

# Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan

**Stage 1: Research and Analysis Report  
(October 2024)**



**OAKVILLE**



**Oakville  
Public  
Library**

# Honouring the Land and Territory

Oakville, as we know it today, is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations. From the lands of the Anishinaabe, to the Attawandaron and Haudenosaunee, these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in First Nations history. As we gather today on the sacred lands of Treaties 14 and 22, we are in solidarity with Indigenous brothers and sisters to honour and respect Mother Earth, the original nations of the trees and plants, the four legged, the flyers, the finned and the crawlers as the original stewards of Mother Earth.

We acknowledge and give gratitude to the waters as being life and being sacred and to the carriers of those water teachings, the females. We acknowledge and give gratitude for the wisdom of the Grandfathers and the four winds that carry the spirits of our ancestors that walked this land before us.

The Town of Oakville is located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Treaty holders, for being stewards of this traditional territory.

# Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the input provided on the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan by our engaged residents, community groups, and partners. We also acknowledge the thoughtful input from Town of Oakville elected officials and staff. The plan will be designed to build upon our shared values and address our key priorities as a dynamic and growing municipality.

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Mayor Rob Burton

Ward 1 Councillors Sean O'Meara and Jonathan McNeice

Ward 2 Councillors Cathy Duddeck and Ray Chisholm

Ward 3 Councillors Janet Haslett-Theall and Dave Gittings

Ward 4 Councillors Allan Elgar and Peter Longo

Ward 5 Councillors Jeff Knoll and Marc Grant

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Ward 7 Councillors Nav Nanda and Scott Xie

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Parks, Recreation and Libraries Make Oakville a Vibrant and Livable Community for All

Oakville residents value their access to parks, recreation, and library services – surveys routinely identify these as defining aspects of the town’s high quality of life. There is a strong relationship between the provision of social infrastructure and benefits to personal, community, social, economic, and environmental wellbeing.

Access to parks, recreation, and library services is a fundamental human need in all ages and stages of life. The wide-ranging benefits of participation for both individuals and communities are well documented, such as social inclusion, personal health, connections with nature, urban improvement, crime reduction and positive social outcomes, community development and pride, lifelong learning, creative expression, employment and volunteering, drowning and fall prevention, and much more. Above all, participation is fun and enables people to reach their full potential.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for growth, it is more important than ever to chart a course that builds a strong and resilient future for parks, recreation, and library services in Oakville.

In cooperation with the Oakville Public Library, the Town of Oakville regularly prepares master plans to identify community priorities, guide capital investment, and inform service delivery. These are long-term plans that provide direction on parks, open spaces, recreation services, programs, facilities, libraries, partnerships, and amenities. The master plan was last updated in 2012 and 2017 (a scoped update to the 2012 Master Plan). A new strategy is needed to guide the town’s capital plan and align with the latest research and community needs.

## 1.2 What to Expect from the Master Plan

The Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan presents a sustainable long-term strategy for the delivery of facilities and services that are responsive to the current and future needs of Oakville’s growing and diverse population. The plan will strategically guide the Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library (OPL) for the next ten years, with a planning horizon that considers major capital needs until the year 2051 in alignment with the latest provincial growth policies.

The overarching goal of the master plan is to ensure the town's facility portfolio is responsive to the current and future needs of the community. The plan is a comprehensive, evidence-based exercise grounded in:

- Public and stakeholder input – residents are being engaged through open houses and surveys, while stakeholders have been invited to workshops

- Demographic analysis – how and where Oakville is growing, changes in age, ethnicity, income, etc.
- Research and trends – examining best practices, participation trends and usage levels, facility condition, etc.

The needs assessments are supported by the most current information on: demographic composition and growth, usage data and trends, stakeholder, benchmarking against high performing municipalities, existing program and facility inventories, asset management data, current policies and funding levels, supporting studies and reports, and more. In this way, the priorities advanced in the plan are evidence-based and respond to dynamic needs across the entire town.

Some key items explored within the plan include:

- The town’s population growth and changing demographics;
- Oakville’s evolving urban structure, including approaches within strategic growth areas;
- Trends and evolving interests in participation within a post-pandemic environment;
- Examining the town’s entire portfolio of parks and facilities and assessing their ability to meet current and future needs; and
- Other topics such as (but not limited to) emerging program needs, climate change impacts, diversity and inclusion, digital services, pricing and affordability, park and trail design, physical literacy, etc.

## 1.3 Project Objectives

This master plan provides a strategy and direction for future goals and objectives related to parks, recreation, and library facilities. The plan is designed to adapt to changes in the town’s demographics, as well as the social, educational, cultural, sport and recreational needs of the community with a focus on diversity and inclusion.

To achieve this, the plan includes a comprehensive analysis of both current data and longer term trends in sport, recreation, culture, and learning. An emphasis is placed on demand-driven metrics and alignment with Council and community priorities. The plan also sets out many tools and resources that the town and public library can use to plan specific projects and to further assess opportunities that may arise during the plan’s implementation.

It is notable that the development of the plan is a collaborative effort between various stakeholders, including community members and service providers that have been engaged in articulating key priorities and potential future outcomes of the plan.

The plan identifies opportunities and tools to allow the town and its partners to continue to provide facilities, amenities, and services that accommodate Oakville’s diverse and evolving needs. This long-term planning approach identifies key priorities and capital requirements that can be incorporated into annual budgets and area-specific/secondary plans as the basis for strategic implementation. Through decision-making frameworks and criteria, the master

plan is a flexible living document that can adapt to changing values, emerging trends, new opportunities, and operational priorities.

The plan also recognizes that a great deal of planning has already been undertaken – this can be seen in the many studies, strategies, and reports that the town and its partners have completed in recent years. The master plan draws on these resources and creates a multi-year implementation strategy that identifies synergies and priorities across the town and across facility types.

The directions in the master plan will influence future capital and operating budgets starting with the town's 2025 budget process. Additional work will still be required beyond the approval of this plan; for example, detailed capital, service, and site-specific planning will be necessary for many of the plan's recommendations, including further public engagement efforts.

## 1.4 Project Approach and Scope

An integrated, coordinated, and multi-phase process was applied to develop the master plan. Tasks were divided into three stages, with distinct deliverables for each stage.

Figure 1: Master Plan Process



The emphasis of the master plan is on facilities owned and/or operated by the Town of Oakville, although the plan also considers facilities provided by other organizations within the public, not-for-profit and private sectors. The plan's recommendations may have applicability to a variety of sectors and providers, but are not binding on facilities that are managed by non-municipal providers, except in instances where there is a formal arrangement with the town relating to facility and/or service provision (e.g., school boards, community organizations, etc.).

Specifically, the master plan evaluates needs and strategies for the following types of facilities and services. Collectively, the plan assesses hundreds of unique assets.

- Active Parkland
- Community Centres
- Indoor Pools
- Arenas
- Seniors' Facilities
- Youth Spaces
- Gymnasiums
- Fitness Centres
- Indoor Turf Facilities
- Arts and Culture Facilities
- Other Indoor Facilities
- Soccer and Multi-use Fields (rugby, field hockey, etc.)
- Ball Diamonds
- Cricket Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Pickleball Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Outdoor Pools
- Splash Pads
- Playgrounds
- Outdoor Fitness Locations
- Skateboard Parks
- BMX Bike Parks
- Outdoor Skating Rinks
- Leash-free Dog Parks
- Community Gardens
- Disc Golf Courses
- Public Libraries

The master plan does not address municipal trails or cultural venues (such as museums, theatres, and historical sites) as these are examined through separate studies and processes.

In addition to providing guidance on facility development, redevelopment, and expansion, the master plan also addresses topics such as program and service delivery, best practices, amenity/park design, and associated resources. Items such as operating arrangements, partnership development, marketing initiatives for existing or new facilities and services, etc. are beyond the project scope.

The plan was prepared by a consulting team led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, under the guidance of a Project Steering Committee comprised of key staff with the Recreation and Culture Department, Parks and Open Space Department, and Oakville Public Library. All town commissions were represented on the project's Steering Committee.

## 1.5 Purpose of this Stage 1 Report

This **Stage 1 Research and Analysis Report** describes the current state of parks, recreation, and library services and facilities in Oakville and does not contain any detailed analysis or recommendations, which are the focus of subsequent phases. The objectives of this report are to:

- describe the current policy and planning context;
- summarize the town's past approaches to facility provision, investment, operational approaches and provision of services, as well as identifying current inventories and usage rates;
- outline current and future demographic trends, along with the associated growth and development impacts that are or will impact the provision of parks, recreation, and library facilities; and
- assess parks, recreation and library trends in Oakville, with comparable municipalities across Ontario, as well as short- and long-term considerations relative to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report will form a technical appendix to the Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan and should be considered draft until the master plan is approved by Town Council.

## 2. Taking a Look Back

The master plan is a product of the groundwork that the town and public library have laid down through past studies and priority-setting exercises. This section summarizes the legislative and policy environment, as well as aligned municipal priorities and planning initiatives so their implications can be considered within the updated master plan.

### 2.1 Previous Master Plans

The last time the town completed a comprehensive study on parks, recreation and library facility needs that was supported by public consultation was in 2012. The Plan was undertaken as part of Vision 2057 and provided guidance to respond to changing needs. The 2012 Master Plan contained 76 action plans; as of 2017, 71% of 2012 Master Plan's short-term actions were completed.

In 2017, the 2012 Master Plan was reviewed and updated to coincide with the Development Charges review. Facility provision targets from previous plans were updated and applied to inform facility requirements for the town's forecasted build-out, which at that time was 266,800 persons (post-2031). This process was structured as a technical, internal exercise focussed on key changes and did not include public consultation.

#### Strategic Framework from the 2017 Master Plan Review

##### Vision

To create and sustain thriving, vibrant and welcoming community facilities, parks and public spaces for the wellbeing of the residents of Oakville.

##### Values

- Equity and inclusion
- Community engagement and placemaking
- Innovation and technology
- Stewardship and sustainability
- Evidence-based decision-making

##### Goals

1. Welcoming, inclusive and engaging spaces that support individual and community wellbeing
2. Vibrant and collaborative spaces that build capacity
3. Flexible and high quality multi-use spaces that are adaptable to changing needs
4. Accessible spaces that are well maintained and environmentally responsible
5. Financially sustainable spaces that benefit from community partnerships

Major infrastructure recommendations from the 2017 Master Plan included (but are not limited to) support for the project that would become the Oakville Trafalgar Community

Centre, advancement of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and build-out of Sixteen Mile Sports Park, planning for library and community space in Palermo Village, long-term development of a library branch along the Trafalgar Corridor North, development of additional sports fields and courts (largely in North Oakville), and more. Additional study on longer-term arena needs and an outdoor pool strategy were recommended as part of future master planning efforts. The plan also validated the town-wide target of 2.2 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents and recommended the preparation of a Parks Strategy (since completed) focussed on achieving this target in areas of redevelopment and intensification.

Of the 69 recommendations put forward in the 2017 Master Plan, **90% have been completed, partially completed, or are in progress.** Seven recommendations have not been acted upon for various reasons, such as lack of funding, other priorities, or a change in direction. More information on recommendations can be found in **Appendix A.**

**Table 1: Report Card – 2017 Master Plan Implementation to Date**

Action (to date)	Number of Recommendations	Percent
Completed / Partially Completed	17	25%
In Progress	45	65%
Incomplete	7	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Previous master plans have effectively guided the capital planning programs of the town and public library for about five-years at a time. Short-term planning helps the town to respond to emerging needs in a timely fashion, while taking the long-view ensures that major infrastructure can be integrated into long-range financial plans. By integrating both capital facility and park needs with service planning, the master plan will be a comprehensive strategy that serves as a living document for the town and library.

## 2.2 Recent Accomplishments

Parks, recreation, and library facilities are vital contributors to strong, vibrant communities and help residents to achieve many of their personal goals. The town has completed a large number of significant projects in recent years – many that were supported by the 2012 and 2017 Master Plans – including (but not limited to):

- a) opening of the Trafalgar Park Community Centre (renewal and expansion of the Oakville Arena and Senior's Centre) in 2018;
- b) opening of the award-winning Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre in 2020;
- c) expansion of the community park at Sixteen Mile Sports Complex in 2024;
- d) detailed design and planning for the future Sixteen Mile Community Centre and Library (planned to open in 2025);
- e) restarting the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative, which is planning for revitalized library and cultural facilities throughout the downtown area;
- f) purchase of additional parkland, including 44-hectares (former Fogolars Country Club) for passive and educational opportunities;
- g) development of approximately 45 new parks and village squares (amounting to about 41 hectares of new parkland) throughout the town, including North Oakville;
- h) numerous new playground installations, soccer fields, sport courts, splash pads, and trails within new parks and village squares;
- i) completion of various capital infrastructure renewal and rehabilitation projects involving facilities and parks throughout Oakville, including accessibility improvements;
- j) expansion of Oakville Public Library's creation zone initiative, food lockers, and non-traditional lending programs (technology, sports kits, etc.);
- k) improved access to technology and online services through investment in new systems;
- l) expanded recreation and library programming in response to evolving community interests, often in partnership with others; and
- m) completion of several notable plans and studies, such as Strategic Plans for the town and public library, Parks Plan 2031, and more.

## 2.3 Project Alignment

Parks, recreation, and library facilities are developed and provided within the context of an extensive web of local, municipal, provincial, and federal laws, strategies, plans and reports. Many of these reports position parks, recreation, and library facilities and services as important contributors in addressing key social, environmental, and economic issues.

