are accessible nearby. The directional signage should include the location/direction and distance to these public facilities, and signage should be placed at regular intervals along the trails.

P&T 6: Develop a trail strategy to further develop a trail network over the long term that will serve residents and support tourism

Park Specific Recommendations

This section discusses specific recommendations and upgrades for the Township's parks. If a park is not included in this section, it means specific changes to that park are not recommended during the term of this Plan. The general park considerations discussed above apply to all parks, including those not listed here.

Parks recommendations are addressed by their park categorization: Recreation Hubs, Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Parkettes. This section focuses on the unscheduled park facilities and amenities, while scheduled facilities (ball diamonds and sports fields) are discussed in more detail in section 4.0.

Recreation Hubs

Baltimore Recreation Centre

Baltimore Recreation Centre is a prominent recreation centre and large park in the Township, offering a variety of facilities and amenities. It should continue to be maintained and developed as a focal point for the whole community. The park area has four ball diamonds, two beach volleyball courts, a basketball court, two playgrounds, parking, washroom facilities, a pavilion, open green space and a small trail network.

Existing Facilities:

1. Pathways and Wayfinding: Movement through the park could be improved and optimized. By adjusting the path that circles around the basketball court and ball diamond 4, the extensive green space could be utilized to add a multi-sport field. Taking the path out to the property edge provides this opportunity.

2. Volleyball Courts: The only of its kind in the Township, the beach volleyball courts should be maintained regularly. Improvements to the courts could include the installation of new sand and the replacement of nets as needed.

New Facilities:

1. Multi-sport field: Soccer, lacrosse and football facilities are virtually non-existent within the community. There is adequate space within the park to install a full size soccer field if the path is adjusted as mentioned above. A multi-sport field would allow for more recreational programming and formal leagues. The new field should also consider additional seating along the sidelines for users and viewers alike.
2. Lighting: Current lighting around the park is primarily located on the ball diamonds. Considerations should be made to install pedestrian lighting along the paths close to the ball diamonds so users leaving the diamonds have adequate vision.
3. General Upgrades: There is currently some seating in the park. Additional group seating and benches should be added by the park's amenities, particularly around the playground and the basketball courts.

P&T 7: Revise path layout

P&T 8: Improve quality of existing volleyball courts

P&T 9: Consider installing a full size multisport field

P&T 10: Install pedestrian lighting at the various paths

P&T 11: Install additional seating throughout the park

Bewdley Community Centre

The second community centre within the Township, the park space at Bewdley Community Centre is just less than half the size of Baltimore Recreation Centre. The park has one ball diamond, a multi-sport court and open green space. This park is in close proximity to Bewdley Optimist Park and is centrally located for residents in Bewdley.

Existing Facilities:

1. Multi-sport court: The existing multi-sport court is in poor condition and should be replaced. Replacements should convert the court into two basketball courts. Other improvements should include new basketball nets and line painting for pavement games where space is available (four square, hop scotch, etc.).
2. Ball Diamond: Where ball diamonds are well used, the Township should consider a Bleacher Installation or Replacement Program. This program is valuable in maintaining the comfort and durability of seating options offered, and should continue monitoring the condition of the bleachers in the years to come and replace them as necessary.

New Facilities:

1. Playground: The Township should consider the installation of a new playground adjacent to the basketball court. Adding an accessible play feature that doesn't require climbing would improve the useability of the play space by all children. There should also be an accessible playground ramp, or at minimum a section with no difference in elevation, between the pathway and adjacent ground surfacing.

P&T 12: Upgrade sport court into basketball courts

P&T 13: Upgrade bleachers

P&T 14: Install new playground

Community Parks

Bewdley Optimist Park

Located along Rice Lake at its western point, Bewdley Optimist Park is a popular destination throughout the year given its access to the lake. The park has a playground, two pavilions, washrooms, a dock, a boat launch, open green space and access to parking.

Existing Facilities:

1. Pavilions: The current pavilions at the park are small in size and offer no seating. Upgrading the pavilions to a singular larger pavilion that offers opportunities for seating and eating could prove beneficial to the community. A larger pavilion would provide further opportunities for enjoyment via a large covered area for potential events and gatherings.

New Facilities:

1. Small Craft Launch: Since this park is one of the largest lake access points along Rice Lake, and given its location within the community, this is the perfect location to provide a small craft launch for residents to use.
2. Barriers: A number of residents take advantage of the lack of barriers between the parking and the park to drive their cars out into the park. This can damage elements within the park and is also a safety concern. The installation of natural barriers such as boulders would prohibit drivers from driving in the park, help maintain park quality and improve the overall safety.

P&T 15: Upgrade/replace existing pavilions

P&T 16: Install small craft launch

P&T 17: Install natural barriers

Cold Springs Memorial Park

One of the larger parks, and the only park located within the Cold Springs community, this park includes one ball diamond and one playground. The hall can be used as a rental space with kitchen and bar facilities.

Existing Facilities:

1. **Playground:** Recently the Township has been awarded a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to upgrade the playground to an accessible playground. These upgrades will be installed in the summer of 2022.
2. **Ball Diamond:** Due to the condition of the ball diamond, it is suggested to be removed.

New Facilities:

1. **Shade Structure:** As part of the Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant, a new picnic shelter is also being installed.
2. **Native Planting:** Planting of native shade trees would benefit playground users and increase protection from the elements.
3. **General Upgrades:** Improve the overall quality of the park with the installation of park signage, garbage receptacles and seating adjacent to the playground.

P&T 18: Install new playground

P&T 19: Remove ball diamond

P&T 20: Install new shade structure

P&T 21: Plant new shade trees

P&T 22: Install new seating, garbage receptacles and park signage

Harwood Waterfront Park

Harwood Waterfront Park is a park within the community that has a lot of history. Historically it was the location of the Harwood Railway Station, where the Cobourg and Peterborough Railway connected across Rice Lake. Currently the park has a pavilion, fishing area, small beach, seating areas, washrooms and parking. Friends of the Harwood Waterfront, a local community group, has raised significant funds in order to purchase the old railway station and return it to its original home.

Existing Facilities:

1. **Beach:** Since this is the only public beach location along Rice Lake, expanding the beach further into the park should be explored. This will include investigating the implications of beach expansion and any conflicts that might arise between the beach expansion and the natural shoreline.

New Facilities:

1. **Lighting:** As Harwood is a prominent community park, the installation of pedestrian lighting would benefit users and increase access with the installation of the historical railway station.
2. **General Upgrades:** Additional seating should be added at the pavilion for increased usability.
3. **Ecology:** Installing native, water-loving plants along the shoreline can help clean the water in the area.

P&T 23: Explore the expansion of the beach area

P&T 24: Install pedestrian lighting

P&T 25: Install additional seating

P&T 26: Enhance water quality with naturalized planting along shoreline

Gores Landing Wharf

The second Township boat launch area, Gore's Landing offers a smaller opportunity for boats to access the water. The park includes a pavilion, boat launch/water access, picnic tables, open green space and a long dock.

Existing Facilities:

1. Boat Launch: The Township should consider expanding the boat launch with a seasonal dock or longer ramp into the water.

New Facilities:

1. Planting Clean up: There are areas with overgrown planting requiring clean up. Any invasive species should be removed.

P&T 27: Expand boat launch with seasonal dock

P&T 28: Clean up planting

Plainville Park

This park is one of two in the Plainville community and offers the most potential for development. Currently the park consists of one baseball diamond and open green space.

Existing Facilities:

1. Baseball Diamond: The Township has noted that use of the diamond remains fairly low, suggesting removal should be explored. Removing the back stop, any benches and removing the diamond surfacing is recommended.

New Facilities:

1. Path: Adding a path around the border of the park creates an opportunity for a walking circuit.
2. Playground: No playground exists in Plainville. Given the large open space and the relatively flat site, this is the perfect opportunity to install an accessible playground.
3. Sport Court: Given the amount of open space, there is opportunity to add either a basketball court or a multi-sport court. A true multi-sport court would include both basketball nets and soccer/hockey nets within the space of one court. Proper design would allow the space to be used both in the summer and winter as a rink.
4. Shade Structure: Adding a shade structure adjacent to the new playground with seating underneath is recommended. This would provide opportunities for protection from the elements as well as a space for events or gatherings.
5. General Upgrades: There is a general lack of seating at this park. Installing seating around the new path for rest areas as well as a few picnic areas is recommended.

6. Ecology: Completing the tree line along the western edge is recommended.
7. Parking: Due to the lack of on street parking and the speed of traffic along Burnham Street north, there is adequate space to add a small parking lot of 10 to 20 parking stalls within the existing park space. Doing so will help create a destination park for local users.

P&T 29: Remove ball diamond

P&T 30: Install path around park border

P&T 31: Install accessible playground

P&T 32: Install multi-sport/basketball court

P&T 33: Install shade structure

P&T 34: Install new seating

P&T 35: Install new trees

P&T 36: Install new parking lot

Behan Park

One of four parks in Precious Corners and the second largest in the area, Behan Park offers lots of potential for amenities. The park currently consists of a playground with a small path, a picnic area and open green space.

New Facilities:

1. Paths: Adding a path around the border of the park creates an opportunity for a walking circuit.
2. Shade Structure: Installing a shade structure north of the playground with seating underneath is recommended. This would provide opportunities for protection from the elements as well as a space for events or gatherings.
3. General Upgrades: There is a general lack of seating at this park. Installing seating around the new path for rest areas as well as a few picnic areas is recommended.
4. Fitness Equipment: There is interest in the community in installing outdoor fitness/calisthenic equipment. Outdoor fitness equipment provides adults of all ages and fitness abilities the opportunity to enjoy free workouts at their own pace as well as a social outlet for exercise.¹ Moreover, when located in close proximity to a playground, both parents and children can engage in physical activity. Given the large amount of space at Behan Park, there is ample opportunity to create a fitness circuit around the new path here.
5. Ecology: The installation of native shade trees around the park is recommended.

¹ <https://fitness.playcore.com/community-benefits/>

P&T 37: Install path around park border

P&T 38: Install shade structure

P&T 39: Install new seating

P&T 40: Install exercise equipment

P&T 41: Install shade trees

Neighbourhood Parks

Pioneer Park

The second of two park locations within Gore's Landing, Pioneer Park currently consists of open green space. There is much potential to increase park use by local residents as well as general demand for additional playgrounds in the area.

New Facilities:

1. Paths: Installing a small path loop around the border of the park will encourage use and create a more pedestrian-friendly park condition.
2. Playground: There is adequate space at this park to install a new playground at the southern end, adjacent the property line. In this location it would remain protected from the roadways and provide opportunity to work with the existing grade to create a unique play experience.
3. General Upgrades: The installation of benches around a new playground, as well as additional picnic areas would provide further opportunities to bring local residents to the park.
4. Ecology: Install native planting along the park border for increased interest and barrier protection. Install native shade trees where appropriate.

P&T 42: Install path around park border

P&T 43: Install new playground

P&T 44: Install new seating

P&T 45: Install native planting

Butterfield Park

As the largest park within Precious Corners, there are already a number of amenities located within this park. Currently the park has a playground, tennis court, paths, ball diamond, open green space and a small parking lot.

Existing Amenities:

1. Ball Diamond: Due to the current condition of the ball diamond and its low use, it is recommended for removal.

New Amenities:

1. Shade structure: The installation of a large shade structure or pavilion just south of the playground offers opportunities for events or gatherings.
2. General upgrades: The park currently has minimal seating and no areas with picnic tables. The installation of seating and picnic tables under the new structure would allow more areas for users to relax.

P&T 46: Remove ball diamond
P&T 47: Install shade structure
P&T 48: Install new seating

Laurel Park

The smallest park located within Precious Corners, Laurel Park is in need of updating. The park currently has a playground, ball diamond and open green space.

Existing Amenities:

1. Ball Diamond: The current condition of the ball diamond is inadequate for game play. The backstop should be removed.
2. Playground: The playground at this park is very outdated and in need of upgrades. A complete replacement and review of the CSA standards is recommended.

New Amenities:

1. Paths: Adding a path around the border of the park creates an opportunity for a walking circuit.
2. Shade Structure: The installation of a large shade structure or pavilion on the eastern side of the park offers opportunities for events or gatherings.
3. General Upgrades: The park currently has minimal seating and is in need of upgrades. The installation of seating and picnic tables under the new structure would allow more areas for users to relax.

P&T 49: Remove ball diamond
P&T 50: Replace playground
P&T 51: Install path around park border
P&T 52: Install shade structure
P&T 53: Install new seating

Plainville Tennis Courts

The Plainville tennis courts are a unique space within the Township as the only park of its nature. The park consists of two tennis courts and a parking lot.

Existing Amenities:

1. Court surface: A review of the current condition of the courts should be conducted to analyze the overall quality of the surface and drainage of the courts. The courts should be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure quality and prevent any injuries.

New Amenities:

1. Lighting: Consideration should be made for lighting the tennis courts during the shorter days of the year so that residents may use the courts as long as possible.
2. General Upgrades: There is currently no seating at this park. Benches should be installed for users to utilize for breaks while actively using the tennis courts, especially during the hot summer months.

P&T 54: Conduct a yearly review on the court surfacing

P&T 55: Install sport lighting

P&T 56: Install new seating

Old Camborne Schoolhouse

The only public park space located within the community of Camborne, the Old Camborne Schoolhouse is a mid-sized park within the Township. The park currently has two playgrounds, a basketball court, picnic benches, the old schoolhouse building and a parking lot. A preserved historical building, the Old Camborne Schoolhouse was renovated in 1995 back to its original 1895 appearance, and is now used for tours and hosting social and community events.

Existing Amenities:

1. Basketball Court: The basketball court and net should be reviewed for any necessary upgrades. These could include a review of the court surfacing, repainting of court lines and replacement of the backboards and nets.
2. Playground Surface: The playground surfacing should be reviewed and replaced as necessary to meet CSA standards.
3. Playground Upgrades: Replacement/upgrade of existing playgrounds. Considerations should be made to age groups of users and level of interest/difficulty of play equipment. Unique play features like climbing elements and ziplines should be considered at this location.

New Amenities:

1. Shade Structure: Given the size and various uses at this park, the Township should consider this location for a moderately sized shade structure. The park is surrounded by trees but lacks adequate shade in the middle of the park.
2. General Upgrades: Upgrades to the benches, picnic tables and garbage cans may be required.