The purpose of this section is to highlight some of the relevant directions within these strategic policy documents. A summary of key reports is provided below, with the remaining summaries contained in Section 3.4 and/or **Appendix B**. Documents included:

### **Corporate Studies**

- Council Strategic Plan and 2023–2026 Business Plan
- Vision 2057
- Livable Oakville Official Plan
- Active Transportation Master Plan
- Oakville Urban Mobility and Transportation Strategy
- Digital Oakville 2021 Plan
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Oakville Climate Emergency Progress Report
- Oakville Universal Design Guidelines
- Oakville Sustainable Design Guide
- Development Charges Background Study
- Community Benefits Charge Strategy
- 2023 Budget, Business Plans, and Long-term Capital Forecast

### **Parks Studies**

- Parks Plan 2031
- North Oakville Parks Facilities Distribution Plan
- Recreational Trail Accessibility Audit and Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan

### **Recreation and Culture Studies**

- Recreation and Culture Service Delivery Model Review
- Recreation and Culture Strategic Directions
- Cultural Plan 2016-2021
- Cultural Hub Study

### **Library Studies**

- OPL Strategic Plan
- OPL Annual Reports

### **Council Strategic Plan and 2023–2026 Business Plan**

In July 2023, Town Council approved a new Strategic Plan and Business Plan to serve as the framework for decision-making and day-to-day choices. The Strategic Plan sets the direction for the Oakville community while the Business Plan helps identify the priorities for Council's four-year term of office. Council's strategic goals will be incorporated into the annual departmental business plans and budgets beginning in 2024.



### Guiding Principles

- Leadership: We will strive to innovate and set a positive example
- Inclusivity: We will create a welcoming and inclusive community
- Excellence: We will commit to quality in the delivery of public services to residents and businesses
- Sustainability: We will act on environmental sustainability and natural spaces
- Quality of Life: We will provide vibrant culture, heritage, and community amenities for all stages of life
- Fiscal Responsibility: We will make decisions driven by economic sustainability

## Strategic Priorities and Selected Strategic Objectives

### Growth Management

- Complete and connected communities: We will manage the development of safe, active, and connected communities with places to live, work, and play for all by:
  - Planning complete mixed-use communities with access to greenspace, retail, schools, libraries, recreation spaces, community centres, and transit hubs
- Infrastructure: We will ensure infrastructure meets the needs of the growing community by:
  - Upgrading, expanding, and constructing parks, recreation, and culture facilities and libraries so they meet current and future needs in all areas of the town
  - Implementing future-ready infrastructure, technology, and policies
- Economic development: We will promote employment growth and the long-term vibrancy of the economy
- Transportation: We will balance safety, mobility, and environmental goals

### Community Belonging

- Inclusion and belonging: We will plan and deliver services and programs so that all people are served equitably by:
  - Delivering recreational programs that reflect the demographic profile of the town with attention to youth, seniors, and other equity deserving groups
  - Supporting events to reflect and celebrate cultural diversity, engage all age groups, and consider accessibility barriers

- Engaging residents: We will provide opportunities for all residents to participate and engage in community life by:
  - Consulting, collaborating, and engaging with community organizations
  - Enhancing partner-led programming in municipal facilities and public spaces

### Environmental Sustainability

- Greenspace, parks, and trails: We will integrate greenspaces and parks throughout our community, and conserve and enhance natural areas by:
  - Protecting environmental features and maintaining green corridors to connect natural areas
  - Acquiring and protecting parkland to enhance outdoor recreational activities
  - Adding to our trail network to enable residents to connect to natural spaces
- Climate change mitigation: We will minimize the impact that the town has on climate change by:
  - Incorporating climate mitigation and adaptation planning into policy, operational procedures, and risk management across all department areas
  - Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and conserving energy across municipal facilities and operations
- Climate change adaptation: We will identify and manage environmental risks and build resiliency in our infrastructure and services

### Accountable Government

- Service excellence: We will support data-driven innovation and continually improve service delivery by:
  - Exploring solutions, including digital services, that increase efficiency and scalability of services
  - Implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across all service delivery areas
  - Developing mechanisms to ensure a continual improvement of organizational performance and service delivery
- Financial management: We will ensure responsible budgeting and sound long-term financial planning by:
  - Prioritizing infrastructure needs and investments to ensure service levels of Asset Management Program reflect financial capabilities
  - Securing provincial and federal funding for infrastructure needs
- People management: We will develop a diverse, talented, engaged, and appropriately resourced municipal workforce

### **Key Actions with Relevance to this Master Plan**

- Plan and build infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing community through the ... construction of North Park (now Sixteen Mile Sports Community Centre and Park)...Downtown Cultural Hub implementation...

- Maximize use of the town’s growth infrastructure funding tools (development charges, community benefits charges, parkland dedication) to pay for the land and infrastructure needed to maintain service levels
- Ensure that all services and activities are designed and evaluated to reflect the changing demographics of a growing community through...continued community development and outreach work to formal and informal community groups
- Ensure that there is a broad menu of recreational and cultural opportunities for residents to enjoy through the following:
  - Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan
  - Special Events Plan
  - Cultural Plan refresh
- Manage our natural environment to adapt to a changing climate, in the context of our urban development, through developing and implementing the ... Land Acquisition Plan, including Parkway lands...

### **Vision 2057 (2014)**

Approved by Council in 2014, Vision 2057 brought together all of the town’s master plans and key planning initiatives to collectively support one unified vision of Oakville’s future – “to be the most livable town in Canada”. A sustainable community framework was developed, along with strategic directions consisting of: Create it; Afford it; Live it; and Preserve it.

One strategic direction under the “Live it” pillar is the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan, the purpose of which is to ensure the wellbeing of the town’s residents, and the cohesive development of communities through parks, recreation and library facilities and amenities, advancing overall quality of life.

Several aspects of this plan relative to parks, recreation, and libraries have been implemented, including the South-Central Public Lands Study and subsequent development of the Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre. The Downtown Plan has yet to be fully implemented, including the incorporation of a library within the vision for a downtown cultural and performing areas space.

### **Livable Oakville Official Plan (2009)**

Official Plans are legal documents that outline the goals, objectives, and policies to manage and direct the physical growth of municipalities and its effects on the social, economic, and natural environment. The Town of Oakville has two official plans in effect: (a) the Livable Oakville Plan applies to the lands south of Dundas Street and to the lands north of Highway 407; and (b) the North Oakville East Secondary Plan and the North Oakville West Secondary Plan apply to the lands between Dundas and the 407.

The Plan includes the provision of several policies to preserve and create a livable community through urban structure, managing growth and change, cultural heritage, and urban design. Livable Oakville also sets out policies for the parks and open space designation, parkland acquisition, and park types.

Parks, recreation and libraries are designed to contribute to several specified growth areas in the town. Examples include:

- Midtown Oakville, a vibrant and complete new community; note: the town is currently preparing a Growth Area Review for Midtown Oakville to guide its future development;
- Uptown Core, which has a park district with a large park offering opportunities for recreational activities as well as an urban square;
- Palermo Village, which is to be developed over several years and will contain a significant civic and public presence with various recreational uses;
- Kerr Village, which will accommodate intensification through new development and redevelopment, and continue to function as a location for recreation uses;
- the revitalization of Bronte Village through a desire to maintain a complete community that includes cultural and recreation uses; and
- Downtown Oakville, which will be the cultural, social, and economic heart of Oakville.

The Official Plan is currently under review to examine existing policies, to assess the town's growth areas, and to conform to or be consistent with the latest Provincial legislation and policies.

### **Recreation and Culture Strategic Directions (2016)**

In 2016, the town's Recreation and Culture Department developed a Strategic Directions document that sets out the Department's vision for its future, values and operating principles, a strategic framework for 2015 and 2020, desired outcomes by 2020 and specific strategies to achieve the desired outcomes. While this strategy is entirely focused on circumstances in Oakville, it is also aligned with the National Recreation Framework that was endorsed by federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers in 2015 and is, therefore, grounded in the most current thinking about the future of recreation in Canada.

Several of the key strategies have since been implemented and the timeline of this strategy has been reached, although the vision, values and principles may still have relevance for service delivery and facility planning.

The long-term vision for the Department is as follows: "All residents of Oakville are engaged in meaningful, diverse and accessible recreation and cultural experiences that foster individual, family and community wellbeing." Values include: public good; inclusion and equity; sustainability; and lifelong participation. Operating principles include: outcome-driven; quality and relevance; evidence-based; partnerships and collaboration; and innovation. The Department intends to fulfill its strategic objectives through focusing on initiatives in four key areas: increased access; enhanced community capacity; quality programs services and facilities; and effective organization and services.

Key outcomes directly related to facilities include:

- All community assets are effectively utilized
- Community groups can access appropriate spaces for their needs
- No physical restrictions to participation – barrier free
- All facilities are clean, safe, accessible, and appropriate for specific use
- New facilities are developed – relevant to needs

## **Recreation and Culture Service Delivery Model Review (2019)**

The review considers all aspects of Recreation and Culture Services, benchmarks other municipal and non-municipal RCS innovations and practices, summarizes several current factors that may impact the Town's recreational services, and provides recommendations to help improve efficiency or effectiveness for the town's RCS department to consider.

The review provides a detailed roadmap to implement the following recommendations:

1. Develop and implement an RCS program framework
2. Develop and implement a partnership framework
3. Enhance the town's RCS cost recovery model
4. Develop a facility repurposing strategy
5. Pursue new revenue enhancement opportunities
6. Assess concessions at RCS facilities
7. Develop a digital strategy focusing on self-service and automation
8. Implement an approach for process improvement
9. Revise RCS front desk process
10. Determine total cost of RCS service

The proposed facility repurposing strategy is particularly relevant to this master plan. Such a strategy could consider facility utilization, annual financial performance, opportunity to avoid potential major capital costs, proximity to potential alternatives, level of private sector offering, suitability of the facility for current uses, and alternative uses.

## **Parks Plan 2031 (2022/23)**

Note: The original plan was written prior to the approval of Bill 23, More Homes Build Faster Act (2022) and was updated in 2023 to be brought into compliance with the updated Planning Act.

The Parks Plan 2031 serves as a comprehensive guideline for parkland dedication, payment, and use of cash-in-lieu, providing direction to address long-term needs as the town's parkland system evolves from a suburban-type park system to an urban park system. The plan includes recommendations on:

- achieving the town's active parkland target of 2.2ha/1,000 people;
- establishing a context appropriate parkland hierarchy and typology;
- designing and maintaining the parkland system;
- generating sufficient land/cash-in-lieu of land;
- options for the ownership of the town's parkland system;
- understanding cash-in-lieu of parkland; and
- administering the town's new Parkland Dedication By-law.

Among its recommendations is the following context-specific parkland hierarchy for planning and development, with definitions provided for each park type.

**Table 2: Recommended Parkland Hierarchy, Town of Oakville Parks Plan 2031**

Strategic Growth Areas	Centres and Corridors	Established Neighbourhoods	Off-Site Dedication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Common (0.75 to 2 ha per site)</li> <li>• Urban Square (0.25 to 1 ha per site)</li> <li>• Promenade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Urban Park (&lt; 0.25 ha per site), such as Connecting Links, Pocket Parks, and Sliver Parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Park (&gt;5 ha per site)</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Park (0.75 to 5 ha per site)</li> <li>• Parkette (&lt;0.75 ha per site)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eco Park (&gt;3 ha per site)</li> </ul>

Other notable recommendations include:

- adopting a comprehensive set of design guidelines articulating the various components of the town’s parkland system;
- maximizing available parkland dedications through the provisions of the Planning Act;
- striving to achieve a minimum parkland ratio of 12% of gross land area within Strategic Growth Area Secondary Plans;
- preparing a Parkland Acquisition Strategy to inform off-site acquisition requirements for achieving the town-wide provision target, including lands within the town’s boundary owned by the Province and Conservation Authority and consideration of land banking;
- making land dedication the first priority for all development located outside of Strategic Growth Areas (a combination of land dedication and cash contributions will be likely within Strategic Growth Areas); and
- considering accepting non-traditional lands for parkland dedication, such as non-core natural heritage lands (e.g., constrained lands), POPs, and strata parks (at a reduced rate).

### **OPL Strategic Plan (2022)**

Oakville Public Library created a three-year post-pandemic Strategic Plan with new vision, mission, and values (note: the plan was recently reviewed by the Library Board, which extended its horizon to 2026). The plan was the culmination of an extensive community engagement process.

**Vision:** Connecting people to what inspires them.

**Mission:** We bring together people, information and ideas to enrich lives and build healthy communities.

## Values:

- Equitable Access
- Curiosity
- Belonging
- Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Exceptional Service

## Strategic Pillars:

- Expanding our reach
- Promoting digital discovery
- Investing in staff to deliver exceptional customer service
- Enriching lives and building healthy communities.



This strategic framework lends support for items such as:

- Delivering services that support the organizational values, including programs for children, teens, adults, seniors and participants with disabilities;
- Exploring new and more flexible ways to deliver services; and
- Investigating online and digital technology opportunities to enhance the customer experience.

Although there is no direct mention of space or facilities in the plan, expansion of alternative service points (e.g., express kiosks, etc.) is one opportunity that may be explored in the short-term. Through the master plan, the integration of physical and alternative service points needs to be examined, supported by an analysis of key performance indicators, post-pandemic lifestyle shifts, and public input.

### Considerations for the Master Plan:

Recent and relevant policy direction and public input (see Stage 2 Report) will provide a strong foundation upon which to build this Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan. Livability, sustainability, and connectivity are just some of the common threads that are woven throughout the town's planning documents – the master plan's strategic framework will seek alignment wherever possible.

## 2.4 Guiding Documents

Below is a summary of key government and sector legislation and guidelines related to the provision of parks, recreation, and library facilities. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

### Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015)

The Framework for Recreation in Canada is a watershed guideline designed to support coordinated policies and practices in recreation and related sectors in Canada. Its aim is to improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and the built and natural environments by outlining a new vision for recreation in Canada supported by clear goals and underlying values and principles.