P&T 57: Upgrade basketball court
 P&T 58: Replace/upgrade playground equipment
 P&T 59: Replace playground surface
 P&T 60: Install new shade structure
 P&T 61: Upgrade existing seating, picnic benches and garbage cans

Parkettes

Scriven Parkette

Located at the corner of Rice Lake Drive N. and Oak Ridges Drive, Scriven Parkette is a small open green space that is host to a monument for Joseph Scriven. At present the monument is hard to see, as it is beginning to be overtaken by vegetation. This public space is not recognizable as a parkette.

Existing Amenities:

1. Monument: Consider moving the monument to a more visible location, as at present it can be easily missed.

New Amenities:

1. Path: Installing a small walking path that enters at the south and exits at the north would help increase foot traffic at this parkette and make it a more usable space.
2. General Upgrades: Adding small seating pockets along the new path and around the monument may increase user access.
3. Ecology: If the monument cannot be moved, considerations should be made regarding removal and cleaning up some of the planting in order to make the monument more visible.
4. Signage: This parkette currently has no signage, making it difficult to find. The addition of Township branded signage would benefit the community.

P&T 62: Move location of monument
 P&T 63: Install walking path
 P&T 64: Add new seating
 P&T 65: Install Township branded signage

Stoney Pier Parkette

Located at the road curve of Lakeshore Drive, this parkette is a relatively small open green space. Located along Rice Lake there is access to the water here.

New Facilities:

1. Paths: The installation of a path at the parkette entry on the south end that leads to the water would be considered an asset for local residents and make the walk to the water easier, especially if carrying a canoe or kayak.
2. Lake Access: Improve the overall access to the lake by making necessary grade adjustments to reduce steep access.
3. General Upgrades: As a large portion of this park shares a border with a roadway, the installation of natural barriers should be considered in order to protect users and prohibit cars from accessing the site. There are also opportunities to install benches and picnic tables here.
4. Ecology: There appears to be a lot of overgrown planting at this parkette. In order to best utilize the space, all invasive species should be removed and further cleanup of planting should be considered.
5. Shoreline: Increase access to the water with cleanup of planting and the installation of any necessary boulders for slope stabilization.

P&T 66: Install new path

P&T 67: Regrade existing shoreline

P&T 68: Install new seating

P&T 69: Install natural barriers

P&T 70: Remove invasive species and clean up planting

P&T 71: Stabilize shoreline with boulders

Considerations for New Facilities

Off-Leash Dog Areas

There is a growing expectation in municipalities by both dog owners and non-dog owners that leash-free areas be provided to allow safe areas for people to run their dogs without conflict with other park uses. Community members have indicated interest in dedicated off-leash areas in Hamilton Township. In anticipation of future demand, a comprehensive study and community consultation should be undertaken to determine the need for and location of off-leash dog areas.

Community groups such as dog owners associations can play an important role in the success of off-leash areas, as they create an avenue to communicate dog owners' needs, maintenance requests and other relevant issues. Additionally, there are often opportunities to partner with public and/or private landholders to convert existing land into a dog park, or incorporate dog off-leash areas in new park developments or revitalization of existing parks, including both fences and time-limited off-leash areas.

Off-leash areas have their own unique design and maintenance considerations to ensure a safe, attractive and practical space for dogs and dog owners. While each space is unique and must be assessed for its own merits in regard

to its ability to successfully host an off-leash area, the following key considerations in the development of off-leash areas are based on best practices employed throughout the world:

- Appropriate selection of surfacing is critical from a number of perspectives including maintenance, drainage, health, dog and human comfort, accessibility, safety and cost. Ideally an off-leash area will use more than one surface and will be selected based on site characteristics.
- Water should be provided for drinking (both dogs and humans); play for dogs; and irrigation (surface dependent). There must be access to water service and installation of gravel/concrete pad at the water source to prevent puddling and erosion.
- Shade is important for both dogs and humans by way of trees and/or shade structures with special consideration required for long-term tree health.
- Not all off-leash areas need fencing. However, for leash-free areas in more urban or high activity parks, a double-gated system should be considered at all entrances and exits with an adequate height (e.g., 1.5-metre (5') high steel fencing).
- Lighting increases safety and extends the hours when off-leash areas can be used in the winter. Lighting should address issues regarding access, safety, environmental impacts and community concerns.
- A wide number of amenities should be considered in off-leash areas to improve accessibility and the experience for both dogs and their owners, such as: dog agility equipment, a small/shy dog area, accessible seating for humans and waste receptacles.

Off-Road Bike Trails

The Township has received requests for off road bike trails. These types of trails can be built almost anywhere but locations with rolling hills or mounds are best. The trails are generally constructed with dirt however may contain other elements like rocks, bridges, or jumps.

Semi-regular maintenance is required to maintain the overall quality of these trails. When damage occurs, problems will only get worse if left alone and can be caused by overuse or heavy rainstorms.

Play Elements

The younger residents of the Township have requested more interesting play elements. The Township should explore some of the more unique play elements when replacing or installing new playgrounds. These elements help challenge children of all ages while increasing the overall play value of a playground. Some elements for consideration; Climbing/rock climbing elements, ziplines and agility fitness courses. These elements will challenge younger age groups while maintaining the interest of the older age groups.

Splash Pads

Developing a splash pad in the Township has been a persistent request from residents for some time. The main concerns with developing a splash pad are the significant construction and maintenance costs, amount of water use and required access to a municipal (potable) water source. Given the amount of water required for a splash pad, a recirculating system is preferred by the Township.

Should the Township explore installing a splash pad in the future, Baltimore Recreation Centre is the only location with the proper existing facilities and capacity to connect to the municipal water system.

Sport Fields

With the removal of ball diamonds around the Township, significant portions of land are being opened up at selected parks. This creates an opportunity for Hamilton to explore the design and installation of soccer or multi-sport fields, which are currently limited within the Township.

The typical area of a full-size soccer or multi-sport field is 7,140 m² (0.714 ha), which can only be accommodated at Baltimore Recreation Centre. However, the Township could make considerations for the installation of youth-sized fields, which typically require approximately 2,624 m² (0.263 ha) or less. Field sizes vary based on age of user. The 2,624 m² would accommodate youth programming for 12 and under. Cold Springs Memorial Park would be one location to consider the installation of youth-sized sport fields.

Boat Launch Specific Recommendations

There are two (2) Township owned boat launches/docks and five (5) non-Township boat launches/docks across Hamilton Township. Considering the location of Hamilton's settlement areas in relation to these facilities, the Township is not well served. There are no municipal boat launches along Lake Ontario. Opportunities to provide additional launches at both lakes should be considered.

Overall, the Township's boat launches are relatively modest in size and amenities vary in both conditions. While one site has minimal parking available the other has none. To ensure the launches are always safe and in a state of good repair, a strategy is required to assess, update and enhance the Township's launches on a regular basis. This would include undertaking a detailed assessment of each launch, identifying required improvements, scheduling the repairs and monitoring regularly after improvements are completed for ongoing repairs and maintenance.

Enhancements should be considered as part of the boat launch strategy to help address the need for additional parking, launch widening or twinning, new or extended docks and other possible amenities such as invasive species signage and boat washing equipment to help control the spread of invasive mussel species.

To further enhance the user experience along the various lakefronts, the Township should consider the installation of a small craft launch. Small craft launches can be as simple as a dock with stabilizing arm or as advanced as a launch port system. These launches vary by water conditions, cost and scale.



Figure 6-1: Trail at Baltimore Arena

6.0 Service Delivery

6.1 Introduction

The Township operates largely as an indirect provider of recreation services. In this role, it facilitates or enables others - such as volunteer program providers, other agencies or individual instructors - in the delivery of programs/activities to the community. The Township's focus as an indirect provider is providing high quality parks and facilities for use by other programs providers and for general community activity and enjoyment. Parks and facilities capital projects, facilities scheduling and operations are key staff responsibilities in this model.

It is typical for relatively small municipalities to operate using this model, as there is neither the level of demand for specific types of programming nor the resources

to institute direct service delivery by hiring dedicated program staff. The Master Plan recommendations align with a continuation of this role for the Township, which requires sufficient support in several areas to be successful:

- a coordinated service delivery structure
- staff, programmers and volunteer resources to do the work
- partnerships and collaborations
- service planning and evaluation
- policy, practices and procedures

Each of these topics is discussed on the following pages.

6.2 Coordinated Structure for Service Delivery

Municipal Advisory Committees

The 2013 Parks and Facilities Review recommended restructuring the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to better represent all areas of recreation interest across the Township. A more integrated structure was proposed to foster increased unity and coordination among the many volunteer groups in the community and a better connection to the municipality.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) was restructured in 2018. It now comprises two Councillors and seven members at large, who represent the communities of Camborne, Baltimore, Gores Landing, Harwood, Cold Springs and Bewdley. The PRAC makes recommendations to Council on the programming and use of Township parks and facilities. The Cold Springs Memorial Hall Advisory Committee and the Cold Springs Park Advisory Committee make recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on use, programming and long-term development plans for the park and hall. The Hall Committee manages rentals and fundraises to supplement revenues to cover operating costs. The Park Committee fundraises for park improvements. These Committees are appointed to serve for the term of Council and comprise: one (1) appointed member of Council; a minimum of five (5) and maximum of seven (7) members-at-large who are appointed by the Council; the Manager of Parks and Facilities and a staff recording secretary. Quarterly meetings are recommended but the number of meetings can be more or less than quarterly.

The closer relationship between the Cold Springs Advisory Committees and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee has facilitated greater coordination in decision-making. At the same time, the Terms of Reference for the two Committees overseeing the Cold Springs

Hall and Park are identical. This suggests an opportunity to amalgamate the two into a single Committee for the Hall and Park, with the objective of making the most of limited volunteer resources and promoting greater coordination at this level.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee prepared the Township's Accessibility Plan as required under the Ontario with Disabilities Act, 2001 (AODA), and continues to update the plan annually. The Committee has inspected every park and every municipal building in the Township to plan for accessibility for all. All areas needing improvement have been included in the plan and all related work is completed within a specified period of time. The Accessibility Committee has met with various Committees of the Township to ensure that accessibility is included in their planning of events, renovations or reconstruction of facilities and in long-term capital plans.

The Township's Heritage Committee is a very active group focused on efforts to influence the preservation of heritage in the Township. In addition to its work in evaluating and designating properties of architectural/historic value (or cultural heritage) and increasing public awareness about heritage conservation, the Committee is involved in areas of participatory programming such as the Heritage House Tour, a Self-guided Tour and a Rice Lake Heritage Boat Tour.

It is anticipated that the working relationships among Township Committees will continue during the timeframe of the Master Plan and will evolve as needed in the process of program/service development. Section 6.3 discusses the need for joint service planning involving all relevant parties.

Old Camborne Schoolhouse

The Old Camborne Schoolhouse is no longer operated by a volunteer board, and scheduling is handled by an individual who also sits on the Township Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. This arrangement benefits both the Township and Schoolhouse users and should be maintained, with required coordination resulting from service planning activities discussed below.

Harwood and Gores Landing Halls

Harwood Community Hall and Park, and Gores Landing Hall, are both owned and operated by volunteer associations: the Harwood Parks and Recreation Club and the Gores Landing Hall Board. These two recreation service providers, therefore, operate independently of the municipality. At the same time, relatively regular financial assistance is provided to both through municipal grants. This assistance recognizes the role that these organizations and facilities play in meeting community recreation needs. As discussed below, however, there should be a stronger connection between the Township and independent operators to ensure overall coordination of services that are being municipally supported.

- SD 1: Amalgamate the Cold Springs Memorial Hall Advisory Committee and the Cold Springs Park Advisory Committee into a single body.
- SD 2: Strengthen links between Township and independent facility/programs operators to enhance community-wide coordination in service provision.

Staff, Programming and Volunteer Resources

Staff: Recreation Program/Event Developer

The 2013 Parks and Facilities Review recommended several additional/enhanced staff functions in service delivery including:

- increasing promotion, awareness and information about all areas of service including programs, events, parks and available facilities to organized users and the community as a whole
- increasing support to the volunteer sector, as the primary providers of recreation programs, activities and events
- instituting recreation management software to centralize, improve and track trends in facility scheduling, use, revenue generation and data on membership/participation among organized groups that use Township facilities
- reviewing hall rental rates to ensure they are both competitive and comparable to others in the regional market

Each of these tasks has been initiated and is included in the ongoing responsibilities of staff. The current Plan, however, will require additional staff resources to ensure program development becomes a core municipal function. Proactively facilitating programming through a dedicated staff position is a prerequisite to optimizing the use of recreation facilities and parks. The cost to the Township for this position can be viewed as a return on investment. Growth in programming and facility use will generate revenues that would otherwise not materialize.

The alternative is to continue to simply rent facilities to those who happen to approach the Township looking for space and hope to recover some costs.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

While this task on its own generates considerable work in terms of promotion, coordination and facilitation, it does not encompass the program/service development function. Increasing facility use is also a key objective of the Master Plan and, as discussed above, there is considerable potential to use existing facilities to expand programming. Similarly, as discussed in section 3.0, the potential to develop outdoor and year-round activity is considerable.

In addition to working with local volunteer groups and individuals to provide programs/services, developing partnerships with outside agencies and groups (see Section 6.2) will also be important. This will involve work to link local program/service needs to those best suited and able to meet them using Township facilities, negotiating agreements required to secure services and supporting these programmers in delivering their programs. A new position dedicated to this function, as described below, is a prerequisite if the Township is going to be able to fulfill its strategic priority to, “transition from recreational capital facilities development to Township-wide community program development increasing investment in active programming in the interest of promoting healthy living and active lifestyles.”¹

It is recommended a Recreation Program/Event Developer position be instituted immediately to begin developing programs/activities and events to be delivered within the Township. Working directly with the Facilities Coordinator (and reporting to the Manager of Parks and Facilities) the primary responsibilities of this position would include proactive relationship building with various sectors of the community to: identify program/event interests in both sport and non-sport areas (including arts, culture and heritage); identify and work with providers; locate and coordinate program/activity provision in Township indoor and outdoor space; monitor and evaluate program efficacy; and lead

structured program/service planning activities with service providers.