**Figure 2: Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015) – Goals**



The Framework’s fourth goal – Supportive Environments – is to ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities. Selected actions that help to guide the master plan include:

- (4.1) Provide recreation facilities and outdoor spaces in under-resourced communities, based on community and/or regional needs and resources.
- (4.2) Work with partners to increase the use of existing structures and spaces for multiple purposes, including recreation (e.g., use of schools, churches, vacant land and lots).
- (4.3) Renew recreational infrastructure as required and to meet the need for green spaces by:
  - Securing dedicated government funding, as well as partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors for the necessary development, renewal and rehabilitation of facilities and outdoor spaces
  - Developing assessment tools and evidence-based guidelines for investing and reinvesting in aging recreation infrastructure
  - Developing and adopting innovative renewal strategies that will endure over time, use less energy and provide affordable access for all

In 2021, the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) launched “ReImagine RREC – Renew, Retool, Engage and Contribute”, a multi-phase COVID-19 recovery initiative for recreation, parks, and community sport leaders. This initiative offers evidence-based

guidance about how the sector is critical to supporting and protecting the health and wellbeing of all Canadians. Key pillars for action include:

1. Parks, Recreation and Community Sport are Essential
2. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Access
3. Clarity and Consistency
4. Sustainability
5. Innovation and Flexibility

Building from this work, in 2023 CPRA released a supplement (currently in draft form) to the Framework for Recreation in Canada, the purpose of which is to lend focus to short-term actions that can be achieved over the next two years or until a new Framework is released. The Supplement considers many of the significant changes and issues that have emerged in recent years, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change considerations, focus on DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion), economic challenges, and more.

It is a goal of the sector to use the Framework as the premier policy to guide parks and recreation programming, service delivery, and facility decisions. While the FRC vision and goals remain the same, several new actions are suggested (see table below).

**Table 3: Framework for Recreation in Canada Supplement (2023) – Actions**

<p><b>Goal 1: Active Living</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Utilize the 24-hour Movement Guidelines (all ages) to help community members increase physical activity and reduce sedentary living.</li> <li>b) Focus on non-competitive and unstructured play for people of all ages, in both indoor and outdoor spaces.</li> <li>c) Provide and promote programming that reflects and accommodates people’s different employment circumstances (i.e., hybrid or work from home).</li> <li>d) Create and promote active transportation opportunities.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Goal 2: Inclusion and Access</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Develop and implement strategies, policies, and programs that ensure all community members across the life-span have equitable access to parks and recreation opportunities and services. It is critical to consider race, culture, gender identity, income, ability, and all people.</li> <li>b) Learn about and implement actions that create a sense of belonging for all members of the community in both indoor and outdoor spaces and places.</li> <li>c) Create, schedule, and promote programs for the purpose of addressing social isolation.</li> <li>d) Learn about and apply Indigenous ways of learning.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Goal 3: Connecting People and Nature</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide natural spaces and places in neighborhoods, communities, and regions through the retention and addition of natural areas, forests, parks, trails, and recreational waters (rivers, lakes, canals and beaches).</li> <li>b) Gather and share best practices about planning, creating, maintaining, and monitoring a comprehensive system of parks and protected areas that allows year-round (if appropriate) access to nature.</li> <li>c) Increase the public’s understanding of the importance of nature and outdoor spaces to health and wellbeing while respecting parks, trails, and other natural environments.</li> </ol>

- d) Develop operational policies and practices that show leadership in environmental stewardship, minimizing negative impacts on the natural environment, and mitigating the effects of climate change.

#### **Goal 4: Supportive Environments**

- a) Provide accessible, inclusive, and welcoming parks and recreation facilities and outdoor spaces in all neighbourhoods, communities, and regions.
- b) Renew parks and recreation physical and social infrastructure.
- c) Support placemaking strategies that encourage community members to take a leadership role in activating neighbourhoods to increase physical activity and social connectedness.
- d) Develop and implement education campaigns that increase knowledge about how parks and recreation contribute to enjoyment and quality of life.

#### **Goal 5: Recreation Capacity**

- a) Develop strategies that address workforce shortages in the parks and recreation sector.
- b) Implement career awareness, preparation, and development strategies to attract and educate new parks and recreation leaders.
- c) Develop, enhance, and implement high-quality and accessible training and competency-based capacity development programs for organizations and individuals (pre-professionals, professionals, and volunteers) working in recreation.
- d) Work with post-secondary institutions (colleges and universities) to support the recreation sector.
- e) Develop initiatives that recognize the contribution of volunteers.

## **Parks for All**

Parks for All is an action plan for Canada's parks community, published in 2017 through a collaboration between the Canadian Parks Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. This document aligns with and supports the Connecting Canadians with Nature document prepared by the Canadian Parks Council as well as the Framework for Recreation in Canada, particularly the FRC's third goal of "Connecting People and Nature".

Parks for All focuses on how all Canadians benefit from healthy parks and natural areas and shares the community's vision and goals for our parks. The report is intended to unite the parks community through specific actions, priorities, and strategic directions. The plan is guided by four strategic directions: Collaborate, Connect, Conserve, and Lead. Some specific actions that may be considered through the master plan or subsequent implementation initiatives include:

### **Collaborate**

- Reach out to unconventional partners and organizations that could creatively contribute to the Parks for All vision.

### **Connect**

- Forge connections between community parks and less accessible wilderness parks by sharing information and coordinating activities and campaigns.
- Support the creation of new parks and the expansion of current parks to offer more opportunities for local connections.

## **Conserve**

- Share expertise and best practices among the parks community.
- Champion the economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits provided by healthy ecosystems. Ensure these are accounted for in decision-making as contributing to stronger economies.

## **Lead**

- Invest time and money in employees for the development of high-performing, dynamic, and caring leaders.

## **Ontario Culture Strategy**

The 2016 Ontario Culture Strategy was built on a foundation of extensive public engagement regarding the value and significance of culture. Considerable effort was expended to investigate key trends affecting the cultural sector, how other jurisdictions in the world are responding to similar trends, and how they are striving to support and reconcile relationships with Indigenous Peoples. The document establishes the following vision for culture in Ontario:

“An Ontario where every person has the opportunity for creative expression and cultural participation, and where the diversity of our stories and communities is reflected, valued and celebrated, now and as part of our legacy to future generations.”

The Ontario Culture Strategy is rooted in the following principles to guide government support for culture:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Quality of Life and Economic Development
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Respect for Indigenous Peoples
- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Public Value and Accountability

The Strategy contains four broad goals centred upon promoting and strengthening culture, economic development, and promoting the value of the arts throughout government. It is a five-year plan containing nine key strategies that guide the provincial government in providing support for culture.

## **Ontario Public Library Guidelines**

These guidelines – developed and directed by the Ontario public library community – provide public libraries of all sizes with a development framework to assist with planning, service delivery, and ongoing monitoring. They are important not only for libraries pursuing accreditation but as a process for boards, CEOs, and library staff to assess their governance, management, and services against best practices.

Elements addressed in the Guidelines include: governance/administration; planning documents and process; policy; personnel and human resources; collections and services; physical and facilities; and more.

As it relates to this master plan, key best practices include (not a complete list):

- community analysis (at least once every four years)
- regular community consultation and performance measurement informs planning
- asset management, facility planning and formal planning document (e.g., master plan)
- gap analysis of service and community need
- minimum hour requirements
- assessment of spaces within the library, including barrier-free spaces

Additional standards and recommendations for public libraries have been compiled by the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO). The third edition (2017) supports a library space provision rate of 1.0 square feet per capita and defines catchment areas according to the following branch types:

- Small branches: Generally serve catchment areas of up to 5,000 population as determined by each system.
- Medium branches: Generally serve catchment areas of 5,000 to 10,000 population as determined by each system.
- Large branches: Generally serve catchment areas of 10,000 to 35,000 population as determined by each system.
- Urban branches: Generally serve catchment area of 35,000 or more population as determined by each system.

## **Ontario Planning Act**

The Planning Act established the framework for land use planning in Ontario and describes how land uses may be controlled, and who may control them. The Act provides the basis for the development of planning policies (e.g., official plans and secondary plans), zoning by-laws, plans of subdivision and other planning tools, and sets out policies and procedures for public consultation and changes to land use.

The Planning Act has undergone several amendments in recent years that represent fundamental changes in how growth planning is carried out in the province. One element of this is the conveyance of parkland through the development approvals process. The proposed changes will make it extraordinarily challenging for the town to realize the goals of its Parks Plan 2031, especially within Strategic Growth Areas.

A summary of some of the recent parkland changes introduced through Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster) is provided below:

- The maximum alternative dedication rate has been reduced to 1 ha/600 units for parkland and 1 ha/1000 units for cash in lieu. Further, the legislation caps the maximum alternative dedication rates at 10% of the land for sites under 5 ha and at 15% for sites greater than 5 ha. This will dramatically reduce parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu to the town for applications under Section 42 (development and redevelopment outside of plans of subdivision). Parkland requirements are not scaled to density — a five-storey or a fifteen-storey building on the same size plot would have the same parkland requirement.

- Affordable residential units, attainable residential units, inclusionary zoning residential units, non-profit housing and additional residential unit developments are exempt from parkland dedication requirements. This will also reduce parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu to the town, possibly increasing the financial burden on taxpayers and/or leading to reduced levels of park service.
- Parkland rates are frozen as of the date that a zoning-by law or site plan application is filed. The freeze is effective for two years after approval. This will reduce cash-in-lieu payments to the town.
- To take effect at a future date, developers will be able to identify the land they intend to convey to the municipality for parkland. These lands may include encumbered lands and privately-owned public space (POPs). If agreement cannot be reached, the municipality or the landowner can appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal. This may result in less suitable lands being accepted as parkland dedication.
- There is a new requirement for municipalities to spend or allocate at least 60% of the monies in their parkland reserve account at the beginning of each year.
- Municipalities are required to develop a parks plan prior to passing a parkland by-law, something the town completed in 2022 prior to the introduction of Bill 23 (note: as of writing, this By-law is under appeal).

## **Provincial Policy Statement**

Issued under the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) contains overarching policy directions on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. Municipalities use the PPS to develop their official plans and to guide and inform decisions on planning matters. On April 6, 2023, the province released for comment the proposed 2023 Provincial Planning Statement. It proposes to repeal “A Place to Growth – the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” and the 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, and replace both with an integrated policy statement.

Policy 3.9 of the proposed policy statement addresses Public Spaces, Recreation, Parks, Trails and Open Space (see below). Notable changes to this policy include new language to consider “persons of all ages and abilities” and the removal of “equitable distribution” when considering the planning of public spaces.

Healthy, active, and inclusive communities should be promoted by:

- a) planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of persons of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity;
- b) planning and providing for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities in the distribution of a full range of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation, including facilities, parklands, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and, where practical, water-based resources;
- c) providing opportunities for public access to shorelines; and
- d) recognizing provincial parks, conservation reserves, and other protected areas, and minimizing negative impacts on these areas.

## **Ontario Public Libraries Act**

The Public Libraries Act outlines how public libraries are established, administered and funded, including procedures for the establishment and operation of library boards.

The Act supports the provision of equal and universal access to information and establishes free public library services in Ontario through governance and regulations. For example, the Act requires that a library must provide a wide range of services to residents free of charge, such as admission to a public library, reference and information services, and reserving and borrowing (books, audio/video materials, etc.).

## **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) came into effect in 2005. The Act includes mandatory accessibility standards aimed at identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities, with the goal of making Ontario fully accessible by 2025. Disabilities are broadly defined as including physical disabilities, vision disabilities, deafness or hard of hearing, intellectual or developmental, learning, and mental health disabilities. The AODA applies to all levels of government, non-profits, and private sector businesses.

The AODA consists of five regulatory standards. The area that is most pertinent to built infrastructure is the Design of Public Spaces Standard within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This Standard establishes a minimum set of technical design requirements that apply to: exterior paths of travel; recreation trails, beach access routes and outdoor public-use eating areas; outdoor play spaces; accessible parking; service elements; and maintaining accessible public spaces. These standards apply to both new development and redevelopment, but are not retroactive for elements that existed prior to the phase-in period (now in full effect).

The AODA also requires the development of Accessibility Plans at the municipal level, which may identify enhancements to existing facilities, among other matters. Technical building standards relating to the accessibility of parks, recreation, and library facilities considered within the master plan are largely governed by the town's Universal Design Standards (version 2.1, 2020).

### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Provincial policies recognize parks, recreation, and libraries as important elements of complete communities and there is strong support for continued investment.

Common goals shared by various provincial and sectoral reports emphasize collaboration, inclusion, community connectivity, healthy environments, and activation/conservation of existing resources. These items should be considered within the master plan's strategic framework.

## 3. How we Currently Deliver Services

The planning context for this exercise is broad and requires a thorough understanding of key challenges and opportunities related to facility investment and service levels. Furthermore, there are several divisions and departments involved in the delivery of recreation and parks services in the Town of Oakville, providing valuable, high impact services that improve the lives of the people they serve.

This section contains an initial review of current service profiles, funding, and participation levels. A deeper examination of these elements will be undertaken through an upcoming stage of master plan development.

### 3.1 Oakville Recreation and Culture Profile

The Town of Oakville Recreation and Culture Department provides a variety of programs and services to individuals, families, and organizations located in Oakville and surrounding areas. The department is organized into the following business units: administration; program development and support; recreation and culture hubs; and cultural services.

The department has adopted the following vision and mission:

Vision – All residents of Oakville are engaged in meaningful, diverse, and accessible recreation and cultural experiences that foster individual, family, and community wellbeing.

Mission – To support the development of a healthy, vibrant, and cultural community in Oakville by:

- Providing quality programs, services, and facilities
- Enhancing community capacity
- Ensuring access to programs and services

Affordable access is an important value for the department, which supports funding for Oakville Galleries, Oakville Arts Council, Special Event Fee Assistance, Cultural Grants, Sports Development Grants, the Recreation Connection subsidy program, and the new community activation grant program (in development).

The department utilizes a traditional service delivery model by employing direct and indirect service delivery methodologies to maximize access to services for the broadest range of residents as possible. In addition to registered and drop-in opportunities directly offered by the department, Oakville supports the “indirect” provision of services by community groups that work in partnership with the town. Key examples include non-profit organizations that offer community-driven programs, initiatives, and services such as (but not limited to) learn to skate, minor sports, creative arts, special events, and even extended to facility-based service agreements (e.g., operation of Pine Glen Soccer Centre, Oakville Gymnastics Centre, etc.).

## 3.2 Oakville Parks and Open Space Profile

The Town of Oakville Parks and Open Space Department has adopted the following vision and mission:

Vision – A commitment to a better quality of life for individuals, families, businesses - today and tomorrow and to make Oakville the most livable town in Canada by developing and managing a safe and sustainable open space system for all our citizens to use and enjoy.

Mission – A commitment to ensuring a diverse range of open space opportunities that preserves and enhances the quality of life for present and future generations. This will be accomplished by protecting and enhancing our heritage and environment, facilitating community partnerships and providing effective, efficient services through a dedicated and professional staff.

The department is organized into several business units: Parks and Open Space Administration; Park Planning and Development; and Forestry Services. The department operates and maintains nearly 500 park sites, trails, and public gardens throughout the town and is also responsible for Oakville Harbours, the Trafalgar Lawn Cemetery and several pioneer cemeteries, and the municipal greenhouse.

Relevant to this master plan, the department leads up a wide range of park development and redevelopment projects annually, ranging from playground replacement to trail expansion to new park construction in growing communities. Additionally, the department supports a variety of park uses, such as sports fields, community gardens, winter skating rinks, special events, and much more.

## 3.3 Oakville Public Library Profile

The Oakville Public Library's (OPL) vision is "Connecting People to What Inspires Them" and their mission is "We bring together people, information, and ideas to enrich lives and build healthy communities". The values of Equitable Access, Curiosity, Belonging, Lifelong Learning, Intellectual Freedom and Exceptional Service anchor the library's approach to serving the community. These values and four key Strategic Pillars provide a meaningful framework for OPL's Strategic Plan, which guides the library's decision making and analysis.

The Oakville Public Library Board, made up of citizens and town council representatives, provides policy and financial oversight. The Board delegates all aspects of the operations of the library to its CEO. The library also oversees Information Oakville, which provides information around community events, community support and resources.

A library is a cultural hub, a meeting place, a space to work and play, among other things. OPL's role is pivotal in helping connect customers to the world at-large, sparking innovation in the community, and supporting growth and well-being through access to barrier-free, equitable library resources and services.

Library services are delivered through a combination of physical, mobile, and online modes which include seven physical locations, five express locations, a mobile app, and the library’s website – meeting customers “where they are at” and ensuring accessible and inclusive services to all residents. OPL worked hard to ensure continuity of services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and offered expanded opportunities for curbside pick-up, digital services, virtual programming, and more.

The Sixteen Mile branch is currently under construction but is being temporarily housed in a prefabricated structure. This is just one example of the many ways the Oakville Public Library is responsive to growth and the rapidly changing composition of the community. One of OPL’s newest initiatives to expand outreach is the Book Bike. OPL’s Library on the Go features a unique book bike filled with books for folks of all ages to take and enjoy. It is currently featured at the Bronte Waterfront Heritage Park.

Other current initiatives of note include a collaboration between OPL and the town to offer StoryWalks® at outdoor trails and locations across Oakville, providing residents of all ages with access to year-round, self-guided walks with selected stories. Access to the latest hardware and software technology is featured in the library’s Creation Zones. These spaces are meant to facilitate a hands-on learning environment aimed at inspiring creativity in the Oakville community through a do-it-yourself approach. All of this against the backdrop of robust programming for all ages, well used print and digital collections and skilled, dedicated staff at all library locations.

### **3.4 Facility Utilization and Program Participation Review**

This section examines usage data collected by the town and public library in order to establish a baseline for analysis, as well as trends and capacities that may be considered further within the master plan assessments. Where possible, several years of usage data has been reviewed to better assess longer-term trends and pandemic-related impacts.

#### **Parks and Recreation Utilization**

Oakville’s Parks and Open Space and Recreation and Culture divisions deliver services in support of community and Council priorities. These priorities are articulated in the town’s Strategic Plan, budget documents, master plans, and more. All documents place significant weight on the thoughts and input of the community.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) articulate what the priorities are, the aligned services within the departments, and how services will be measured. This well-rounded approach provides clear communications to the community and demonstrates that the town has placed priority where they should be placed based on community input, research, trends, demographics, legislation, as well as industry standards. KPIs allow staff, community groups, and volunteers to see how their work is valued and contributes to the success of Oakville, while holding the town accountable for demonstrating the return on the investment of tax dollars. Comparing this data to prior years provides an outlook as to where improvements have been made and could be made, thus contributing to efficient and effective service through evidenced-based decision-making.

The following table identifies key pieces of data that are collected by the Recreation and Culture Department, representing potential measures for utilization, efficiency, and effectiveness. This is not a complete list.

**Table 4: Longitudinal KPI Data Collected by the Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library**

Service / Facility Type	Utilization	Efficiency and Effectiveness
<b>Recreation and Culture Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- registration, drop-in, membership, waitlist statistics</li> <li>- customer information (age, location, segmentation, etc.)</li> <li>- participants per capita</li> <li>- financial assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fill rates</li> <li>- market/population penetration</li> <li>- surveys (programs, corporate satisfaction)</li> <li>- revenues/expenses, cost recoveries</li> <li>- events and volunteer activity</li> <li>- quality assurance measures</li> </ul>
<b>Community Centres and Associated Spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- total visits</li> <li>- rental data</li> <li>- CORE group membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- surveys (corporate satisfaction)</li> <li>- revenues/expenses, unit costs, cost recoveries</li> <li>- cost per square foot</li> </ul>
<b>Arenas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- total visits</li> <li>- rental data</li> <li>- CORE group membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revenues/expenses, cost recoveries</li> <li>- cost per square foot</li> </ul>
<b>Seniors' Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- total visits</li> <li>- membership data (town-wide)</li> <li>- facility hours, programming</li> <li>- CORE group membership</li> <li>- rental data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revenues/expenses, cost recoveries</li> <li>- cost per square foot</li> </ul>
<b>Outdoor Sports Fields</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rental data</li> <li>- CORE group membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revenues</li> </ul>
<b>Outdoor Pools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- registration, drop-in data</li> <li>- rental data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- revenues/expenses, cost recoveries</li> </ul>
<b>Other Park Amenities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- n/a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- n/a</li> </ul>
<b>Parkland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rental data for pavilions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- active parkland per capita</li> <li>- surveys (corporate satisfaction)</li> </ul>

The Recreation and Culture Department has compiled key information on many of the above metrics for 2019 and 2022 for consideration in future stages of the master plan.

### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Oakville and its partners offer an extensive list of parks and recreation services and programs and are more progressive than most communities in leveraging related data to support continuous improvement initiatives.

In 2019, recreation program registration was approximately 8,200 persons (excluding drop-ins and memberships) with a capacity rate exceeding 80%. Most programs serve youth and/or aquatics services. While the pandemic has caused significant disruptions to staffing and training, past studies have identified opportunities to attract more users to municipal programs and to create a more balanced portfolio of programs. The new Sixteen Mile Community Centre will also assist in this regard.

## **Oakville Public Library Utilization**

A high-level review of the Oakville Public Library's facility and program utilization has been undertaken to inform the Master Plan. This review focusses on the five-year period between 2017 and 2022, with recognition to the various disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the second quarter of 2023 was compared to the same period in 2019 and 2022 to examine the extent that usage patterns may have changed since before the pandemic.

The primary outputs that were examined include circulation, foot fall traffic, program attendance, new card registration, and usage of the public computers. These and other output measures were also compared with other public library systems within Halton Region and with public libraries serving similar sized communities (2022 data, which is the most recently available data provided by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport).

### **Six Year Utilization Trends (2017 -2022)**

Despite the pandemic, the trend since 2017 indicates that physical circulation is strong and remains very stable as circulation was close to pre-pandemic levels in 2022. However, material formats such as physical audiobooks, CDs and BluRay/DVDs will need to be monitored closely for decreases in usage as this is already being observed by Oakville Public Library staff.

Digital circulation has continued to increase since 2017 and was close to matching physical circulation in 2022. The outputs that were slower to recover in 2022 were foot fall traffic, printing, computer use, and programming. Foot fall traffic in 2022 is still significantly down from 2019; however, this may have been partially affected by facility closures and/or restricted hours.

Given that OPL's new card registrations were the highest they have been in 2022, this suggests that interest in library services is growing amongst newer residents. However, the percentage of Oakville's population who are active cardholders has fallen from 31% in 2018 to about 25% in 2022.

In terms of programming, children continue to be the largest population segment served over the last 5-year period.

**Table 5: OPL Key Output Measures, 2017-2022**

Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Physical Circulation</b>	1,455,910	1,513,005	1,576,174	794,345	1,009,258	1,357,878
<b>Digital Circulation</b>	219,505	272,484	342,169	408,592	1,154,787	1,689,402
<b>Total Circulation</b>	1,675,415	1,785,489	1,918,343	1,202,937	2,164,045	3,047,280
<b>Phone calls</b>	n/a	33,503	35,113	37,889	46,272	31,558
<b>Email enquiries</b>	3,704	3,868	4,036	8,386	7,946	4,392
<b>Website sessions</b>	1,886,690	2,184,967	930,404	760,976	653,498	658,546
<b>Bibliocommons sessions</b>	1,160,710	951,695	1,188,370	874,040	1,025,770	1,040,674
<b>Public Access computer sessions</b>	65,988	79,705	70,470	15,010	8,838	32,866
<b>Items printed</b>	n/a	52,302	51,091	15,514	10,742	28,140
<b>Event attendance</b>	2,194	4,335	2,456	191	449	788
<b>Program attendance</b>	53,949	58,820	55,600	20,321	8,790	29,766
- Children	45,936	49,042	48,780	15,588	6,527	24,160
- Teen	1,056	1,126	1,506	665	303	822
- Adult	2,487	3,785	2,989	2043	1,815	2,956
- All Ages	4,470	4,867	2,325	2025	145	1,828
<b>Total foot traffic</b>	1,292,370	1,228,740	1,236,456	417,195	226,146	770,659
<b>New Cardholders</b>	12,644	12,242	12,235	6,219	8,782	15,239
<b>Total Active Cardholders</b>	61,723	66,109	63,729	55,034	49,109	56,832

Source: OPL Annual Performance Measures Report

### Current Utilization - 2023

In the library’s analysis of Q2 2023 (a time of “normal” operation with no pandemic-related restrictions), digital circulation increased by 15% over the same period in 2022 and 429% over the same period in 2019. Physical circulation is strongly returning with a 7% increase from the same quarter in 2022 but did not surpass the pre-pandemic levels of 2019 (-11%). Total circulation in 2023 is on pace to surpass pre-pandemic levels.

Program attendance has increased by 8% in 2023 as compared to the same period in 2022, but still represents a decrease from Q2 in 2019 by 60%. Foot fall traffic increased significantly from Q2 2022 levels and has slightly surpassed foot fall traffic for the same period in 2019 (2% more).

The number of new library cards issued in Q2 of 2023 increased strongly (22%) and significantly surpassed new card registrations for Q2 of 2019 (47%). While total active cardholder numbers are still slightly lower compared to 2019, this is still a positive trend.

**Table 6: OPL Key Output Measures, Q2 2023**

Measure	2019 Q2 YTD	2022 Q2 YTD	2023 Q2 YTD	% Change 2019-2023	% Change 2022-2023
Physical Circulation	786,508	654,209	697,488	-11%	7%
Digital Circulation	174,515	801,683	922,911	429%	15%
Total Circulation	961,023	1,455,892	1,620,399	69%	11%
Phone calls	17,646	15,978	7,631	-57%	-52%
Email enquiries	1,675	2,051	2,103	26%	3%
Website sessions	461,548	316,521	363,121	-21%	15%
Bibliocommons Sessions	607,738	507,738	541,467	-11%	7%
Public Access Computer sessions	39,282	12,910	11,804	-70%	-9%
Items printed	29,110	8,729	8,807	-70%	1%
Event attendance	896	0	0	-100%	n/a
Program attendance	32,368	12,009	12,941	-60%	8%
Total foot traffic**	713,598	293,152	725,809	2%	148%
New Cardholders	5,303	6,423	7,806	47%	22%
Total Active Cardholders	63,025	47,957	60,535	-4%	26%

Source: OPL Annual Performance Measures Report, Q2 2023.

The following table illustrates circulation patterns by library location. The rates would indicate that Glen Abbey has the highest circulation of all locations since 2019 with Iroquois Ridge, Central, Woodside, White Oaks, Sixteen Mile, and Clearview locations in descending order followed by the OPL Express service points.