Programs/activities would include Township-delivered special events as well as regular, seasonal programming, and advising/assisting non-municipal event providers. Although the focus of the position is to build programming at Township facilities and parks, facility/space suitability and service distribution are also factors to be considered. As such, the new position would also support and facilitate programming offered at Gores Landing Hall and Harwood Community Hall and Park.

In addition to recreation-related academic and experiential qualifications for this position, an essential prerequisite is self-motivation with a genuine interest in reaching out to, and meeting new people, relationship building, inquiry/research and creative problem-solving to overcome obstacles to delivering innovative programs and services. Based on the Township’s current salary grid, this position is estimated at \$55,000.

SD 3: Hire a Recreation Program/Event Developer immediately to begin developing programs/activities at all Township facilities and parks, and to facilitate programming at other community spaces that are public serving.

¹ <https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/township-office/resources/Documents/Township-of-Hamilton-Strategic-Plan-to-2023---July-16-2019.pdf>

Programming: Building a Program Instructor Base

In addition to the Program/Event Developer's work in matching needs/interests to potential program providers, seamlessly facilitating providers in delivering services will help recruit and retain instructors. This task will be critical to growing the supply and variety of programs/activities in the Township. While some of the support to instructors such as marketing and promotion will be the same as those provided to volunteer groups through the Community Affiliation Policy (see Section 6.4), others will be more specifically geared to individual instructors who offer programs in the areas of fitness, wellness, arts, heritage, etc.

Consultation for the Master Plan revealed perceptions that it is too complicated and costly for instructors to access Township facilities to offer programs. This view points to the merits of clarifying and promoting the process whereby instructors can access Township spaces for their programs, and the assistance available from the municipality to deliver their services. In addition to providing appropriate space and helping with set up, providing as much in the way of administrative support as possible makes it easier for individuals to deliver programs. The Township can manage registration, fees payments, notifications, etc. on behalf of the programmer, ideally through an online system that will also contribute to municipal objectives in the areas of tracking participation, follow-up with registrants for evaluation surveys, and generally streamlining these tasks.

Insurance is another area that can present a considerable obstacle for individuals to deliver programs. Insurance is a complex topic and an ongoing issue for Ontario municipalities. Cursory research on this topic shows that as litigation and insurance costs have increased

over time, municipalities have been pushed to find ways to reduce expenditures on coverage. Moreover, current legislation in Ontario is based on the concept of joint and several liability, meaning that "if a municipality can be found even 1% responsible for an incident, property taxpayers may be left to pay the entire damage claim."² This puts a significant burden on the tax base should the municipality be required to pay a claim, with costs to the individual taxpayer increasing in smaller communities.

The municipal costs of insurance in delivering recreation programs can be controlled by managing risk³, which includes not offering the service. Alternatively, passing the costs of insurance on to the provider lessens municipal expenditures. However, it is difficult for individual program providers to carry the costs of coverage, particularly if their services are limited (e.g., two, one-hour programs per week) and the intent is to deliver affordable programs at the introductory level.

The Township's Finance and Legal Departments would handle investigating options for reducing insurance costs for individual program providers. We are aware of an ongoing municipal inquiry about blanket coverage for a 'class' of program instructors, the costs of which would be shared among the individuals hired by the municipality as opposed to each instructor having to carry their own policy. Internet research indicates that insurance pools are an alternative to individual corporate policies. "There are two municipal insurance pools in Ontario - the Waterloo Region Municipalities Insurance Pool and Durham Municipal Insurance Pool. By working together, municipalities can negotiate a better deal together than they could on their own.

2 https://www.las.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/Risk%20Management/LAS_Municipal%20Risk_Jan%202022.pdf

3 Anything a municipality does to help prevent potential harm to people and property falls under risk management.

This is particularly helpful for smaller municipalities.”⁴ Whether or not this approach would be relevant to coverage for instructors would need to be determined. If the Township has not investigated these options to date, they may be potential routes to growing program services within the Township while minimizing the costs of insurance to providers.

SD 4: Institute a process that maximizes support and minimizes costs to instructors hired to deliver programs.

Volunteers: Expanding the Volunteer Base

Many communities continue to struggle with recruiting and retaining volunteers to participate in delivering parks and recreation services. This discussion provides suggestions on potential areas of focus for volunteer development in Hamilton Township to align with its strategic priorities to:

- continue to support and promote volunteerism, and community spirit.
- maintain and enhance the volunteer system of service delivery, where efficient and effective to do so.⁵

A planned strategy may help improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of investing effort in volunteer recruitment. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee could be charged with researching and identifying the components of a comprehensive strategy for the Township. This work will also point to the need for professional services for program design and start-up, management software, as well as the staff requirements for its ongoing implementation.

Recruitment Strategy Considerations

While there are no approaches to building a community volunteer base that guarantee success, suggested strategies incorporate the following characteristics:

- goals and objectives are articulated, allowing people to identify how these align with their interests/passions and encourage involvement
- what is needed and what the volunteer can offer in the way of skills is specified, to eliminate the unknown and make commitment easier
- benefits to the volunteer are conveyed
- commonly asked questions are anticipated and answered
- signing up is made easy⁶

The Township should develop a “Volunteers Needed” webpage that deals with the items noted above and advertises specific positions to be filled (e.g., “job” description that provides details on the position, its location, time commitments, preferred experience/knowledge/skills, who it might be of interest to, etc.). Potential interest in one-time assistance with, for example, volunteering for a day at an annual event, should also be solicited. A sign-up form should be built into the page for individuals to submit their contact information for a specific position, general area of interest, and/or to be contacted as need arises. Once interested individuals are registered, they can be contacted as directed by their submissions.

Respondents to the online household survey for the Master Plan indicated a noticeably stronger level of interest in volunteering than did those who participated in the random survey.

4 https://www.las.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/Risk%20Management/LAS_Municipal%20Risk_Jan%202022.pdf

5 <https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/township-office/resources/Documents/Township-of-Hamilton-Strategic-Plan-to-2023---July-16-2019.pdf>

6 <https://callhub.io/recruit-volunteers-8-swift-steps/>

	Random Survey (400 respondents)	Online Survey (105 respondents)
volunteering to work to source private sector grants/donors/sponsors	4%	14%
volunteering to help run programs/activities	6%	35%
joining a volunteer stewardship group (e.g., Friends of 'X' Park)	4%	30%

The Township can use the results of the Master Plan survey to seek out these individuals and encourage them to register for specific positions or for possible future engagement as need/opportunity arises.

On and Offline Recruitment

While optimizing the use of digital technology in volunteer recruitment is essential, it should not preclude more traditional methods of outreach. A comprehensive strategy should involve initiatives that combine both online and offline components. All age groups are consuming information through more channels now than in the past. “The primary consumption patterns of all demographics are the same - shopping, entertainment, news, content...[although] their avenues are different (online and offline). Tap into the basics [e.g., local radio, newspapers, etc.] to reach more people from diverse groups.”⁷ Requests for volunteers, therefore, should be posted on-line and in ‘bricks-and-mortar’ locations including municipal buildings and sign boards as well as grocery stores, pharmacies, coffee shops, etc. that agree to assist in advertising. Similarly, on-line postings can include the Township’s website and those of other locations/groups’ websites and/or social media. The essence of the messages should be consistent but can be adjusted for specific audiences.

Word of mouth is both a traditional and potentially effective way to engage new volunteers and should be used on an ongoing basis. “Concentric circles recruitment” involves requesting existing volunteers to reach out to people in their circle to engage others who know and trust them and are more likely to be ideologically like-minded.

Online recruitment offers a unique opportunity to offer remote volunteer positions, which may appeal to those who want flexibility and/or are particularly skilled in content development, online outreach or phone work. Home-based volunteers can be engaged to help with tasks such as telephone requests or follow-up; designing flyers, posters or writing content; managing social media; and sending text blasts. Opportunities to volunteer remotely should also be promoted.

Texting via an SMS marketing tool is the preferred way to issue targeted message appeal-blasts for several reasons:

- millennials and post millennials prefer texting
- 98% of texts are opened, and receive replies within an average of 90 minutes
- suits every stage of the recruitment process
- combines automated and personalized messaging
- facilitates conversation without being invasive
- responses are recorded⁸

⁷ <https://callhub.io/volunteer-recruitment-ideas/>

⁸ <https://callhub.io/recruitment-text-marketing/>

Post-pandemic Opportunities

The [Canadian City Parks Report: Centring Equity & Resilience \(2021\)](#) by Park People is the 3rd annual look at trends, challenges, and opportunities related to Canada's city parks. As part of the study, a survey on COVID-19 was launched in April 2021. It was open to all Canadians and promoted through the Park People newsletter, social media and partner networks. Nearly 3,500 responses were received, including representation from all provinces and territories. The survey results showed a renewed interest in parks, a trend that was anecdotally reported throughout the pandemic, as well continued support for expanded parks-based activities:

- 89% had tried a new activity in a park in 2020, with top activities including regular walks through parks and trails (56%) and socializing with friends and family (40%).
- 50% reported their winter park use increased during COVID-19 compared to pre-pandemic winters with 73% saying they expected this use to continue or increase in post-pandemic winter seasons.
- 76% want to see more community programming in parks.
- 53% want outdoor arts/culture events.
- 51% want increased access to winter recreation activities in parks.

As might be expected, the survey findings showed that COVID-19 reduced volunteer opportunities. “The average number of volunteers per thousand dropped from 11.6 to 2.7 compared to last year’s report, reflecting reduced opportunities for park volunteering due to the pandemic” (p. 39). At the same time, “volunteer interest is likely to rebound. 58% of Canadians said that COVID-19 had caused them to become more interested in getting involved in stewardship projects [i.e., tending a community garden or assisting with invasive species removal] suggesting new interest in city, non-profit, and resident-led volunteer programs post-pandemic” (p.39). Although not to the same extent, Hamilton Township residents who responded to the Master Plan surveys indicated interest in joining a volunteer stewardship group (e.g., Friends of “X” Park), and/or volunteering to help run programs/activities.

These findings suggest the pandemic may have instilled a new, experiential-based appreciation of parks that can be tapped for volunteer involvement. The Park People survey also indicated that, “of all park types, Canadians prefer to visit their local neighbourhood parks (71%), naturalized or “wild” parks or green spaces (61%) and trails (60%)” (p. 5), which points to potentially specific types of volunteer involvement to be pursued in the short-term.

- SD 5: Use Master Plan survey results to follow up on expressed interest and encourage people to register for specific volunteer positions or for possible future engagement as need/opportunity arises.
- SD 6: Engage the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to research and identify the required on and off-line, in-person and remote, components of a comprehensive volunteer recruitment strategy.
- SD 7: Use findings to determine the need for, and costs of, professional services for program design and start-up, management software, as well as the staff requirements for its ongoing implementation.
- SD 8: Use both on and off-line approaches to recruiting volunteers
- SD 9: Focus on post-pandemic interests/opportunities to attract volunteers to help with Township projects and programs.

6.2 Partnerships and Collaborations

In an indirect service delivery model, collaborations and partnerships are a large part of service provision through other providers. As a long-term Plan, opportunities for new partnerships may emerge - particularly through the efforts of a Program/Event Developer whose role will include finding program providers to meet community needs and interests that cannot be addressed through local organizations. The “fit” between local program/service needs and a response from other providers will depend on a variety of factors including the specific nature of needs, the availability and suitability of Township facilities and spaces, costs to each party and participants, etc., which would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

As a starting point, the Township has several established relationships that can be further developed in program/service provision. Research for the Master Plan included discussions with the EarlyON Northumberland, Cobourg Public Library and Northumberland Tourism, all of which are interested in working with the Township to expand programs, services and/or awareness of what’s available. Challenges to providing programs within the Township that were noted include not having a dedicated staff member to work with, and the municipality’s liability for Library-based activities that could occur in parks/outdoor spaces that have not been programmed in the past.

To date, EarlyON has operated programs at Baltimore Recreation Centre and the Old Camborne Schoolhouse. The latter was very well received and attended, but the former did not attract optimal participation. Once Cobourg-based services are back on track post-COVID, EarlyON will be looking for opportunities to grow its services in the Township, with interest in securing dedicated space.

Generally, better promotion of programs and tourism-related opportunities is suggested to generate awareness, and possibly increased use, of services/assets. Communications and promotion are discussed in Section 6.4. Several interviewees noted that partnerships with non-municipal organizations may also open up funding opportunities that would not be available to the Township acting alone.

YMCA Northumberland is another agency that could be a potential program provider.⁹ While YMCAs have traditionally been facility-based, in more recent years their services have evolved to include satellite programming in communities within their respective jurisdictions. The local YMCA is based in Cobourg, and it is likely that residents in Hamilton Township who live at the south end of the municipality travel to this facility. At the same time, there may be opportunities for the YMCA to bring programs to Township facilities.

As noted above, opportunities for the Township to attract new uses/users of facilities should also be pursued. Special Olympics Ontario (SOO) is a case in point. Through its program development function, SOO is seeking to partner with municipal recreation departments to bring more inclusive programs to communities.

⁹ Our request for an interview with the YMCA did not receive a response.

Over the past 50 years Special Olympics has grown from a modest program serving local athletes to become the world’s largest movements [sic] dedicated to promoting respect, acceptance, inclusion, and human dignity for people with intellectual disabilities through sports. Special Olympics Ontario has optimized the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle through sport to improve the well-being of individuals with an intellectual disability. Their vision is that sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities all across Ontario.¹⁰

To this end Special Olympics is partnering with municipalities in Ontario to support them in developing and providing programs for people with intellectual disabilities. SOO provides assistance in the areas of volunteer and coach training courses; athlete and volunteer recruitment for the program; support for promotion; and competition opportunities. Municipal contribution to the partnership may include facilitating/running the program as part of its regular roster; providing facilities, equipment, etc.; setting the price for participation; providing necessary coaching, staff and volunteers; providing SOO with limited feedback on participant profile (e.g., age and gender); encouraging all involved with the program to register with SOO; abiding by SOO policies and procedures; paying relevant expenses (as agreed upon between the parties); providing insurance coverage for events/programs. The municipality retains all income from the program.

Facilitating the use of Township facilities by organizations such as the Ontario Senior Games and Special Olympics Ontario will also diversify program supply and build inclusion into service delivery. Moreover, these initiatives align with corporate strategic priorities to, “consider municipal policies, services and programs that take into account the impact of an aging population, [and] improve and expand opportunities for persons with disabilities, and identify, remove and prevent barriers to their full participation in the life of the community.”¹¹ Going beyond AODA requirements to remove physical barriers to inclusive programming furthers the goal of “full participation in community life.”

SD 10: Further develop existing relationships with agencies such as the Cobourg Library and EarlyON to expand services.

SD 11: Pursue collaborations with new facility users and service providers such as Special Olympics Ontario and YMCA Northumberland to address program/service needs.

¹⁰ <https://www1.specialolympicsontario.com/our-mission/>

¹¹ <https://www.hamiltontownship.ca/en/township-office/resources/Documents/Township-of-Hamilton-Strategic-Plan-to-2023---July-16-2019.pdf>

6.3 Service Planning and Evaluation

Beyond the need for internal planning activities, joint service planning by all key providers in the community should occur on a regular basis. The Terms of Reference for each of the Advisory Committees note planning activities as part of their responsibilities, to support the broad objective of “making recommendations that meet the greater need of residents of the Township of Hamilton and Community user groups.” These terms are best realized through joint planning efforts that involve the Committees and major program/service providers in the Township.

In addition to the Township’s Advisory Committees that have direct mandates for parks and recreation, the Heritage Advisory Committee and the Environment and Climate Change Committee (ECCC) can be called upon to participate in planning recreation programs and services that are related to their specific areas of interest. A volunteer waterfront stewardship program, for example, could incorporate elements that address local climate change concerns identified by the ECCC. If not already involved at this point in the process, the Accessibility Advisory can provide input specific to program design that addresses accessibility issues. Even though Harwood and Gores Landing Halls are programmed independently, their participation in planning activities can contribute to greater communication and connectivity among all providers, enhanced awareness of the full “roster” of programs and services within the Township and help ensure that needs and potential opportunities are less likely to be overlooked in a collective approach.

Through the Program/Event Developer, the Township should take the lead in instituting planning activities with this core group of organizations covering several general tasks to align with annual budgeting:

- verifying community service needs/demands

- determining which of these can be addressed
- detailing the program/service response by area (parks, trails, facilities, programs and/or delivery
- determining the delivery method and, if appropriate, the organizations to share in provision
- developing budgets to support the action(s)

Partnerships among participating organizations should emerge in response to specific required actions, which may be continuous or self-limiting, depending on the initiative. They will also constitute different contributions to service delivery (e.g., municipal space for a program, run by a volunteer group, with guidance from the Health Unit).

The number of sessions per year in which all participants should engage can be determined collectively. At least one full-group session per year, however, would be required - and likely supplemented by smaller group meetings throughout the year to deal with specific topics emerging from the collective session or unforeseen issues. Special events, for example, may require separate groups/sessions and include the business community in planning activities.

The first planning activity noted above, “verifying community service needs/demands,” will involve periodic research to clarify program and service needs by age group, content and delivery method. The Master Plan surveys revealed areas of interest that can be used as starting points for further investigation using various consultation methods, including in-person sessions and the “Community Engagement, Surveys” page on the Township website. As the Program/Event Developer will be largely responsible for this task, and there are a variety of program interests and age groups to consider, those that emerged as most

preferred and can be offered most easily should be investigated first. Moreover, programs that can potentially address several areas of interest simultaneously should be considered in the early stages of service development.

Ongoing service monitoring and evaluation will also inform planning to address needs year over year. The Township's recreation management software can generate information on a variety of variables to use in service planning, some of which has been used in preparing the Master Plan. Monitoring use of non-scheduled facilities such as tennis courts and multi-use pads will help confirm use for different activities and the need for improved or additional facilities. These facilities can be visited on a random, rotating basis throughout the year to record use levels and types. As outdoor facilities are used largely in the summer, this task could be assigned to a student position.

Parks and Recreation [Ontario's Manual entitled Measuring Customer Value and Satisfaction for Parks and Recreation](#) is a practical guide to supporting service evaluation work. As noted in the Manual, it is "intended to enable providers of parks and recreation to easily and consistently assess customer value and related issues. [It] includes a common set of core questions and an enhanced set of questions that can be used by providers to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and services, as well as advice on approaches to administering surveys" (p. 1).

The ability to evaluate progress will require annual targets that can be measured. For example, a program objective for an upcoming budget year may be to introduce four new programs in areas of particular interest emerging from the Master Plan's consultation (e.g., pickleball instruction, Zumba class, photography course and youth drop-in). Except for a youth drop-in, a pilot program in these areas should ideally be open to all ages as an initial test of the potential "market" in terms of interest. Program design (e.g., content, location, scheduling, cost) would be details

for the Program Developer to work through in consultation with the Facilities Coordinator, and the instructor (where applicable) who has been engaged to deliver the program. Each new program is essentially a pilot designed to optimize participation and will be evaluated upon completion to determine future options to continue - with any required adjustments - or discontinue. The results of each year's programming would provide the basis for reporting on outcomes and planning for the upcoming year. Volunteers' experience should also be evaluated to identify areas where it can be improved to enhance the program so that existing volunteers will see their contributions are valued, and potential new participants will benefit from a well-designed approach.

Many commentators are predicting permanent shifts in the demand for recreation services post-COVID, and the need for municipalities to respond accordingly. The actual implications of the pandemic, however, will only become apparent over time. For example, the expectation that more people will continue to work from home on flexible schedules can be anticipated to translate into greater levels of demand for recreation programs/access to facilities in traditionally non-peak times. Monitoring these factors will contribute to verifying anticipated changes in recreation service needs and the need to adjust municipal delivery responses to this demand.

In addition to annual updates based on evaluations of service targets, the Master Plan should undergo a comprehensive update in five years to ensure its continued relevance to evolving internal and external factors. This will be particularly important to integrating post-COVID changes into the Plan's ongoing implementation.

- SD 12: Through the Program/Event Developer, the municipality should take the lead in instituting joint service planning on a regular basis with the Advisory Committees and major program/service providers in the Township.
- SD 13: Request other interested parties to participate in planning activities, as need or opportunity arises.
- SD 14: Institute ongoing service monitoring and evaluation to inform service planning in the areas of facility/space use, program and events, and volunteering.
- SD 15: Develop annual planning targets to allow outcomes to be measured and reported.
- SD 16: Review and update the Master Plan in five years.

6.4 Policy, Practices and Procedures

Policy: Volunteers

Section 6.2 discusses volunteer recruitment strategies and the need to evaluate the volunteer experience. A volunteer program should be supported by policy that sets out the Township's purpose, objectives and parameters with respect to volunteerism. At minimum, it should address the following:

- purpose and guiding principles of the policy
- relevant definitions (e.g., volunteer, vulnerable persons, duty of care, risk management, etc.)
- scope of the policy (inclusions and exclusions, as appropriate)
- organizational standards (e.g., specify Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement as a guide to involving volunteers in Township programs, services, committees and events)
- minimum requirements to volunteer (e.g., age, parental permissions, Police Security Clearance, agreement to attend mandatory trainings, etc.) and inclusion/anti-discrimination statements
- reference to other relevant documents (e.g., policies, procedures, handbook, etc.)

The policy should also be further detailed with separate internal management procedures and an applicable handbook for volunteers. A handbook should contain sufficient detail to orient volunteers to the Township and the role of volunteers in programs/service delivery. In this document, general descriptions about the types of volunteer positions available should be outlined. As the specifics of individual positions will change over time, however, recruitment tasks (see Section 6.2) will cover these as they evolve. The handbook should include the information noted below, with introductory pieces on the Township's role and volunteer

program philosophy aligning with the policy's content:

- a welcome message from the Mayor and Council and information about the Township's role - aligned with its strategic directions - in parks and recreation and the types of services provided
- the Township's volunteer program philosophy in terms of how volunteers are engaged, why they are important, and the impact they make in providing services
- an organization chart of staff and contact information who deal directly with volunteers
- types of volunteer opportunities (e.g., helping deliver a program, stewardship projects, on-site, remote, administrative/organizational activities, daytime, weekends, flexible, one-time events, etc.)
- possible locations of volunteer activities (e.g., names and addresses of parks, community centres, etc.)
- beyond orientation (minimum requirement) training opportunities and support, possible certifications, leadership programs, etc.
- volunteer safety procedures and protection against risk and exposure to liability
- protocols regarding conduct, confidentiality, customer service standards, harassment, emergency procedures/reporting, complaints, etc.

Along with mandatory requirements such as background checks and AODA training, some positions may require certification in areas such as First Aid/CPR. If there are costs involved in qualifying to volunteer, the Township could allocate funds each year to cover all or a portion of these expenses, with the understanding that the individual commits to volunteering for a specified length of time.

Where practical, incentivizing volunteering may help recruit individuals to help. The Township of Severn, for example, has a Volunteer Parent Policy for Recreation Programs whereby a parent who assists on a weekly basis with a program is entitled to a 50% reduction in their child's registration fee. As the Township's program supply is developed, this type of policy could be beneficial to providing local children's programs that require help and for which volunteer hours can be easily tracked. It could also be extended to programs for adults who require the help of caregivers to facilitate their participation.

SD 17: Develop a volunteer policy, management procedures and handbook.

SD 18: Consider developing a policy to incentivize individuals to volunteer in service provision.

Policy: Community Group Affiliation

Only two groups that participated in the Master Plan survey expressed interest in additional assistance from the Township. One group indicated better facility scheduling is needed and one requested support with marketing and promotion. There are many Township-based groups, however, that did not respond to the survey. In view of this, and anticipating more community-based programming, the Township should consider developing a policy aimed at equity and consistency in municipal assistance provided to volunteer groups and promote awareness of the help that is available. A Community Group Affiliation Policy describes the services available from the municipality to registered community groups in providing their program and services.

Although not-for-profit community groups or organizations must be registered to receive municipal assistance, registration does not guarantee support. A standard, typically annual, registration/application process for eligible groups interested in municipal assistance "affiliates" them with the municipality and establishes a formal, consistent process for reviewing requests and monitoring policy effectiveness. Municipal staff review the applications and make recommendations to Council for approval. The support provided is typically in-kind, with funding provided through a separate policy or policies (i.e., Council Grants). The extent of services available to affiliated groups depends on the capacity of the municipality to provide them.

The policy specifies criteria for affiliation and the services available to affiliated groups. Requirements for affiliation include items such as delivering programs and services that align with municipal goals/objectives as stated in, for example, in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Strategic Plan; being a not-for-profit group operated by a volunteer

board or executive committee; identifying the group as either adult or youth focused - if a greater emphasis is placed on youth activities (family based activities could be considered youth for the purposes of the policy); ensuring membership/participation in the group is available to all residents in the community; meeting criteria to measure the merit of the group's programs/services (e.g., does not duplicate existing programs/services, fosters physical activity/healthy lifestyles, etc.); being based in the municipality with a majority (51%) of participating members residing within its boundaries. While a majority local membership is often used as a criterion, it may not be realistic for Hamilton Township, which is part of a larger regional market that includes travel between communities within Northumberland County to use recreation services.

Benefits to affiliated groups might include:

- facilities and equipment: free or proportionate discounted fees for use of facilities, spaces, equipment
- marketing and promotion: distribution of approved promotional materials at municipal facilities and assistance with contacts for the local media; free listing in the parks and recreation program guide
- grants and insurance: assistance from municipality in securing liability insurance, sourcing potential grants, and/or completing applications for non-municipal grant programs (e.g., Ontario Trillium Foundation, private sector, etc.)
- volunteer recruitment: posting volunteer needs for upcoming program seasons on a "Volunteers Needed" webpage on the Township's site
- leadership training and development: course rebates for community volunteer development to a maximum amount/person/course (e.g., \$50/year) to a maximum amount per group/organization (e.g., \$200/year), provided the course is a core component
- of the organization/group's mandate, with priority being given to certain courses
- events: assistance with developing a marketing/advertising plan and economic impact survey and analysis; use of municipal supplies such as portable event fencing, trash cans, etc.; delivery and pick up of municipal equipment.

While several of the above benefits are already available to local volunteer groups, it may be useful to bring these - and others identified through consultation - into a single policy. It can be used to provide clarity and consistency in terms of the range of support services available to volunteer groups and what they must do to be eligible to be, and remain, affiliated. The policy can also be structured to simplify its application over time. Specifying support in terms of, for example, percentage discounts on facility rentals, can help simplify fee schedules that change on a regular basis. Developing a new policy can be used to review and possibly update existing policies that also relate to volunteer service provision (e.g., grants for capital or operating costs) or to identify individual policies/practices for specific types of support that are not needed once it is in place.

SD 19: Develop a Community Group Affiliation Policy, based on the results of consultation with volunteer recreation groups to confirm the type and extent of required assistance to sustain/grow their programs/events, and to inform policy development.

Policy: Service Pricing

Although the Township publishes a rates and charges schedule that is updated annually, it is not clear if service prices reflect the community's position on the function that user fees should play in financing parks and recreation services. Pricing for parks and recreation services is often part of a corporate-wide policy. The following discussion is limited to parks and recreation services.

The Master Plan survey results indicated relatively strong support in the community for increased user fees. Fifty percent (200) of the telephone survey respondents said they would pay more fees to use recreation services, and 43% (105) of those who participated in the online survey indicated willingness to pay higher fees - and this was the most frequently selected option among those listed. This position is important to future service development. Adding to the supply of municipal parks and recreation services will cost more and financing this through means other than additional subsidies is preferable in view of the need to control the burden on municipal property taxes over the long term. This discussion comprises a general description on the purpose and approach to developing pricing policy and is provided as reference for future consideration as the Township grows its service supply. While policy of this type may not be needed now, the extent of service development over the term of the Plan may make it a reasonable step to rationalizing fees for service.

The primary goal of pricing policy is to set the framework for the relative proportions of service costs to be financed through the tax base or through user fees, depending on the nature of the service. Fees for use can be consistently set within the principles, goals and objectives of the policy, all of which are community specific. Although municipalities use variations of the "pyramid method" for determining this relationship, GreenPlay provides a useful description of this approach.

GreenPlay © Methodology for User Fees Determination

[GreenPlay](#) uses a "pyramid methodology for resource allocation/cost recovery." This approach is illustrated in Figure 6-2 and depicts a direct relationship between the extent of community benefit derived from recreation services and the level of subsidization. This approach allows the municipality the flexibility to provide a wide range of services, while ensuring limited involvement in those that primarily benefit individuals.