**Table 7: OPL Physical Circulation by Location, Q1 2023**

Branch	2019 Q2 YTD	2022 Q2 YTD	2023 Q2 YTD	% Change 2019-2023	% Change 2022-2023
Central	124,882	83,706	83,890	-33%	0%
Clearview	35,956	31,080	28,656	-20%	-8%
Glen Abbey	228,661	201,630	222,746	-3%	10%
Iroquois Ridge	191,944	155,092	180,276	-6%	16%
Online	5,122	1,393	1,718	-66%	23%
OPL Express @ QEPCCC	1,852	1,303	2,167	17%	66%
OPL Express @ River Oaks	N/A	45	757	n/a	1582%
OPL Express @ Sixteen Mile SC	2,953	1,505	3,874	31%	157%
OPL Express @ St. Luke's CC	26	290	432	n/a	49%
Sixteen Mile	14,477	52,179	35,468	n/a	-32%
White Oaks	72,051	55,981	65,854	-9%	18%
Woodside	108,584	70,005	71,650	-34%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>786,508</b>	<b>654,209</b>	<b>697,488</b>	<b>-11%</b>	<b>7%</b>

Source: OPL Annual Performance Measures Report, Q2 2023.

## Public Library Comparator Data

The most recent annual public library statistics collected by the Province of Ontario (2022) reflects library activity during the last phases of the pandemic. Utilization outputs for were collated for the purposes of comparing OPL with public libraries of similar populations. Public libraries in Halton Region were considered, as well as selected libraries of similar sizes and those that OPL could use as benchmarks.

Oakville Public Library's physical circulation is among the top with only Vaughan, Markham, and Burlington reporting greater per capita numbers across their systems. Conversely, OPL's foot fall traffic was not as robust as its comparator libraries in 2022 while OPL's per capita programming attendance numbers were also slightly below average. It is noted that pandemic restrictions were significant for part of this year, with some programming remaining online with some customers being more reluctant to return. The materials outputs suggest that OPL is amongst the lowest in terms of materials expenditures and slightly below average in terms of titles per capita.

**Table 8: Public Library Comparison Data (2022)**

Comparator	Population (2021)	Physical Circulation		In person Visits	
		#	Per Capita	#	Per Capita
Burlington	176,802	1,214,029	6.87	957,500	5.41
Kitchener	261,610	1,270,852	4.86	909,200	3.47
Markham	349,007	2,617,161	7.50	1,073,950	3.07
Milton	120,500	711,759	5.91	497,600	4.12
Mississauga	779,100	3,824,503	4.91	2,305,700	2.95
Oshawa	172,000	698,889	4.06	678,800	3.94
Richmond Hill	215,316	1,148,058	5.33	778,850	3.61
Vaughan	329,000	2,451.46	7.45	1,044,650	3.17
<b>Average</b>	<b>300,417</b>	<b>1,435,963</b>	<b>4.78</b>	<b>1,030,781</b>	<b>3.43</b>
<b>Oakville (2022)</b>	<b>211,000</b>	<b>1,363,179</b>	<b>6.46</b>	<b>514,700</b>	<b>2.43</b>
Comparator	Annual Program Attendance		Titles per Capita (print and non-print)	Total Operating Revenue Per Capita	% of Operating Budget for Materials
	#	Per Capita	#	\$	%
Burlington	27,706	0.15	1.53	\$62.37	10.48%
Kitchener	44,971	0.17	1.75	\$47.27	10.58%
Markham	37,475	0.10	1.28	\$48.69	20.41%
Milton	27,328	0.22	3.14	\$47.09	16.75%
Mississauga	81,665	0.10	0.39	\$36.67	12.80%
Oshawa	25,749	0.14	1.28	\$57.07	8.83%
Richmond Hill	26,879	0.12	1.35	\$48.29	8.42%
Vaughan	97,686	0.29	0.95	\$65.29	15.37%
<b>Average</b>	<b>46,182</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>1.46</b>	<b>\$51.59</b>	<b>12.96%</b>
<b>Oakville (2021)</b>	<b>31,488</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>\$55.66</b>	<b>9.88%</b>

Source: Annual Survey of Ontario Public Libraries (2022)

## Conclusion

The output measures have generated some preliminary conclusions regarding usage and key elements of Oakville Public Library’s service delivery. These observations will be assessed further during subsequent phases of the master plan.

- Oakville Public Library’s **physical circulation** is very strong and will likely continue to be in the future. Digital circulation will also likely continue to grow indicating that total circulation will steadily increase over time. New card registration rates were the highest in 2022 proving that borrowing both physical or digital resources is highly valued by OPL customers.
- **Foot fall traffic** has seen growth surpassing 2019 and 2022 for the same period.

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Public library services were significantly impacted by the pandemic, but OPL’s usage figures indicate that most services are rebounding. For example, OPL is seeing strong library material circulation rates (both physical and digital) at most library locations, which bodes well for library services in Oakville.

Additionally, the current and future expenditure budgets for materials should be reviewed to confirm that OPL will be able to deliver at current services levels when the population increases, respond to future user preferences, and to ensure a diverse range of materials both in format and content.

## 3.5 Budget, Capital Forecast and Funding Levels

### Operating Budget

In 2023, the town approved an operating budget of \$390.8 million. The tax levy accounts for 61% of this amount, or \$239.5 million. Parks, recreation, and library services are largely tax-supported, although revenues from user fees and other sources help to offset tax impacts.

**Table 9: 2023 Operating Budget by Department**

Department	Gross Operating	% of Town-wide Total	Tax Levy
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	\$27.2 M	6.9%	\$21.7 M
<b>Recreation and Culture</b>	\$43.0 M	11.0%	\$21.0 M
<b>Oakville Public Library</b>	\$12.4 M	3.2%	\$11.7 M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$82.6 M</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>\$54.4 M</b>

Note: excluded Facilities and Construction Management (town-wide state of good repair services)

The town uses reserves to meet several financial objectives, such as mitigating tax and rate increases, funding or expanding the town’s capital program, and limiting long-term debt. Each department contributes annually through the budget to equipment and building replacement reserves. As new assets are constructed or purchased, contributions for the future maintenance and replacement are added to the operating budget.

## **Capital Budget and Long-term Capital Forecast**

In 2023, the town approved a capital budget of \$178.3 million to address infrastructure renewal, growth, and program initiatives. These projects are supported by sources such as the tax levy, capital reserves, development charges (DC) and community benefit charges (CBC), debt, and more. These funding amounts will vary from year to year depending on capital priorities and funding sources.

**Table 10: 2023 Capital Budget by Department**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Total Project Budget</b>	<b>% of Town-wide Total</b>
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	\$22.0 M	12.3%
<b>Recreation and Culture</b>	\$12.9 M	7.2%
<b>Oakville Public Library</b>	\$3.4 M	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$38.4 M</b>	<b>21.5%</b>

Note: excluded Facilities and Construction Management (town-wide state of good repair services)

The ten-year capital forecast for the town (2023-2032) includes \$2.0 billion of capital projects. Of this, 55.1% is growth-related, 37.3% is for infrastructure renewal, and 7.6% is for program initiatives. Many of these projects are guided by master plans and asset management planning and are subject to change. Funding sources are varied, with the most prominent being DCs and CBCs (36%) and capital levy and reserves (36%). Parkland reserves and debt are also notable funding sources; for example, debenture financing has been used to assist in funding the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and Library.

It is important to note that the approved 2023 budget and forecast was prepared prior to Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act) being passed and does not include the impact of these legislative changes. As a result of these legislative changes, it is anticipated that the town’s DC revenues will be reduced significantly, which will have an impact on future capital forecasts and financial planning. Furthermore, we are currently living in a time of rapid cost escalation, which may place additional pressure on planned capital projects.

The 2023-2032 budget and forecast provides a project description, rationale, budget, and operating impact for all capital projects. The master plan will consider, validate, and/or recommend adjustments to major in-scope capital projects. Highlights from the budget and forecast are identified below.

**Table 11: Major Parks, Recreation and Library Facility Projects identified in the Long-term Capital Forecast**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Budget Amount</b>	<b>Anticipated Timing</b>
<b>Recreation and Culture</b>	Sixteen Mile CC and Library – Growth	\$7.8 M	2023-25
	Wedgewood Pool Rehabilitation	\$0.8 M	2023
	Iroquois Ridge CC – Pool and Lobby Renovation	\$2.7 M	2023
	Kinoak Arena – Rink Floor, Dashers, etc.	\$2.2 M	2023-24
	Maple Grove Arena – Rink Floor, Dashers, etc.	\$2.4 M	2028-29
	New Palermo Community Centre	\$13.0 M (land)	2026-27
	New Recreation Facility (undefined)	\$21.6 M	2031-32
	River Oaks CC Capital Projects (rink A replacement, squash/racquetball court renovation, etc.)	\$3.2 M	2025-26
	Glen Abbey CC – Feasibility Study	\$0.1 M	2024
	Glen Abbey CC – Blue Rink Floor, Dashers, etc.	\$2.2 M	2024-25
	Oakville Centre for Performing Arts – Lobby Renovation	\$5.9 M	2024
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	Wallace Park Redevelopment and Washroom Renovation	\$1.5 M	2023
	Cornwall Park Skateboard Park	\$0.2 M	2023
	Sixteen Mile Sports Park – South Parcel	\$2.9 M	2024
	Towne Square Rehabilitation	\$4.1 M	2024
	Palermo Park - Phase 3	\$4.6 M	2025-27
	Joshua Meadows Community Park	\$15.0 M	2029-31
	The Parkway - South	\$9.0 M	2030
	Various Park Development and Renewal Projects	variable	2023-32
	Recreational Trail Accessibility Program	\$6.5 M	2023-32
Parkland Acquisition	\$61.8 M	2023-32	
<b>Oakville Public Library</b>	Sixteen Mile Library Collections	\$3.3 M	2023
	Woodside Library Branch Renovation	\$1.8 M	2024-25
	New Library Branch – Trafalgar Corridor North	\$5.0 M (land) \$1.7 M (other)	2024 2031
	New Library Branch – Palermo	\$12.7 M	2027-29
<b>Facilities and Construction Management</b>	Sixteen Mile Sports Complex – Geothermal Retrofit	\$2.1 M	2024
	Various Facility Repairs, HVAC, and Roofing Projects	variable	2023-32

Notes: This is not an exhaustive list; refer to budget documents for details. Many park projects are bundled together and not identified. Projects within the long-term forecast are subject to change.

## **Development Charges By-law and Background Study**

The Development Charges Act lays out Ontario's regulatory and legislative framework which municipalities must follow to levy development charges. Development charges (DC) are fees collected from developers at the time a building permit is issued and are a primary tool in ensuring that "growth pays for growth". Most municipalities in Ontario, including the Town of Oakville, use development charges to ensure that the cost of providing infrastructure to service new development is not borne by existing residents and businesses in the form of higher property taxes.

Parks, recreation, and library facilities and associated lands are eligible capital costs that may be imposed through development charges (along with other hard and soft infrastructure such as roads, transit, water and sewer, etc.) as long as these costs are not accounted for through Planning Act tools. Lands for parks cannot be collected through DCs, nor are cultural facilities eligible for DC funding.

The 2022 Town of Oakville Development Charges Background Study included a net growth-related capital cost for parks and recreation facilities of \$217.6 million, plus an additional \$20.8 million for library facilities for the period of 2022-2031. Major growth-related **capital projects** identified in the town's 2022 DC Study include are consistent with what is presented in the town's 2023 budget and long-term capital forecast.

The town's Development Charges By-law 2022-068 was passed prior to the introduction of Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act), which enacted sweeping changes to the development charge regime. These changes are extensive and are too many to list herein, but will generally lead to reduced DC revenues due to increased exemptions and exclusions, adjustments to historical levels of service calculations, introduction of a mandatory phase-in, and related changes. Further, land costs (to be specified through regulation) and costs for studies (such as master plans) are no longer eligible for DC funding.

The Town of Oakville estimates that Bill 23 will lead to reduced DC revenues, increase the need for debt financing (increasing the cost of growth to the town substantially), and delay the delivery of growth-related infrastructure. Based on the 2022DC Study, the town estimates that these changes will result in a total decrease in DC revenue in the range of 12% to 37% depending on final details, many of which have yet to be clarified.

The town may update the DC By-law at any time as new by-laws are imperative for ensuring that the town is collecting appropriate charges required to service growth and taking into consideration updated capital needs and growth forecasts.

## **Community Benefits Charges**

Authorized under section 37 of the Planning Act (formerly known as bonus zoning for increased height and density), the town charges a Community Benefit Charge (CBC) on development and redevelopment to pay for the growth-related capital costs of facilities and services. The charge is for high-density development and redevelopment of five or more storeys with 10 or more residential units. The amount of the CBC payable is 4% of the value

of land that is subject of the development or redevelopment on the day before the day the building permit is issued.

CBCs cannot be charged for those costs already being collected for through DCs or parkland dedication. Some examples of eligible costs relevant to this master plan include arts centres, museums, public art, public realm improvements, community gardens, and land for park and recreation purposes in excess of lands provided under the Planning Act.

The town's CBC Strategy identified a variety of parks, recreation and cultural projects as being recoverable through CBCs. Notable projects potentially to be funded through CBCs include:

- Performing Arts Theatre/Cultural Hub (2028)
- Town Square redevelopment (2023)
- Outdoor event stage, amphitheatre, public art, garden plots, etc.

The town passed a CBC By-law in September 2022, prior to the passing of Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act), which enacted several changes to the community benefits charge regime, including new statutory exemptions, setting of maximum amounts, and more. Future iterations of Oakville's CBC Strategy will need to account for these changes, as well as updated growth forecasts.

#### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

The sweeping changes introduced by Bill 23 in late 2022 represent a significant area of uncertainty for the Town of Oakville and all Ontario municipalities, most notably as they relate to municipal finance and infrastructure investment. Parks, recreation, and library services account for approximately one-fifth of the town's operating and capital expenditures, and growth-related spending relies heavily on development charges and community benefits charges that have been substantially altered through Bill 23.

The town is aligned with the provincial goal of building 1.5 million new homes (including 33,000 units in Oakville). However, additional study will be required to fully understand the impact on the funding and delivery of parks, recreation, and library services that are required to serve this growth.