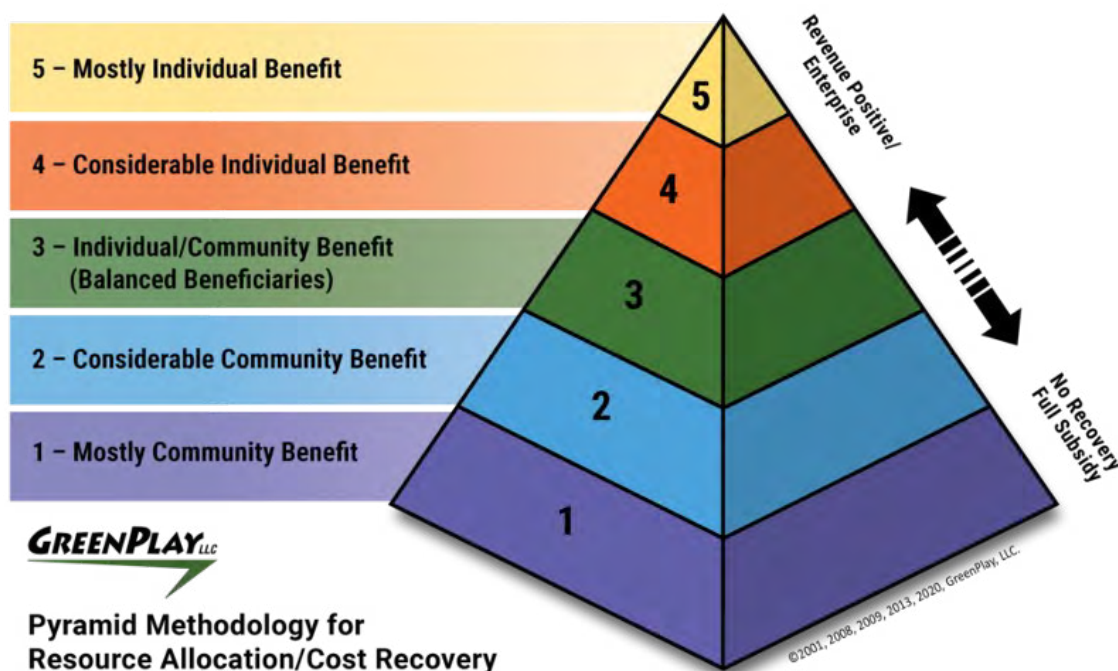


Figure 6-2: Pyramid Methodology for Resource Allocation Cost Recovery

The GreenPlay pyramid identifies services in Tier 5 as “profit centres.” From the Township’s perspective, Tier 5 services could be viewed as those best provided by the private sector, against which the municipality does not want to compete. Municipal provision of these types of services, therefore, would likely only occur in the presence of verified demand and the absence of a commercial/business provider. At the same time, all services in the upper tiers are priced at progressively higher levels beyond cost recovery, in recognition of their limited community benefit and the need to subsidize those in the lower tiers.

In the City of Redmond study information shown on the next page and in Figure 6-3 below, direct costs of provision were considered in applying the GreenPlay model to allocate services against cost recovery. None of the services - regardless of the tier in which they fell - were recovering costs prior to this work. At the same time, the outcome of the process retained a high level of subsidization for Tier 1 services - the services that most strongly align with a municipal mandate in recreation services that focuses on providing no/low-cost services for the community at large.

GreenPlay Model		Municipal Mandate
Profit centre	HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT	Weakly Aligned
	MOSTLY INDIVIDUAL BENEFIT	
No subsidy - full cost recovery	INDIVIDUAL/COMMUNITY BENEFIT	Strongly Aligned
	MOSTLY COMMUNITY BENEFIT	
Full-subsidy = no cost	HIGH COMMUNITY BENEFIT	

Figure 6-3: GreenPlay Model Related to Municipal Mandate

The Redmond Parks and Recreation Department Cost Recovery Pyramid Model

Using direct costs only, Current and Target Cost Recovery is shown by Tier in the table below. The Target Cost Recovery of 46% equates to a minimum of 100% cost recovery for Tiers 2 through 5. It is anticipated that a plan will be formulated to reach this target through a combination of cost savings, new revenue streams and fee adjustments over the next eight years.

Categories of Service	Current Cost Recovery %	Target Cost Recovery %
Tier 5	69%	160%
Tier 4	81%	130%
Tier 3	86%	110%
Tier 2	57%	100%
Tier 1	0.3%	0.4%
Total All Tiers	30%	46%

Placement of Categories on Tier levels is shown in the table above. The percentage of Total Direct Expenses is the percentage of the Department's total budget, using direct costs only, that represents the services assigned to each other. ¹

1 Source: GreenPlay LLC. December 2017. City of Richmond Washington. Cost of Service and Cost Recovery Methodology Report.

The overall target of 46% recovery of direct costs assumes a minimum recovery of 100% in Tiers 2 through 5, meaning a recovery range of 100% (Tier 2) to 160% (Tier 5) is necessary to subsidize Tier 1 services.

Municipalities in Ontario have adopted this methodology or some variation of it, in developing pricing policy. The Town of Halton Hills used the GreenPlay model in developing [its Parks Rates and Fees Strategy](#). The [Town of Newmarket](#) uses five service categories along a continuum ranging from Public Good at 0% cost recovery to Private Good at 100% cost recovery. The [City of Windsor's policy](#) identifies three vs. five levels of services based on a continuum of full/high to low/no subsidization.

Although the Township of Hamilton's "menu" of parks and recreation services will not likely grow to the extent of those in these larger communities, and may require a simpler framework, the philosophy is generally applicable: service pricing is directly related to the link between the service being provided and the municipality's mandate/role in recreation. Moreover, it provides a rational way to set cost recovery objectives and distribute fees equitably in relation to the relative benefits accruing to the community or the individual user. Examples of 0% cost recovery services are "no-cost" access to/use of parks, and free public skate programs. Examples of services that would warrant 100%+ cost recovery are commercial/business rental of municipal halls/meeting rooms and fees for municipal parking lots. In view of anticipated growth in service provision in Hamilton Township, and the costs associated with expansion, a pricing policy may be useful to offset some of these costs and limit increased subsidies.

A municipal pricing policy should be developed in consultation with the community to collectively determine its goals, underlying principles, objectives, local considerations and their application to the operating components of the policy (e.g., types of costs to be recovered,

proportions of costs to be recovered, types of services to be assigned to selected categories/tiers, and associated shares of recovery, etc.). By rationalizing fees in relation to community vs. individual benefits, a pricing policy can also help ensure that affordability is ensured through appropriate levels of subsidization. At the same time, it does not take the place of a fees assistance policy that ensures access to services regardless of ability to pay.

This policy could be developed in-house or by contracting professional services, depending on the amount of effort involved, and the availability of staff to do the work.

SD 20: Consider developing a pricing policy in consultation with the community to rationalize user fees and address the potential to recover a greater proportion of costs in relation to anticipated service expansion.

Practices and Procedures: Revenue Generation

In addition to its Commemorative Bench/Tree Policy, the Township should consider developing other mechanisms to generate revenue. The details of each approach depends on the objectives in using it, in conjunction with other service funding. Formal procedures should be developed for each tool to help ensure clear and consistent implementation and should be promoted so the community is made aware of opportunities to contribute.

Donation Programs

A general donation program could be considered to support recreation services, although it would likely need to include other areas to which residents could donate. The City of Toronto includes an opportunity to donate to specific service areas in its tax mailouts. This Voluntary Contribution program notes, “You can make a voluntary contribution (donation) to support a variety of City programs and services that matter to you. You can make a donation in any amount from \$1 up to \$50,000 [which include]: children; youth and parenting; history, art, and culture; parks, gardens and beaches.”¹²

These are only four of 12 categories listed on the insert, including general revenues. Potential categories for the Township of Hamilton could include recreation services in general or be refined to allow contributions to be directed to specific facility improvement projects or program areas.

Naming Rights

Financial support can be recognized by naming a park or facility after the donor. In recent years, the practice of naming places after individuals has come under fire as public pressure emerges to rename institutions, streets and other public spaces when the namesake’s worthiness is called into question (whether this is an individual or a business/commercial enterprise). A possible way to preclude this eventuality is to provide a highly visible plaque in the park or facility that acknowledges the individual or business that contributed to its development, while choosing a formal name that is relevant to/reflects the community as a whole.

Approaches in the same area as naming rights include sponsorships and selling advertising space at municipal facilities.

Targeted Capital Campaigns

While “capital campaigns” typically relate to raising funds for large building projects, the same approach can be taken for smaller, community-supported initiatives that contribute to parks and recreation infrastructure. Key elements of this approach to planned fundraising include: a predetermined monetary goal attached to providing a concrete project, sufficient lead time to raise funds, an end date to fundraising, broad-based community involvement in the effort and ongoing communications about its progress. Often, incentives are provided to motivate contributions (e.g., matching funds, public recognition of donors, etc.)

Except for the results of the random survey on assisting with fundraising, interest in these types of contributions was relatively strong in Hamilton Township.

12 Source: <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/property-taxes-utilities/property-tax/voluntary-contributionoption/>

	Random Survey (400 respondents)	Online Survey (105 respondents)
donating money to a capital campaign	21%	34%
organizing/assisting with local fundraising events	6%	34%

Among 13 user groups, the largest proportions either disagreed with contributing to capital costs for facilities or were uncertain about involvement in fundraising for facility development. The strongest level of agreement, however, emerged for assistance with fundraising.

	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Our organization would contribute to the capital costs of developing new facilities for our use	15%	46%	39%	13
	2 groups	6 groups	5 groups	
Our organization would help with fundraising activities for facility development	39%	15%	46%	13
	5 groups	2 groups	6 groups	

Last Minute Ice rentals can help generate revenue to offset arena operating costs. The City of Owen Sound¹³ lists these parameters for its program:

- Last minute ice is considered within 24 hours of the time of booking
- Will not apply to statutory holidays unless the facility is scheduled to be open
- Is not and cannot be used to replace regular bookings
- Regular bookings cannot be cancelled to book Last Minute Ice. All requirements of the City's Ice Allocation Policy will apply (e.g., conditions of use, insurance)
- A rental contract provided by the City must be signed and proof of insurance must be provided prior to use
- Bookings are final and are non-refundable
- Bookings are for minimum of one hour
- One hour rental is equivalent to 50 minutes of ice time and 10 minutes for ice resurfacing
- City reserves the right to limit last minute ice bookings where it is considered to be used for profit or gain or is being abused to replace or in the place of a regular ice booking
- Is booked on a first come, first serve basis
- City reserves the right to cancel or amend the implementation of last-minute ice at any time at its discretion

¹³ Source: <https://www.owensound.ca/en/exploring/ice-rental.aspx>

SD 21: Develop additional mechanisms to generate revenue generation to help finance parks and recreation services and promote them, including donations, targeted capital campaigns, naming rights, last minute ice, etc.

Practices and Procedures: Agreements and Accountability

Foregoing discussions have identified areas in which the Township will need to engage in greater collaboration with other agencies and organizations in both planning and delivering recreation services. Partnerships should be supported by formal agreements to clarify the purpose, objectives and terms of the arrangement, and the responsibilities of the parties involved. The type and complexity of agreements will depend on the nature of the arrangement and the relevant components (e.g., a lease agreement for long-term use of a Township facility or space; a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an outside agency to deliver programs locally). The content of similar types of agreements will also vary depending on the partner agency or organization. A lease agreement with a not-for-profit agency, for example, could include a minimal rental cost in exchange for providing services to the community as a whole. A similar agreement for an organization that serves a specific segment of the community or a limited interest group could warrant a higher lease rate. These are items that would presumably be addressed in a pricing policy to ensure consistent application and targeted levels of cost recovery.

In addition to securing agreements that formalize partnerships, Council should be regularly updated on the activities of independent organizations that are funded

by the Township. This is important for accountability reasons and to support community-wide service planning. As noted above, both Harwood Community Hall and Park, and Gores Landing Hall, are owned and operated by volunteer associations. At the same time, relatively regular financial assistance is provided to both through municipal grants. Based on budget documents for the years 2015 through 2021, Harwood Hall received a total of \$51,000.00 and Gores Landing received \$10,000.00. This assistance recognizes the role that these organizations and facilities play in meeting community recreation needs. However, annual reports to Council should be submitted by these organizations on the use of these funds. As joint planning activities are implemented, and costs to provide new services are identified, annual requests for municipal financial support can be better anticipated and incorporated in the annual budget process.

SD 22: Enter formal agreements with partners to deliver parks and recreation services in the Township.

SD 23: Strengthen reporting relationships between the Township and independent operators to ensure accountability and overall coordination of services that are being municipally supported.

Practices and Procedures: Communications and Promotion

The Master Plan surveys revealed what appears to be strong awareness of the recreation services available in the Township. When asked why they use services outside the municipality, 15% (21) of online survey respondents indicated they do not know what's available in Hamilton Township, and the corresponding response from the random telephone survey was 4% or 7 respondents. At the same time, as municipal programs and services increase, promoting awareness of their availability will be key to optimizing use and meeting needs close to home.

The Strategic Plan's fourth pillar to "improve communication with the public and increase public awareness of municipal activities" encompasses all Township services - including parks and recreation. These services, therefore, should be a key component in acting on the priority to "develop and implement a communications strategy." The Township is in the process of implementing its strategic priority to make technological improvements and develop use of social media to connect with ratepayers. In preparing the communications strategy, the following items should be considered in communicating with residents about parks and recreation services:

- creating social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) specific to recreation and leisure opportunities in the Township to improve awareness about programs and events to various age groups through their choice of media. Residents who are interested in recreation activities may be more likely to follow/subscribe to an account dedicated to this topic than general municipal updates. Staff operating these accounts can also quickly re-share upcoming programs, events and news from other community providers.
- mapping locations of parks, recreation facilities, waterfront access points and linking

these to descriptions that are currently on the Township's website.

- integrating the outreach components of the volunteer recruitment strategy.
- working with the County to promote Township-based assets and services via its communication channels.

While the Internet tends to be the focus for information provision and promotion, other forms of communication should also be reviewed and enhanced, as required. Seniors in many communities, for example, also note the need for print, radio, local television, and word-of-mouth information channels as necessary supplements to web-based sources.