## 4. How our Community is Changing

This section provides information on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the town's residents, including population projections. The implications of this information on facility planning are substantial. It assists in identifying key geographic areas and population groups that need to be planned for through the provision of parks, recreation, and library facilities. These implications and options are discussed further in subsequent phases of the Plan.

### 4.1 Demographic Profile

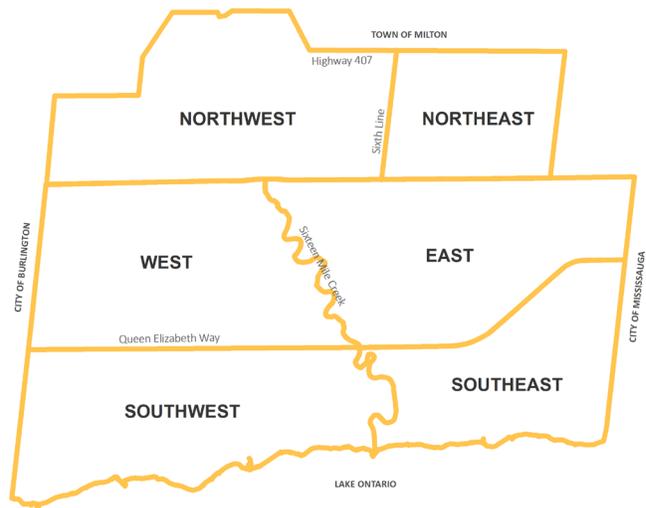
A vibrant community within the Greater Toronto Area, Oakville is a lakeside town with heritage, preserved and celebrated by residents and visitors. Founded in 1857, Oakville has become one of the most coveted residential and business centres in Ontario, offering all the advantages of a well-serviced urban centre, while maintaining a small-town feel. The town is the largest municipality in the Region of Halton in terms of population, outpacing Burlington, Milton, and Halton Hills.

#### Plan Areas

Previous master plans divided Oakville into communities defined by the geographic areas and presented inventories and needs using these areas. These areas were chosen based on a combination of factors, including major physical barriers (e.g., escarpment, highways) that can restrict accessibility. With the growth in North Oakville, this community has been split into two plan areas for a total of 6 across Oakville.

The Plan Areas not intended to reflect approved growth boundaries, but rather they represent geographic points of reference and areas that may share general catchment areas for services. In turn, application of this approach allows for comparisons and assists in understanding both town-wide and more localized service and facility provision levels and needs.

Figure 3: Plan Areas



## Historical Population

Oakville’s population increased to 213,759 persons in 2021, representing a growth rate of 9.3% since the 2016 census, greater than the growth rate across Halton Region (2.9%) and Ontario (5.8%).

Table 12 – Population by Planning Area

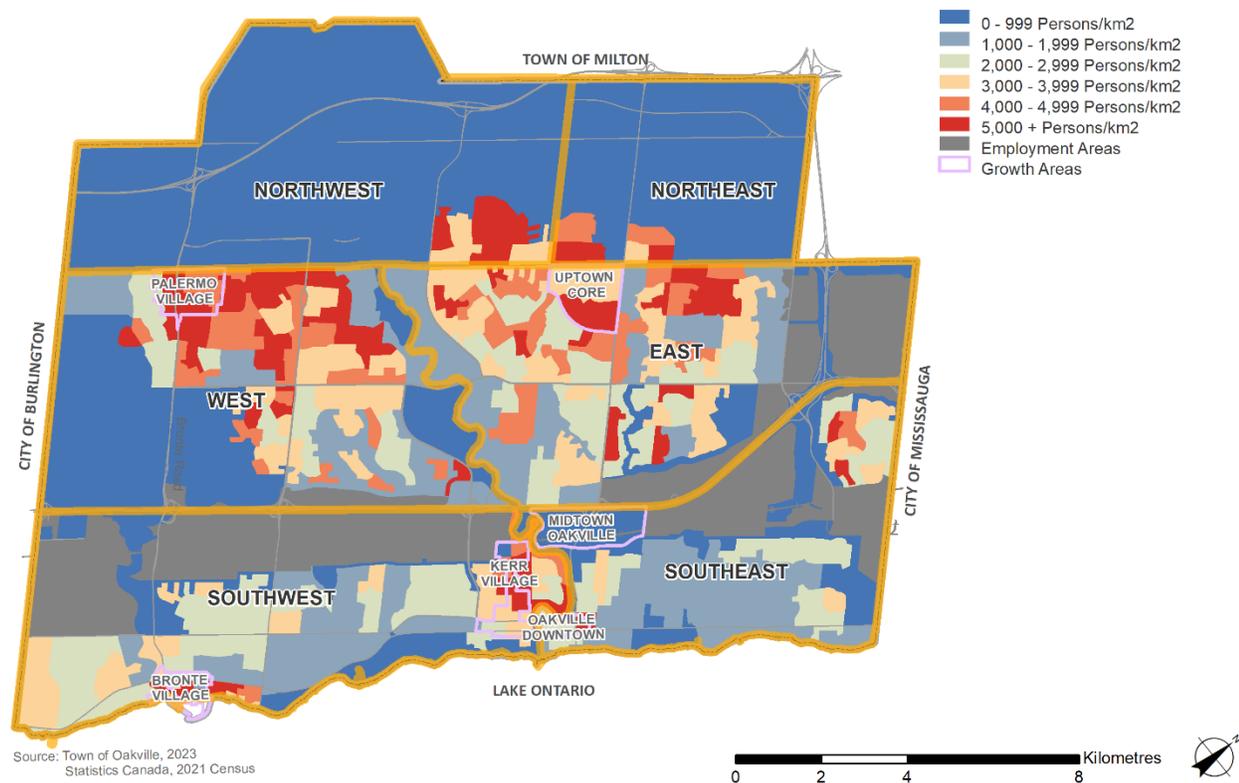
Study Area	2011 Census	2016 Census	2021 Census	Change Last 10 years (2011-2021)	
Northeast and Northwest	350	6,430	21,320	20,970	98%
East	59,950	60,950	63,110	3,160	5%
West	56,300	58,990	60,740	4,440	7%
Southeast	24,850	24,675	24,420	-430	-2%
Southwest	41,050	42,790	44,170	3,120	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182,500</b>	<b>193,830</b>	<b>213,760</b>	<b>31,260</b>	<b>15%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada

Totals may not add due to rounding

The following map shows population densities across the town for 2021, noting higher densities in many of the town’s growth areas (e.g., northern portions of Oakville).

Figure 4: Population Density (2021), Town of Oakville



### Considerations for the Master Plan:

As Oakville grows, its urban structure is changing. The town's planning policies support higher population densities in new growth areas, including North Oakville which has been the most recent focus of housing growth. Higher residential densities often mean less private space (e.g., living space, backyards, etc.), making it more critical that public spaces be accessible, well designed, and capable of accommodating more intense use.

## Age Composition

Age is an important factor for planning parks, recreation, and library facilities. Oakville's population is represented significantly by adults ages 35 to 54 years with a rate of 30% in 2021. However, this age cohort's representation of the total population has been declining over the past 10-years, as older adults (26%) and seniors (32%) have experienced the most significant increases.

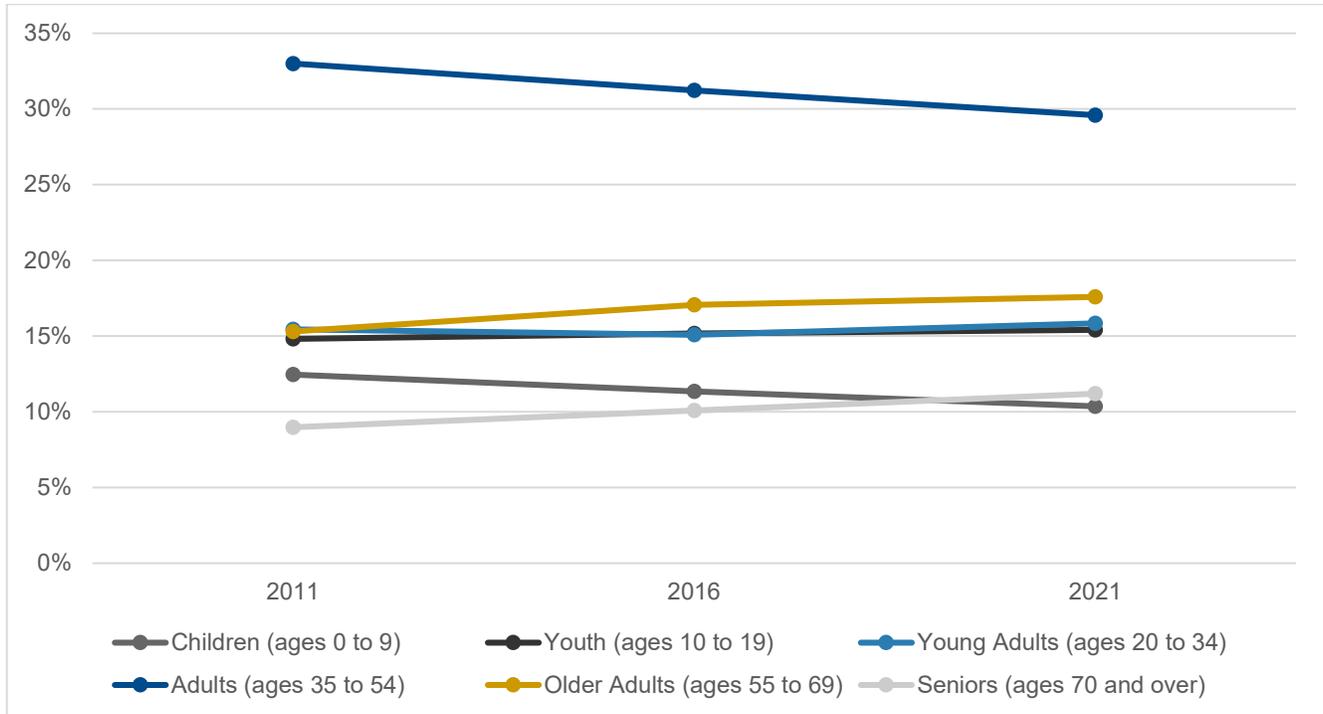
With the exception of children who have decreased by a rate of 3%, the town has experienced an increase in each of the other age cohorts between 2011 and 2021. The town's 41.6-year median age is similar to that of Halton Region (42.0 years) and the Province (41.6 years). The following table and figure show the distribution and growth of Oakville's population over the past three census years.

**Table 13 - Population by Age Group, Town of Oakville (2011 to 2021)**

Age Cohort	2011	2016	2021	Change from 2011-2021
Children (ages 0 to 9)	22,740	22,010	22,155	-3%
Youth (ages 10 to 19)	27,045	29,425	32,950	+18%
Young Adults (ages 20 to 34)	28,180	29,240	33,865	+17%
Adults (ages 35 to 54)	60,235	60,530	63,255	+5%
Older Adults (ages 55 to 69)	27,940	33,085	37,600	+26%
Seniors (ages 70 and over)	16,390	19,540	23,940	+32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182,520</b>	<b>193,832</b>	<b>213,759</b>	<b>+15%</b>
Median Age	40.2	41.7	41.6	+1.4 years

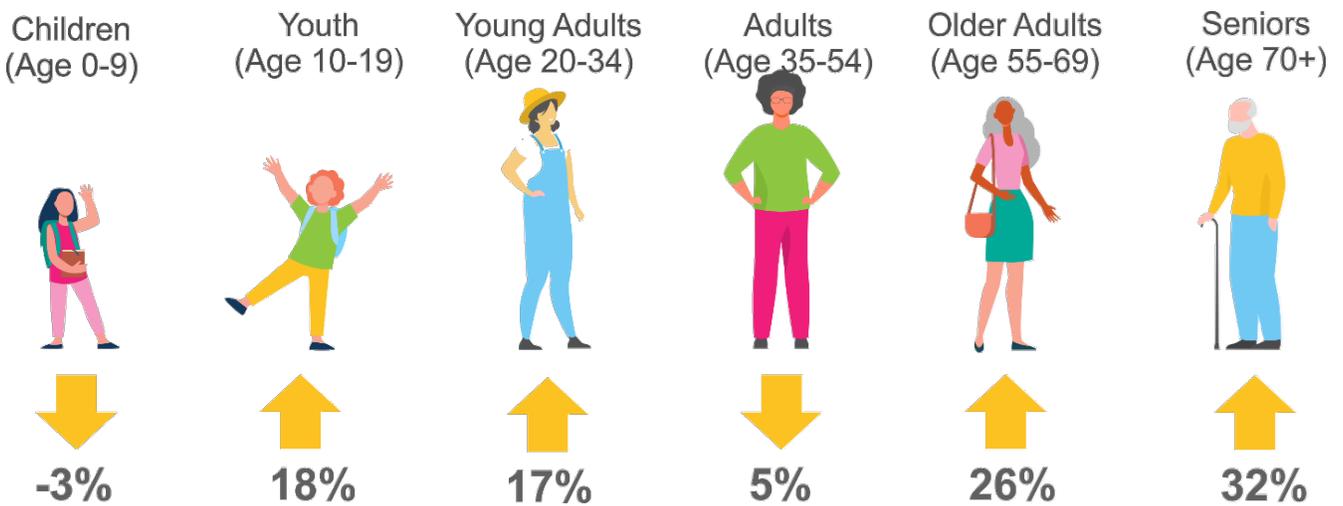
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