As the program supply is developed in upcoming years, print and digital communications can keep pace in terms of sophistication - and may eventually include a magazine-style community guide. In the short-term, however, promotion can include regular (e.g., every other month) printed and downloadable circulars/flyers that advertise programs and events, and can be used by residents to learn what's available and how to register/participate. Residents could be given the option to subscribe to receipt of each issue via email.

The Program/Event Developer's position would include responsibility for preparing a graphically interesting circular on a regular basis, and ensuring that programs/events that occur between regular issues are also promoted in print and on social media.

The Township's policy that limits postings on the Community Calendar to municipal-only events should be revised to allow community-based programs and events to be included. Information on items to be included would be submitted to the Program/Event Developer and vetted by communications staff.

BROCHURE TRENDS FOR 2020:

Put it in print...Set aside your notions that millennials want everything online and that baby boomers want everything in print. You have it backwards! Boomers in the U.S. lead all other nations in computer literacy of older adults. And millennials prefer print catalogs. Yes.

The popularity of print continues to rise as more younger people begin to participate in lifelong learning. Increasingly, lifelong learning members are noting that when they improve their print catalog, their online and digital presence is more effective. The catalog drives traffic to your website. Tips:

- Integrate your print materials with digital communication
- Focus on creating well-designed, easily navigable web pages and good social media

And memorize this: “Print drives decisions. Decisions are implemented online.”¹

1 <https://lern.org/>

Communications channels can also be used by the Township to promote its work in parks and recreation services. The Municipality of Port Hope, for example, posts an annual graphically portrayed Parks, Recreation and Culture Year-in-Review¹⁴ that summarizes the past year’s work in developing, operating and maintaining these services. Much of this information would be captured in monitoring activities and could be used to produce an ‘annual report’ to Township residents.

SD 24: Use the development of a Township-wide communications strategy to incorporate specific elements to disseminate information and raise awareness of parks and recreation services and volunteer opportunities.

SD 25: Prepare and post an annual services ‘year-in-review’ that summarizes and informs the community about the Township’s achievements in parks and recreation.

SD 26: Include both digital and print media information to promote/communicate with residents about parks and recreation services.

14 <https://www.porthope.ca/en/your-municipal-government/prc-year-in-review.aspx>



7.0 Implementation Strategy

7.1 Introduction

This section outlines the proposed implementation strategy for the Master Plan's 129 recommendations. Following a discussion of key considerations, the recommendations are presented by service areas of the Master Plan (Programs and Events, Facilities, Parks and Trails, Service Delivery), accompanied by the anticipated costs and timeline associated with discrete tasks. For a more complete explanation of each recommendation, please refer to the corresponding discussion in the preceding sections.

This strategy should be considered a living document. In monitoring and evaluating the Master Plan, changes that result from work completed should be reflected in systematic reviews that track the initiation, progress and completion of each item as they are implemented in annual work plans and budgets.

7.2 Considerations

The proposed roll-out of recommendations is based on the information available at the time of Plan development and includes the following considerations:

Operational vs. Capital Projects

Of the 129 recommendations, 54 are operational in nature. This means the implementation of these recommendations would be undertaken by staff as part of their day-to-day activities. The remaining 69 capital recommendations and six recommendations to undertake supplementary studies require discrete budget allocations for execution. This includes both improvements/repairs to existing facilities, as well as the design and construction of new facilities and amenities. The capital cost estimates for parks and trails include design fees, initial project start up permits, insurance, protection fencing, construction signage, contingency and cash allowance.

Immediate Need

Several recommendations reflect immediate community need. These are scheduled for Year 1 in the implementation forecasts and address

repair backlogs to aging infrastructure and facilities, closing gaps in services and processes for decision-making. Importantly, a Recreation Program/Event Developer should be hired immediately to begin developing programs/activities at all Township facilities and parks, and to facilitate programming at other community spaces that are public serving.

Dependencies and Efficiencies

While recommendations are described as individual initiatives, many are interrelated and need to be considered in the larger context of achieving efficiencies in implementation. Some recommendations must be initiated and completed before other recommendations can begin, while others may benefit from being undertaken simultaneously in terms of process efficiency and providing a more fulsome approach to physical improvements.

Budget Considerations

The implementation sequence attempts to evenly distribute the costs of recommendations over the ten-year time frame of the Master Plan. This includes costs associated with operations,

Table 7-1: Cost Summary of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Recommendations

Area of Recommendations	Timing				Total Estimated Cost
	Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
P&E: Programs and Events	-	-	-	-	-
F: Facilities	-	\$70,300	-	-	\$70,300
P&T: Parks and Trails	\$448,966	\$535,949	\$773,778	\$20,000	\$2,415,190
SD: Service Delivery	\$55,000	\$205,000	\$250,000	\$165,000	\$675,000
Total Cost	\$503,966	\$811,249	\$1,033,778	\$185,000	\$3,160,490

planning/design and implementation. The total cost of all projects over the ten-year schedule is approximately \$3,160,490, with \$503,966 allocated for the first year (see Table 7-1).

It should also be noted that costs for some recommendations are not available and are yet to be determined. These have been noted in the forecast and would be in addition to the numbers provided in the Master Plan. Another factor to consider are cost premiums/fluctuations due to the pandemic and inflation. The current situation makes it especially difficult to attach estimates to recommendations. This is particularly true at a Master Plan level where the potential range in design and the quality of materials and finishes are also unknowns, and are determined by the municipality.

Staff Resources

The need for staff resources to do the work requires both a distribution of tasks over time and, in some cases, hiring additional staff to take responsibility for implementation. It will also require coordinated efforts both internally and externally.

Flexibility

The proposed schedule reflects a reasonable roll-out, assuming no major obstacles to activation. However, it is expected that some projects may need to be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. There may also be opportunities to “fast-track” other initiatives.





Ongoing initiatives are to be carried through each year to the end of the Plan’s term. Their applicability throughout the entire period, however, will depend on evolving needs in relation to service development. For example, program expansion for specific interests may be sufficient to meet demand in considerably less than ten years (subject to potential changes based on continuation of monitoring and verification of need). The point at which this will happen, however, is unknown and thus not identified as an “end-date” in implementation. The recommendations shown as time-limited endeavors may also extend beyond the years shown. It may take longer to complete the identified activities and/or the completion of a recommendation may result in a new system component or procedure. Recommendations to establish formal agreements or contracts, for example, are shown as time-limited for negotiating arrangements that will create new, ongoing relationships between the Township and other providers (e.g., volunteers, agencies, businesses, etc.).





7.3 Anticipated Costs and Timing


Table 7-2 below outlines the anticipated costs and timeframe for implementing each of the Master Plan's 129 recommendations.

Table 7-2: Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Implementation Strategy


Legend:


-  operating costs
-  capital costs
-  study to be undertaken
-  task for Recreation Program/Event Developer (see SD 3)




Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
Programs and Events						
P&E 1	Continue offering Township-led public skate times for all ages.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&E 2	Continue to support community groups that provide recreation programming in the Township for diverse age groups and ability levels.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&E 3	Continue to provide Township-led all-ages events, and support community groups that organize events.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&E 4 	Explore opportunities to use park spaces, water access areas, trails and facilities as venues for more recreation programs and events, in collaboration with community agencies and organizations.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
P&E 5 	Expand gymnasium sports programming (e.g., badminton, volleyball, pickleball, basketball) at existing Township facilities and/or local schools, in partnership with community providers.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
P&E 6	Support efforts to establish a community-led pickleball league in the Township.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&E 7 	Work with public providers like EarlyON and the library to better promote/deliver programs for preschoolers and young children.	Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)				-
P&E 8 	Partner with tourism initiatives in Northumberland County to promote/deliver programming and events unique to Hamilton.	Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)				-

Legend:
 operating costs

 capital costs





 study to be undertaken



 task for Recreation Program/
Event Developer (see SD 3)

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short [Years 2-4]	Medium [Years 5-7]	Long [Years 8-10]	
P&E 9 	Expand supply by piloting new programs in existing Township facilities using a short-duration model.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
P&E 10 	Evaluate short-duration activities to determine their potential as long-term programming, camps, etc.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
P&E 11 	Explore opportunities to develop intergenerational programming in partnership with volunteer groups.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
Total Estimated Costs for Programs & Events:		-	-	-	-	-
Facilities						
F 1	Prepare comprehensive building conditions assessments for Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Cold Springs Memorial Hall.		\$60,000			\$60,000
F 2	Continue work to further AODA improvements and monitor general facility conditions as need and opportunity arises.	Capital costs as required per identified upgrades by year				variable
F 3	Retain both indoor ice pads: Two indoor pads will remain sufficient to meet needs for ice over the term of the Master Plan, along with available prime and non-prime time to accommodate expanded use.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
F 4	Continue to seek opportunities to accommodate the needs of ice users in the market and beyond, and to develop ice-based events.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
F 5	Continue to promote and develop use of the arena floor, including new uses such as pickleball.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-





Parks & Recreation Master Plan





Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
F 6	Develop an allocation policy for use of the Sabic indoor turf to promote equitable access to facility users during the high demand fall/winter season.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
F 7	Consider a discounted rental rate during late weekday afternoons (e.g., 4 pm to 6 pm) to encourage both greater use of non-prime time (e.g., for birthday parties), as well as freeing up more prime time for consecutive scheduling.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
F 8 	Actively develop expanded spring/summer use of the indoor turf.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 9	Develop indoor programming suitable to Baltimore and Bewdley Halls and Old Camborne Schoolhouse.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 10	Purchase portable dance mats for use at Baltimore or Bewdley Hall.		\$8,000			\$8,000
F 11 	Based on response to new programming, determine the need to install a permanent sprung floor at one of the Centre halls.				Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)	-
F 12	Consult with Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit to investigate the potential to use community centre kitchens for programming.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
F 13	Pilot a “community kitchen” project.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-





Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
---	---	--	--

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
F 14 	In consultation with owner/operators, focus on proactively developing community-serving programs and events that are compatible with non-municipal halls/spaces when they are available.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 15 	Actively promote the four diamond ball field complex at Baltimore Recreation Centre to areas beyond those currently captured in its market and to non-typical users.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 16 	Monitor use of informal field to establish demand for construction of a regulation field.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 17	Consider providing a formal outdoor multi-use playing field at the Baltimore Recreation Centre in response to verified demand.			Costs absorbed within PT7		-
F 18 	Monitor use of tennis courts and multi-purpose pads for trends in tennis and pickleball activity.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
F 19	Before considering outdoor courts for pickleball, “test” demand by providing a portable facility on the arena floor or another suitable indoor space.		\$2,300			\$2,300
F 20	Ideally, retain Plainville courts as dedicated tennis-only facilities.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
F 21	Consider repurposing other tennis or multi-use courts for single or dual-purpose pickleball facilities based on demonstrated demand and proximity to residential areas.			Costs absorbed within PT recommendations		-
Total Estimated Costs for Facilities:		-	\$70,300	-	-	\$70,300

Parks & Recreation Master Plan


Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
---	---	--	--

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
Parks and Trails						
P&T 1	Conduct regular AODA assessments for accessible and safe paths, connections, entrance sand other amenities.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&T 2	Develop a Township-branded signage and wayfinding strategy to be implemented at Township parks, trails, boat launches, facilities, heritage sites and main arterials.	\$30,000				\$30,000
P&T 3	Develop an “environment first” policy, focusing on the support of the local ecology and waterfront development and management.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&T 4	Develop an “Active Hamilton” policy, focusing on the support and improvement of outdoor sporting activities and facilities.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&T 5	Consider building partnerships with local school boards for community use of sporting facilities, or joint development if providing a new facility.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&T 6	Develop a trail strategy to further develop a trail network over the long term that will serve residents and support tourism.	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Baltimore Recreation Centre						
P&T 7	Revise path layout.	\$26,980				\$26,980
P&T 8	Improve quality of existing volleyball courts.	\$30,000				\$30,000
P&T 9	Consider installing a full size multisport field.		\$425,000			\$425,000
P&T 10	Install pedestrian lighting at the various paths.	\$70,000				\$70,000
P&T 11	Install additional seating through the park.	\$16,000				\$16,000
Soft Costs						\$226,166
Baltimore Recreation Centre Total						\$794,146

Legend:





OTF funds = Ontario Trillium Foundation grant

 operating costs capital costs study to be undertakentask for Recreation Program/
Event Developer (see SD 3)

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
Bewdley Community Centre						
P&T 12	Upgrade sport court into basketball courts.	\$38,952				\$38,952
P&T 13	Upgrade bleachers.	\$8,000				\$8,000
P&T 14	Install new playground.	\$58,953				\$58,953
Soft Costs						\$42,170
Bewdley Community Centre Total						\$148,075
Bewdley Optimist Park						
P&T 15	Upgrade/replace existing pavilions.			\$60,000		\$60,000
P&T 16	Install small craft launch.		\$9,445			\$9,445
P&T 17	Install natural barriers.	\$58,953				\$58,953
Soft Costs						\$28,449
Bewdley Optimist Park Total						\$99,894
Cold Springs Memorial Park						
P&T 18	Install new playground.	OTF funds				-
P&T 19	Remove ball diamond.		\$10,303			\$10,303
P&T 20	Install new shade structure.	OTF funds				-
P&T 21	Plant new shade trees.		\$3,000			\$3,000
P&T 22	Install new seating, garbage receptacles and park signage.	\$8,500				\$8,500
Soft Costs						\$8,681
Cold Springs Memorial Park Total						\$30,484
Harwood Waterfront Park						
P&T 23	Explore the expansion of the beach area.		\$23,230			\$23,230
P&T 24	Install pedestrian lighting.	\$35,000				\$35,000
P&T 25	Install additional seating.			\$8,000		\$8,000
P&T 26	Enhance water quality with naturalized planting along shoreline.	\$3,000				\$3,000
Soft Costs						\$27,566
Harwood Waterfront Park Total						\$96,796





Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
Gores Landing Wharf						
P&T 27	Expand boat launch with seasonal dock.	\$12,250				\$12,250
P&T 28	Clean up planting.	\$3,470				\$3,470
Soft Costs						\$6,258
Gores Landing Wharf Total						\$21,978
Plainville Park						
P&T 29	Remove ball diamond.			\$21,661		\$21,661
P&T 30	Install path around park border.			\$11,160		\$11,160
P&T 31	Install accessible playground.			\$20,000		\$20,000
P&T 32	Install multi-sport/basketball court.			\$15,000		\$15,000
P&T 33	Install shade structure.			\$70,000		\$70,000
P&T 34	Install new seating.			\$16,000		\$16,000
P&T 35	Install new trees.			\$2,400		\$2,400
P&T 36	Install new parking lot.			\$4,200		\$4,200
Soft Costs						\$63,879
Plainville Park Total						\$224,300
Behan Park						
P&T 37	Install path around park border.			\$16,313		\$16,313
P&T 38	Install shade structure.			\$72,000		\$72,000
P&T 39	Install new seating.			\$22,000		\$22,000
P&T 40	Install exercise equipment.			\$9,200		\$9,200
P&T 41	Install shade trees.			\$25,000		\$25,000
Soft Costs						\$57,544
Behan Park Total						\$202,057
Pioneer Park						
P&T 42	Install path around park border.		\$6,971			\$6,971
P&T 43	Install new playground.		\$22,000			\$22,000
P&T 44	Install new seating.		\$12,000			\$12,000
P&T 45	Install native planting.		\$4,000			\$4,000
Soft Costs						\$17,907
Pioneer Park Total						\$62,878





Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
Butterfield Park						
P&T 46	Remove ball diamond.			\$8,510		\$8,510
P&T 47	Install shade structure.			\$70,000		\$70,000
P&T 48	Install new seating.			\$8,000		\$8,000
Soft Costs						\$34,448
Butterfield Park Total						\$120,955
Laurel Park						
P&T 49	Remove ball diamond.			\$9,830		\$9,830
P&T 50	Replace playground.			\$20,000		\$20,000
P&T 51	Install path around park border.			\$6,360		\$6,360
P&T 52	Install shade structure.			\$30,000		\$30,000
P&T 53	Install new seating.			\$12,000		\$12,000
Soft Costs						\$31,135
Laurel Park Total						\$109,325
Plainville Tennis Courts						
P&T 54	Conduct a yearly review on the court surfacing.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
P&T 55	Install sport lighting.	\$49,355				\$49,355
P&T 56	Install new seating.	\$8,000				\$8,000
Soft Costs						\$22,838
Plainville Tennis Courts Total						\$80,193
Old Camborne Schoolhouse						
P&T 57	Upgrade basketball court.			\$15,000		\$15,000
P&T 58	Replace/upgrade playground equipment.			\$25,000		\$25,000
P&T 59	Replace playground surface.			\$4,518		\$4,518
P&T 60	Install new shade structure.			\$49,277		\$49,277
P&T 61	Upgrade existing seating, picnic benches and garbage cans.			\$19,000		\$19,000
Soft Costs						\$44,915
Old Camborne Schoolhouse Total						\$157,710

Parks & Recreation Master Plan


Legend:


 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short [Years 2-4]	Medium [Years 5-7]	Long [Years 8-10]	
Scriven Parkette						
P&T 62	Move location of monument.	\$7,029				\$7,029
P&T 63	Install walking path.	\$4,480				\$4,560
P&T 64	Add new seating.	\$12,000				\$12,000
P&T 65	Install Township branded signage.	\$3,500				\$5,000
Soft Costs						\$11,352
Scriven Parkette Total						\$39,861
Stoney Pier Parkette						
P&T 66	Install new path.			\$5,500		\$5,500
P&T 67	Regrade existing shoreline.			\$30,000		\$30,000
P&T 68	Install new seating.			\$18,000		\$18,000
P&T 69	Install natural barriers.			\$6,000		\$6,000
P&T 70	Remove invasive species and clean up planting.			\$5,000		\$5,000
P&T 71	Stabilize shoreline with boulders.			\$18,849		\$18,849
Soft Costs						\$33,189
Stoney Pier Parkette Total						\$116,538
Total Estimated Costs for Parks and Trails:		\$448,966	\$535,949	\$753,778	\$20,000	\$1,758,696
Total Soft Costs						\$656,497
Grand Total Parks + Trails						\$2,415,193

Legend:
 operating costs

 capital costs





 study to be undertaken






 task for Recreation Program/
Event Developer (see SD 3)

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short [Years 2-4]	Medium [Years 5-7]	Long [Years 8-10]	
Service Delivery						
SD 1	Amalgamate the Cold Springs Memorial Hall Advisory Committee and the Cold Springs Park Advisory Committee into a single body.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 2	Strengthen links between Township and independent facility/programs operators to enhance community-wide coordination in service provision.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 3 	Hire a Recreation Program/Event Developer immediately to begin developing programs/activities at all Township facilities and parks, and to facilitate programming at other community spaces that are public serving.	\$55,000	\$55,000 x 3 years	\$55,000 x 3 years	\$55,000 x 3 years	\$550,000
SD 4	Institute a process that maximizes support and minimizes costs to instructors hired to deliver programs.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 5	Use Master Plan survey results to follow up on expressed interest and encourage people to register for specific volunteer positions or for possible future engagement as need/opportunity arises.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-
SD 6	Engage the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to research and identify the required on and off-line, in-person and remote, components of a comprehensive volunteer recruitment strategy.	Costs absorbed within operating budget				-





Parks & Recreation Master Plan


Legend:

 operating costs	 capital costs	 study to be undertaken	 task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short [Years 2-4]	Medium [Years 5-7]	Long [Years 8-10]	
SD 7	Use findings to determine the need for, and costs of, professional services for volunteer program design and start-up, management software, as well as the staff requirements for its ongoing implementation.		\$40,000			\$40,000
SD 8	Use both on and off-line approaches to recruiting volunteers.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 9	Focus on post-pandemic interests/opportunities to attract volunteers to help with Township projects and programs.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 10 	Further develop existing relationships with agencies such as the Cobourg Library and EarlyON to expand services.	Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)				-
SD 11 	Pursue collaborations with new facility users and service providers such as Special Olympics Ontario and YMCA Northumberland to address program/service needs.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
SD 12 	Through the Program/Event Developer, the municipality should take the lead in instituting joint service planning on a regular basis with the Advisory Committees and major program/service providers in the Township.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
SD 13 	Request other interested parties to participate in planning activities, as need or opportunity arises.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
SD 14 	Institute ongoing service monitoring and evaluation to inform service planning in the areas of facility/space use, program and events, and volunteering.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-





Legend:


	operating costs		capital costs		study to be undertaken		task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)
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Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short [Years 2-4]	Medium [Years 5-7]	Long [Years 8-10]	
SD 15 	Develop annual planning targets to allow outcomes to be measured and reported.		Costs absorbed within operating budget / new staff (see SD3)			-
SD 16	Review and update the Master Plan in five years.			\$50,000		\$50,000
SD 17	Develop a volunteer policy, management procedures and handbook.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 18	Consider developing a policy to incentivize individuals to volunteer in service provision		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 19	Develop a Community Group Affiliation Policy, based on the results of consultation with volunteer recreation groups to confirm the type and extent of required assistance to sustain/grow their programs/events, and to inform policy development.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 20	Consider developing a pricing policy in consultation with the community to rationalize user fees and address the potential to recover a greater proportion of costs in relation to anticipated service expansion.			\$35,000		\$35,000
SD 21	Develop additional mechanisms to generate revenue generation to help finance parks and recreation services and promote them, including donations, targeted capital campaigns, naming rights, last minute ice, etc.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 22	Enter formal agreements with partners to deliver parks and recreation services in the Township.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Legend:

 operating costs
  capital costs
  study to be undertaken
  task for Recreation Program/ Event Developer (see SD 3)

Recommendation		Timing				Total Estimated Cost
		Year 1	Short (Years 2-4)	Medium (Years 5-7)	Long (Years 8-10)	
SD 23	Strengthen reporting relationships between the Township and independent operators to ensure accountability and overall coordination of services that are being municipally supported.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 24	Use the development of a Township-wide communications strategy to incorporate specific elements to disseminate information and raise awareness of parks and recreation services and volunteer opportunities.		Costs absorbed within Corporate Communications Strategy budget			-
SD 25	Prepare and post an annual services 'year-in-review' that summarizes and informs the community about the Township's achievements in parks and recreation.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
SD 26 	Include both digital and print media information to promote/communicate with residents about parks and recreation services.		Costs absorbed within operating budget			-
Total Estimated Costs for Service Delivery:		\$55,000	\$205,000	\$250,000	\$165,000	\$675,000

8.0 Conclusion

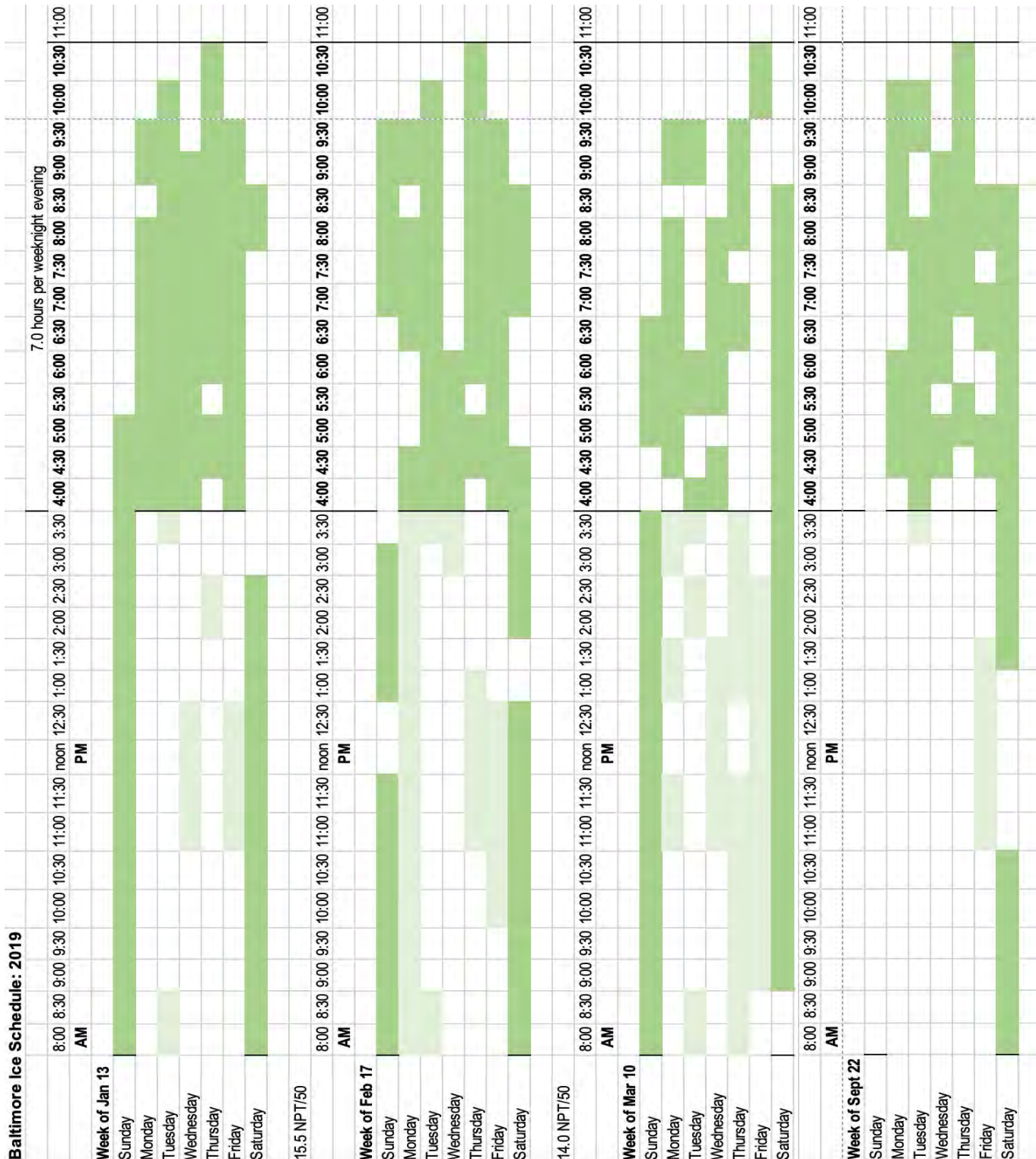
This comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan analyzes the current and future recreation needs of those who live, work and play in the Township of Hamilton. The Township's focus as an indirect provider of recreation services is providing high quality parks and facilities for use by other programs providers and for general community activity and enjoyment.

A key objective of the Master Plan is to increase recreation programming, activity and events using existing municipal assets. The current supply of recreation facilities is both diverse and well maintained, with considerable potential to accommodate additional use. Proactively facilitating programming through a dedicated Recreation Program/Event Developer staff position is a prerequisite to optimizing the use of recreation facilities and parks. The cost to the Township for this position can be viewed as a return on investment. Growth in programming and facility use will generate revenues that would otherwise not materialize.