**Figure 5: Population by Age Group, Town of Oakville (2011 to 2021)**



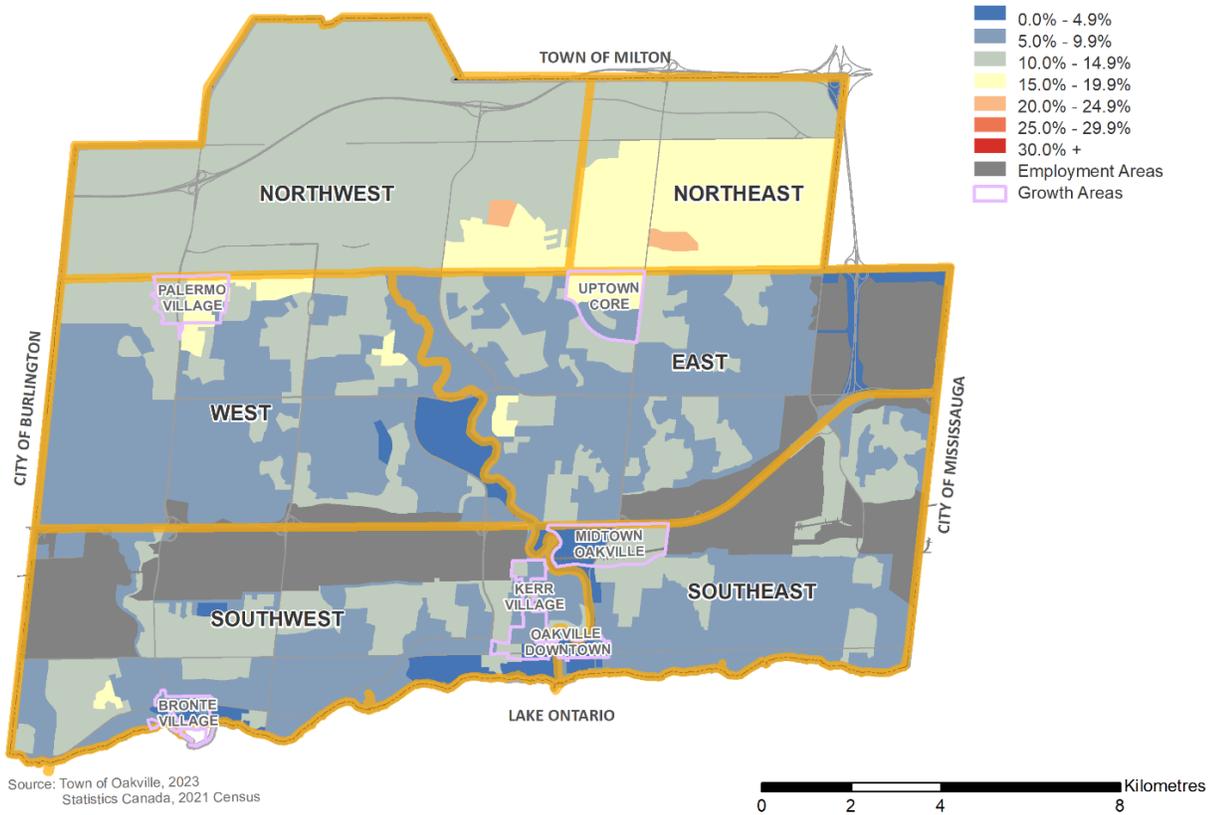
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

**Figure 6: Population Change by Age Group, 2011 to 2021, Town of Oakville**

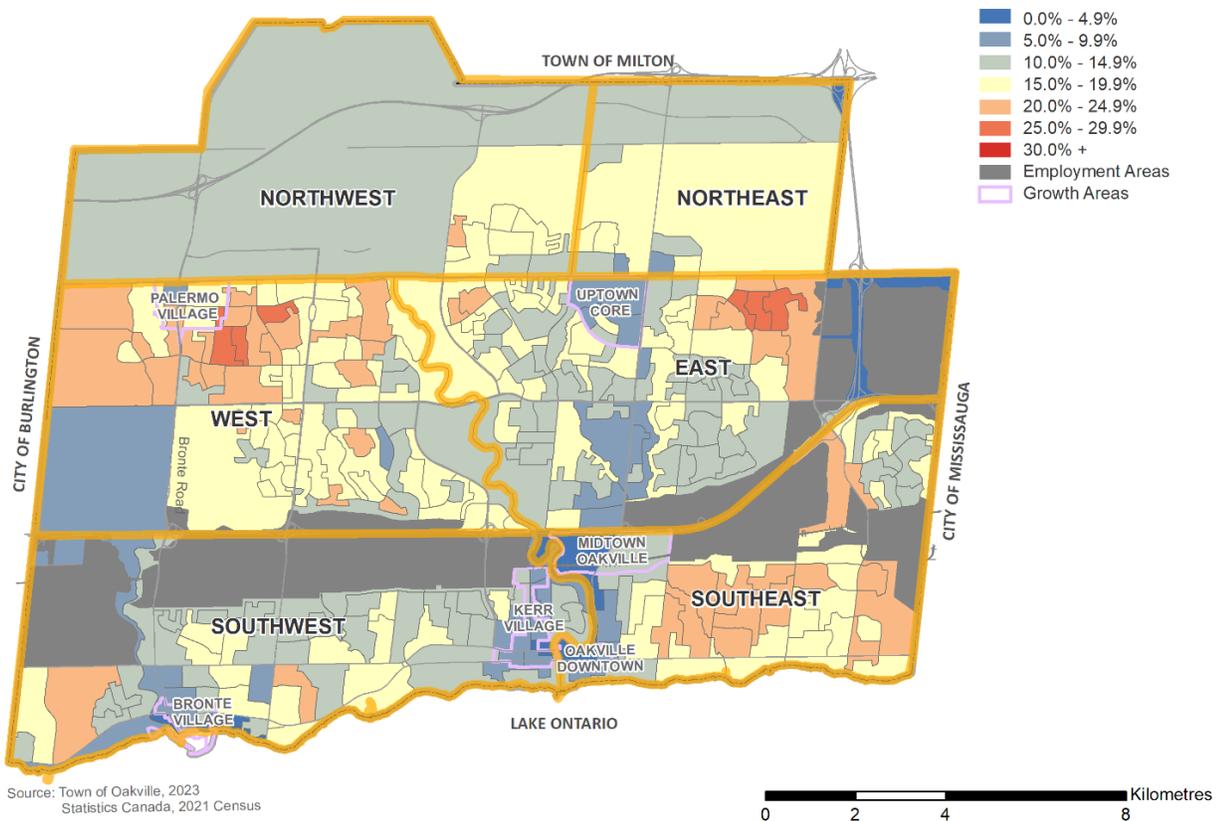


Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

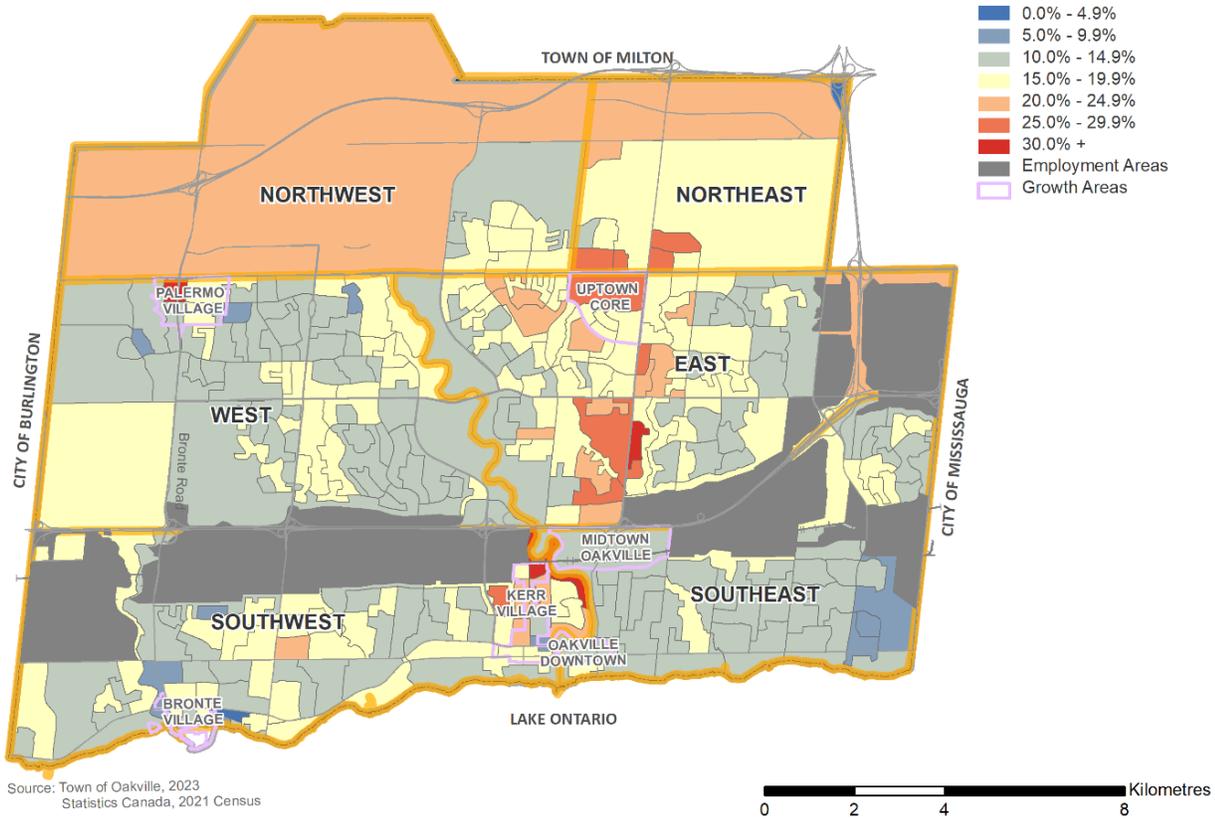
**Figure 7: Children (ages 0 to 9 years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**



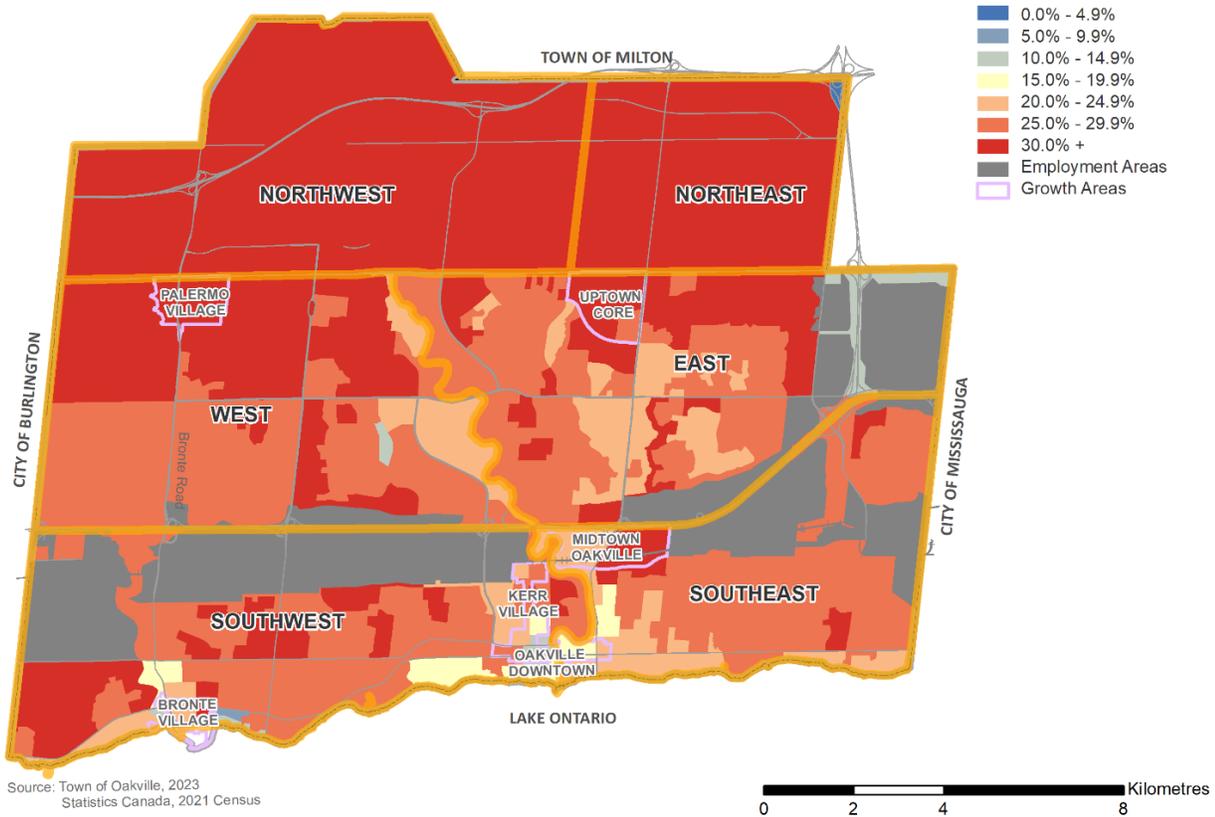
**Figure 8: Youth (ages 10 to 19 years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**