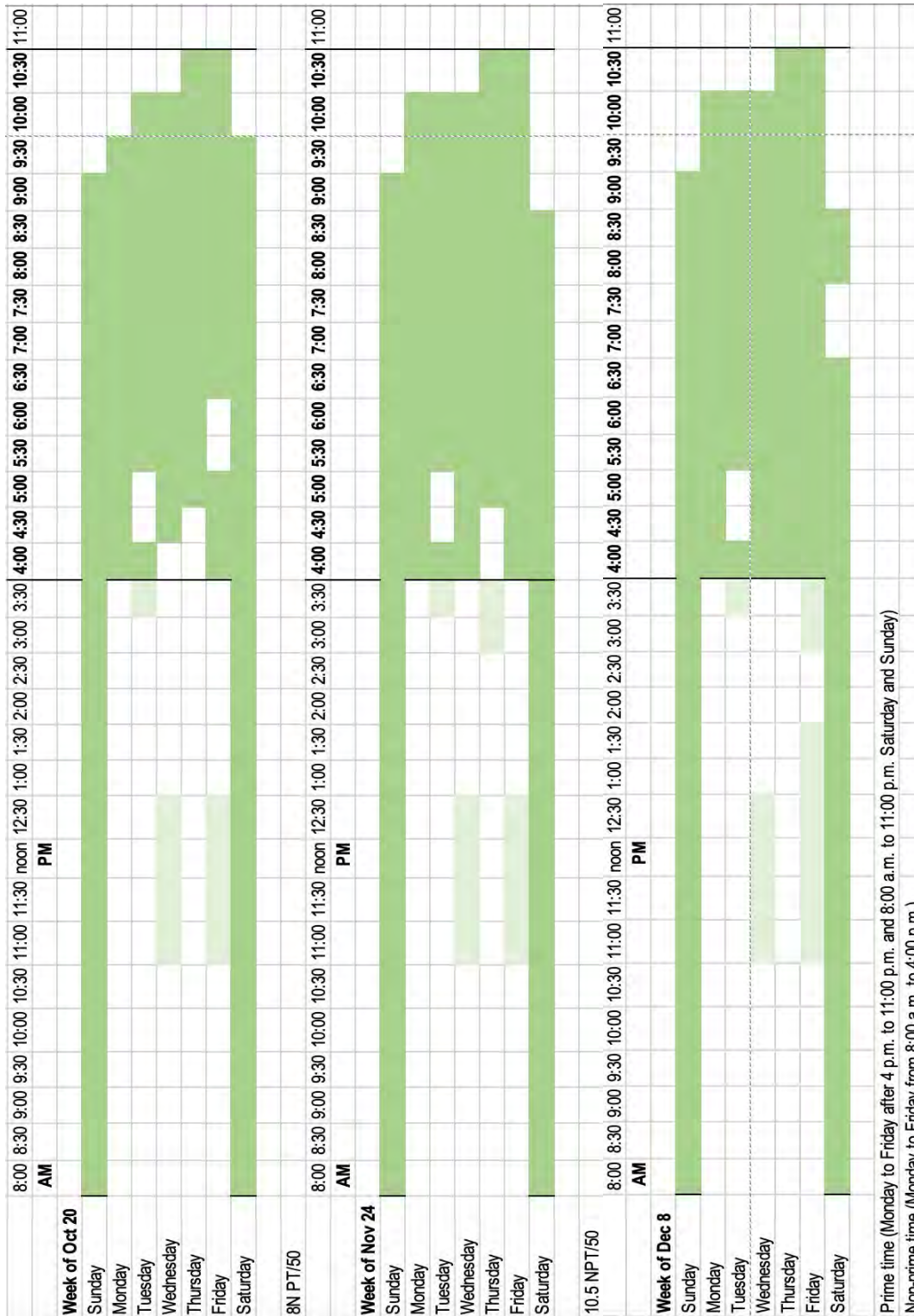
This Master Plan provides recommendations and an implementation strategy for managing and developing parks and recreation facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources and investment through to 2031. It is a key tool for achieving the Township's strategic goals and reflecting the changing demographics, values and needs of a healthy community.

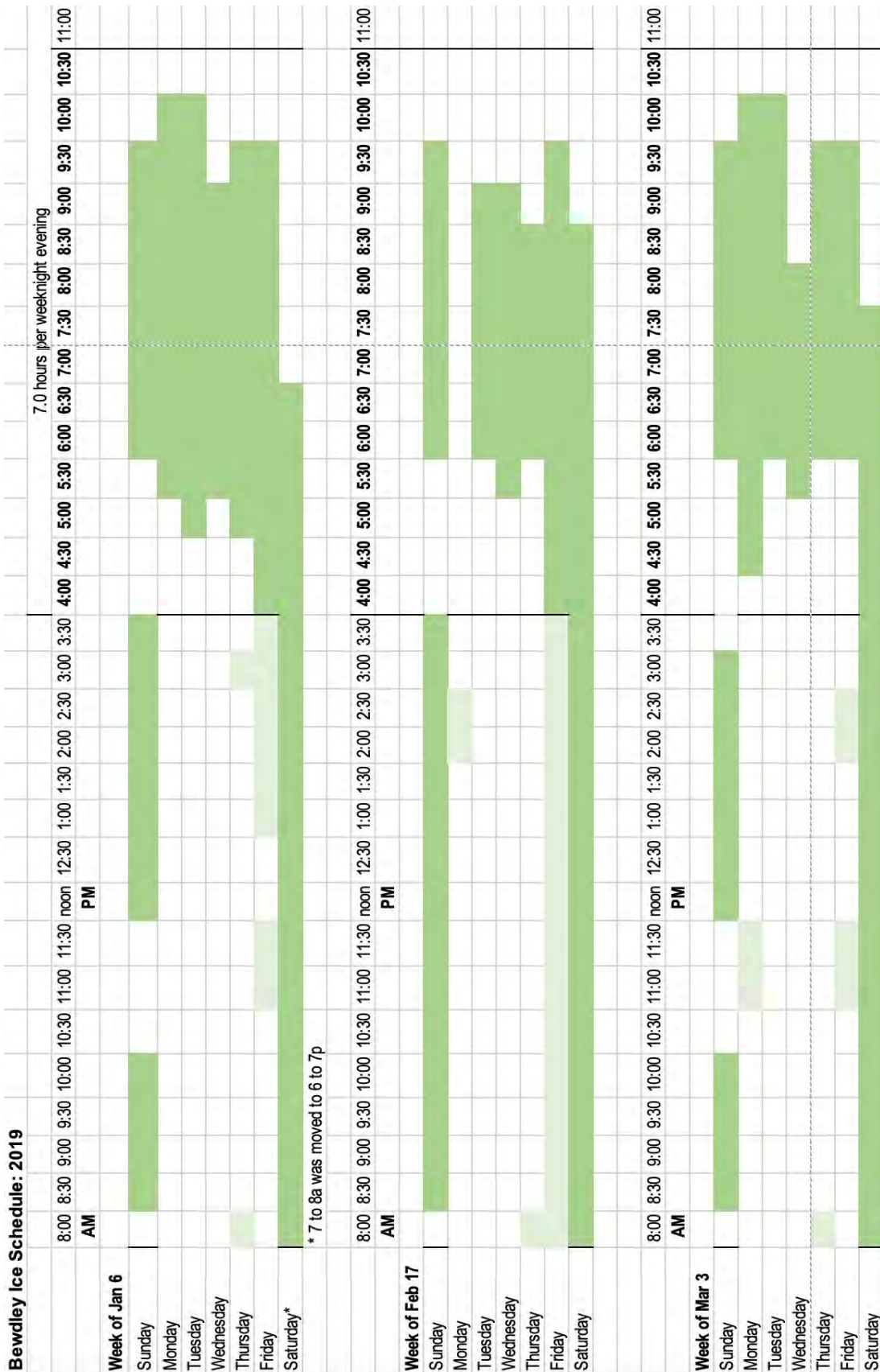


Appendix A: Arena Ice Schedules

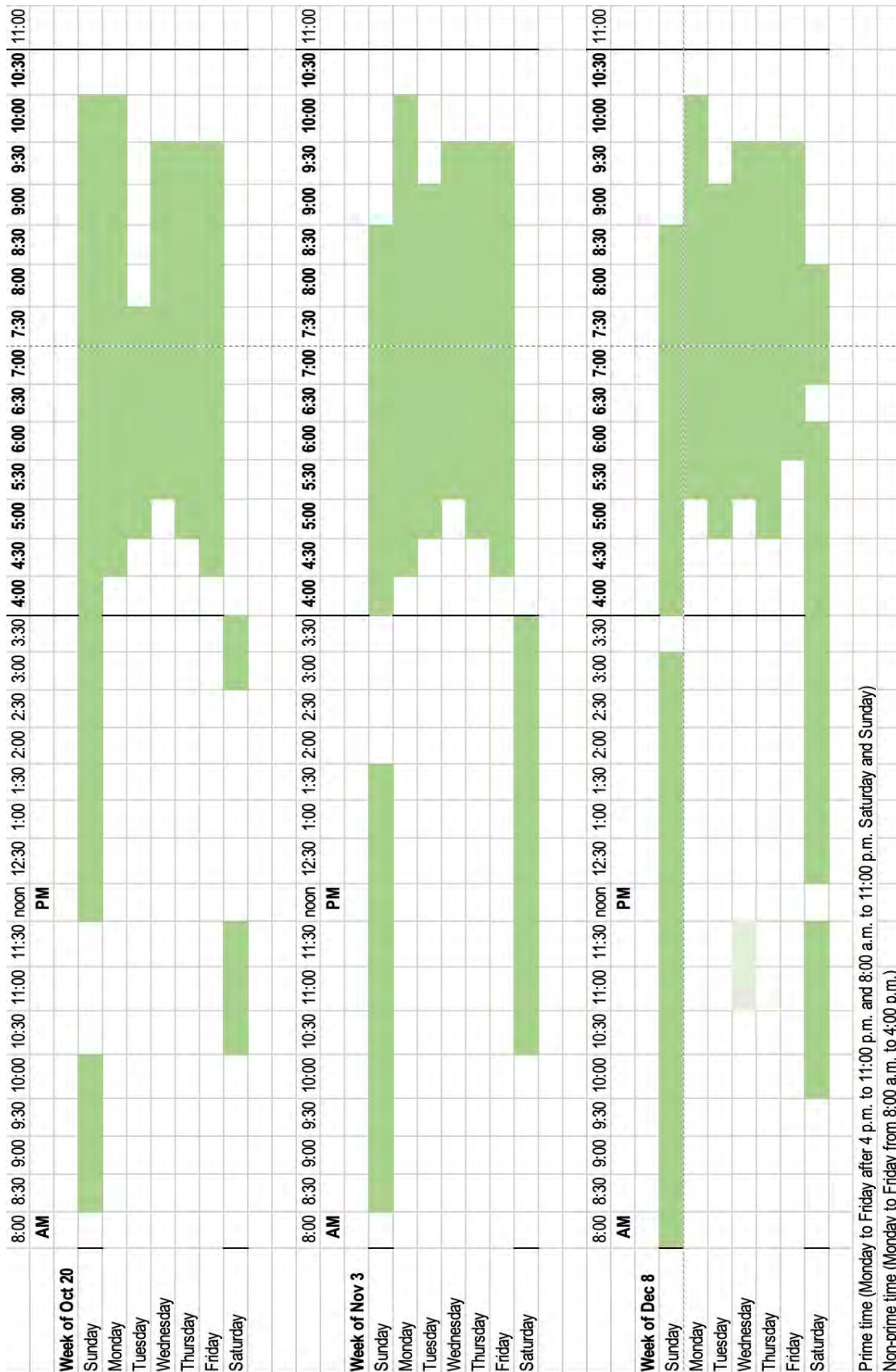


Parks & Recreation Master Plan





Parks & Recreation Master Plan



Appendix B: Hamilton Parks and Amenities Inventory

	Park Name	Location	Type	Size [ha]	Playground	Benches/ picnic areas	Volleyball	Water Access	Dock	Boat Launch	Basketball Court	Canteen	Pavilion	Open Green Space	Walking Trail	Washrooms	Parking
Municipal	Baltimore Recreation Centre and Park	23 Community Centre Rd, Baltimore	Recreation Hub	~11.59 ha (28.64 arces)	2	1	2				1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Behan Park - Precious Corners	10 Behan Rd, Cobourg, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.76 ha (1.89 acres)	1	1								1			
	Bewdley Community Centre	7060 Lake St, Bewdley, ON	Recreation Hub	~5.02 ha (12.41 acres)							1			1			1
	Bewdley Optimist Park & Dock	5073 and 5074 Rice Lake Dr N, Bewdley, ON	Community Park	~0.53 ha (1.31 acres)	1	1			1	1			2	1		1	1
	Butterfield Park	16 June Ave, Cobourg, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.83 ha (2.05 acres)	1						1			1			1
	Castlehill Park	30 Stoneridge Rd, Cobourg, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.44 ha (1.08 acres)	1	1					1						
	Cold Springs Memorial Hall and Park	3844 Burnham St N, Cobourg, ON	Community Park	~1.21 ha (3.00 acres)	1	1								1			1
	Laurel Park - Precious Corners	21 Lorraine Ave, Cobourg, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.24 ha (0.6 acres)	1									1			
	Harwood Waterfront Park	5527 Front St, Gores Landing, ON	Community Park	~0.12 ha (0.30 acres)		1		1					1	1		1	1
	Gores Landing Wharf Waterfront Park and Dock	5310 Plank Rd, Gores Landing, ON	Community Park	~0.10 ha (0.26 acres)		1		1	1				1				
	Pioneer Park (Gores Landing)	5311 Plank Rd, Gores Landing, ON	Community Park	~0.05 ha (0.134 acres)		1								1			
	Plainville Park	4603 Burnham St N, Gores Landing, ON	Community Park	~0.85 ha (2.11 acres)										1			
	Scriven Memorial Park	4852 Rice Lake Drive N, Bewdley, ON	Parkette	~0.11 ha (0.27acres)										1			
	Lakeshore Lookout		Parkette			1								1			
	Stoney Pier Parkette (Harwood)		Parkette					1						1			
	Plainville Tennis Courts	8644 Oak Ridges Dr, Gores Landing, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.5 ha (1.22 acres)										1			1
	Old Camborne Schoolhouse and Park	3441 Albert's Alley, Cobourg, ON	Neighbourhood Park	~0.43 ha (1.06 acres)	2	1					1			1			1
	Total Municipal				10	10	2	3		1	5	1	5	15	1	3	8

	Park Name	Location	Type	Size (ha)	Playground	Benches/ picnic areas	Volleyball	Water Access	Dock	Boat Launch	Basketball Court	Canteen	Pavilion	Open Green Space	Walking Trail	Washrooms	Parking
School Board	Camborne Public School	3546 Kennedy Rd, Cobourg, ON	Public School	~6.86 ha (2.78 acres)	1									1			1
	Dale Road Senior Public School	8228 Dale Rd, Cobourg, ON	Public School	~2.69 ha (6.5 acres)	1									1			1
	Baltimore Public School	9320 Burwash Rd, Baltimore, ON	Public School	~1.73 ha (4.27 acres)	1									1			1
	Northumberland Montessori School	8681 Danforth Rd W, Cobourg, ON	Public School	~1.40 ha (3.45 acres)										1			1
	Plainville Public School	4877 Burnham St N, Gores Landing, ON	Public School	~2.90 (7.17 acres)	1									1			1
	Total School Board				4	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Non-Profit	Harwood Community Hall Park	5453 Front St, Harwood, ON		~1.29 ha (3.21 acres)	1						1						
	Total Private				1	0	0	0		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conservation Area	Balls Mills	2971 Regional Rd 15, Baltimore, ON	Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority	15.7 ha (38.1 acres)		1								1	1		1
	Rice Lake		Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority	73.6 ha (181.91 acres)		1								1	1		1
	Carr's Marsh	Bob Carr Rd,	Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority														
	Total CA				0	2	0	0		0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2