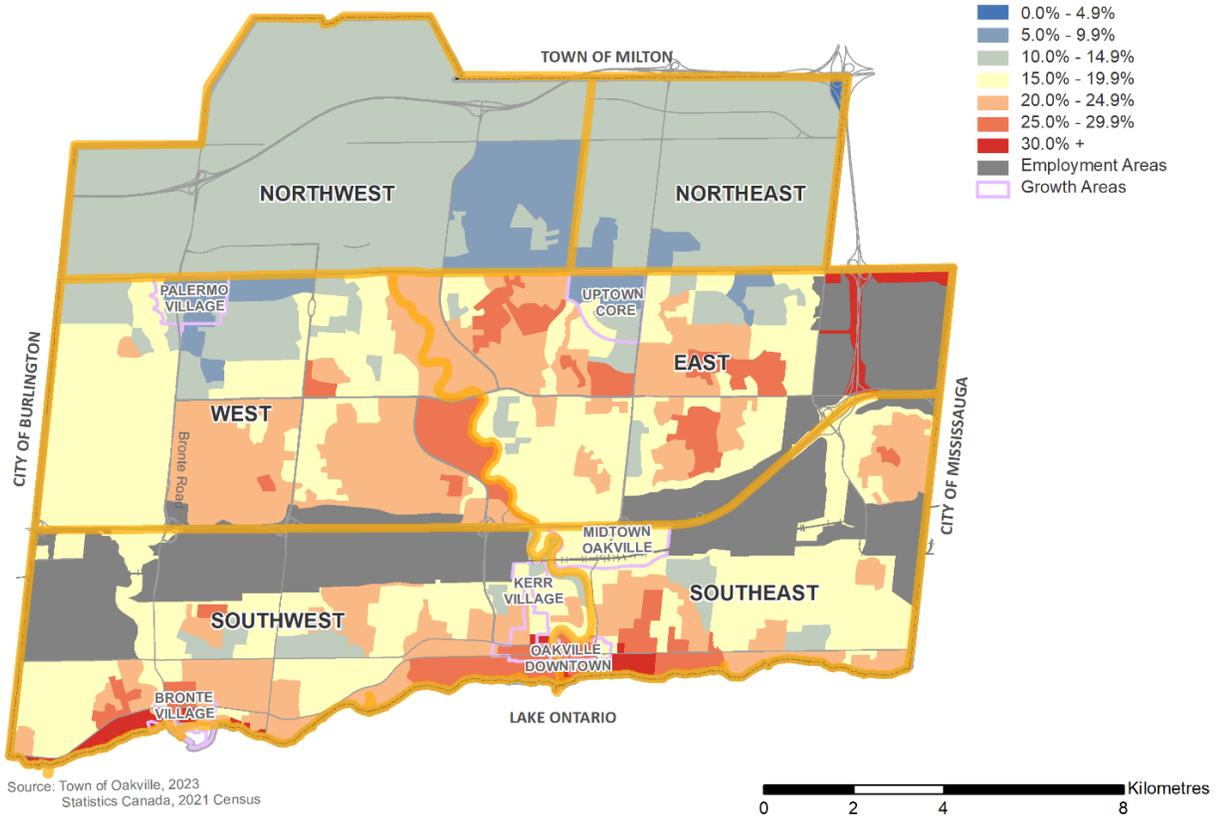
**Figure 9: Young Adults (ages 20 to 34 years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**



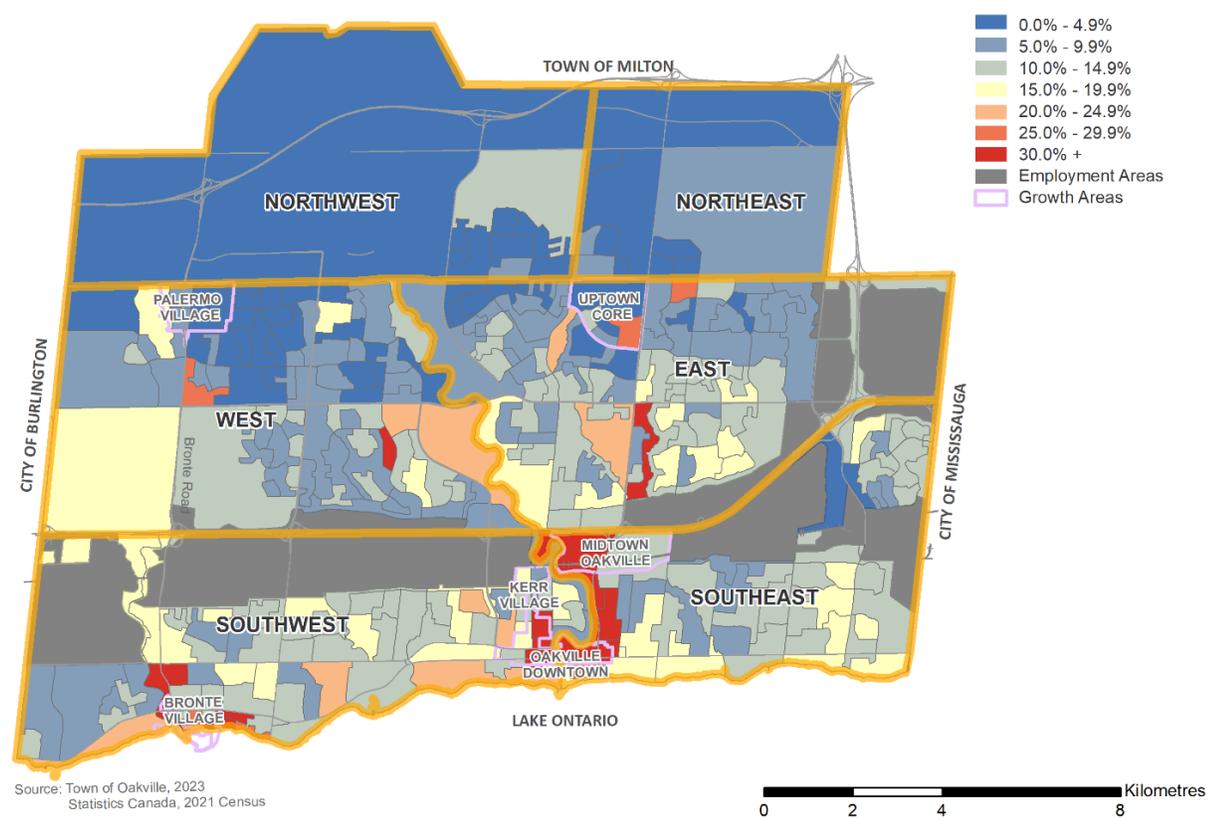
**Figure 10: Adults (ages 35 to 54 years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**



**Figure 11: Older Adults (ages 55 to 69 years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**

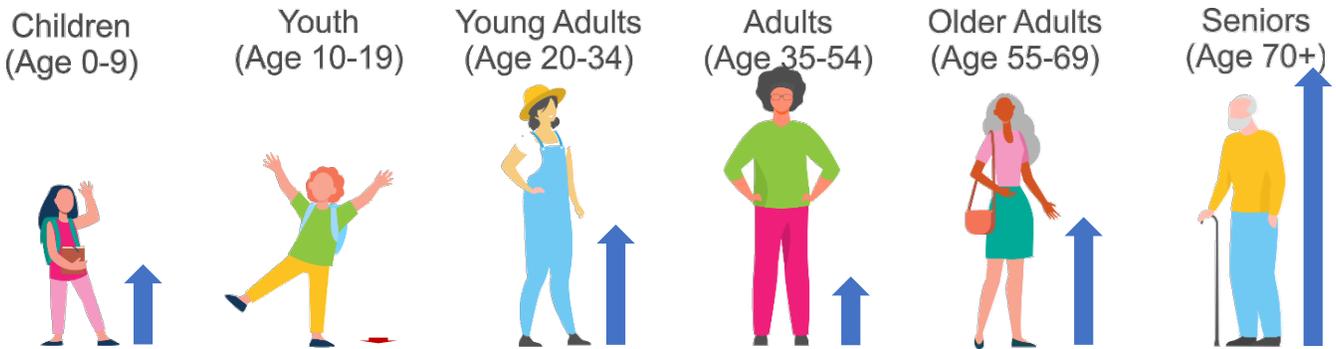


**Figure 12: Seniors (ages 70+ years) as a Percent of Total Population (2021)**



Looking forward, Oakville’s population is forecasted to continue to get older, with the number of seniors expected to grow faster than all other age cohorts. The number of older adults and young adults will also see notable growth, while the number of youth (ages 10 to 19) are projected to remain relatively stable over the next ten years.

**Figure 13: Population Change by Age Group, 2022 to 2032, Town of Oakville**



Source: Environics Analytics (2023)

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

The number of older adults and seniors has been growing in Oakville and across Canada for many years. This is leading to increased demand for services and spaces to serve this age group, including both active pursuits (e.g., pickleball, hiking, etc.) and more passive activities (e.g., hobbies, socials, special events, etc.).

Children and youth are a core market for parks and recreation departments and public libraries and exhibit strong participation rates. These younger age groups have been growing slower than the overall population, leading to emerging requests for adult and senior-oriented activities. As Oakville grows, demand for activities and services across the full age spectrum can be anticipated.

## **Household Composition**

Household types may be an indicator of different needs for parks, recreation, and library services. In 2021, 46,285 couple families were recorded in Oakville, accounting for 87% of private households. Conversely, 12% (6,645 households) were noted as lone-parent families. Families with a range of age groups living under the same roof may require more diverse leisure options in their neighbourhood to meet their needs. The table below compares the counts and rates of household types from the past three census periods.

**Table 14 – Household Type, Town of Oakville (2011 to 2021)**

Household Type	2011		2016		2021	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Couple-families	45,020	87.1%	47,745	87.0%	46,285	87.6%
Lone-parent families	6,645	12.9%	7,125	13.0%	6,555	12.4%
<b>All families</b>	<b>51,660</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54,875</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>52,835</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

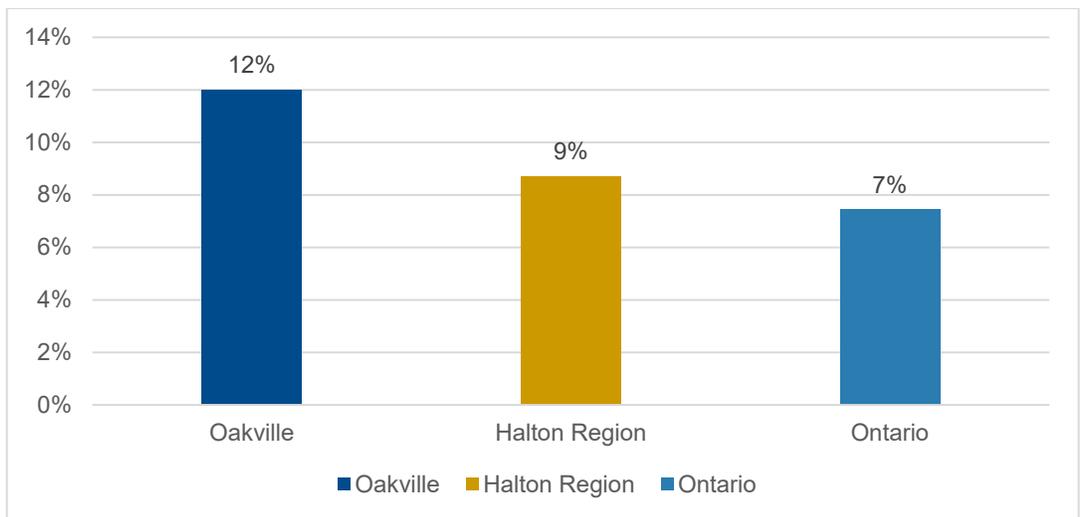
Lone-parent families and households with a range of age groups living under the same roof (including multi-generation households) may require more convenient and diverse leisure options in their neighbourhood to meet their needs.

## Diversity and Language

The town’s rate of immigration has increased with newcomers to Canada comprising nearly all of the town’s population growth since 2011. In 2011, immigrants accounted for 27.6% of Oakville’s population, increasing to 32.0% in 2011 and 41.2% in 2021.

“Recent immigrants” represented in the figure below refers to individuals who first obtained landed immigrant or permanent resident status between 2011 and 2021. In Oakville, the town’s 25,675 recent immigrants represented 12% of its residents in 2021, a proportion greater than Halton Region (9%) and the province (7%).

**Figure 14: Recent Immigration Population (2011 to 2021)**



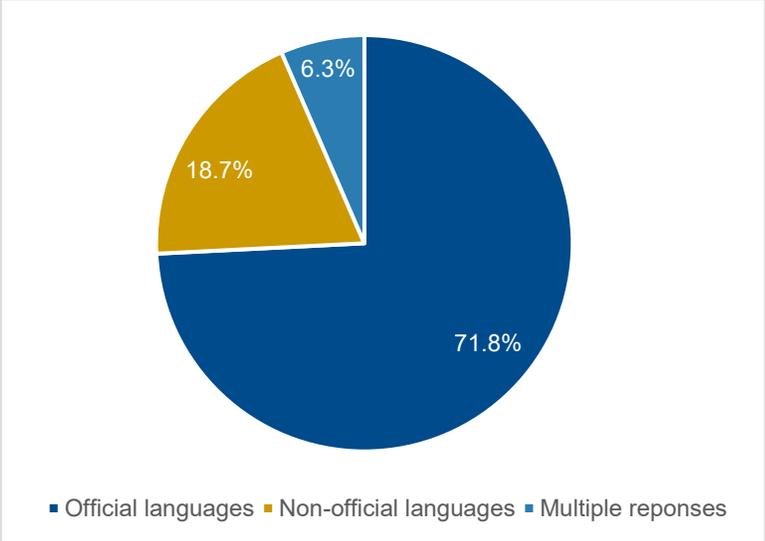
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

In 2021, 0.7% of Oakville’s population identified as Indigenous (1,415 persons); this rate is lower than the average in Halton Region (1.0%) and Ontario (2.9%). The total visible minority

population was 90,130 in 2021, or 43% of the population. This rate is higher than the average in Halton Region (36%) and Ontario (34%).

Furthermore, the distribution of official languages spoken most often at home are 73.6% English and 0.6% French. Non-official languages are mainly represented by Indo-European languages (8.7%), Sino-Tibetan languages (6.2%), and Indo-Iranian languages (3.5%). Furthermore, 6.3% of respondents identified multiple responses.

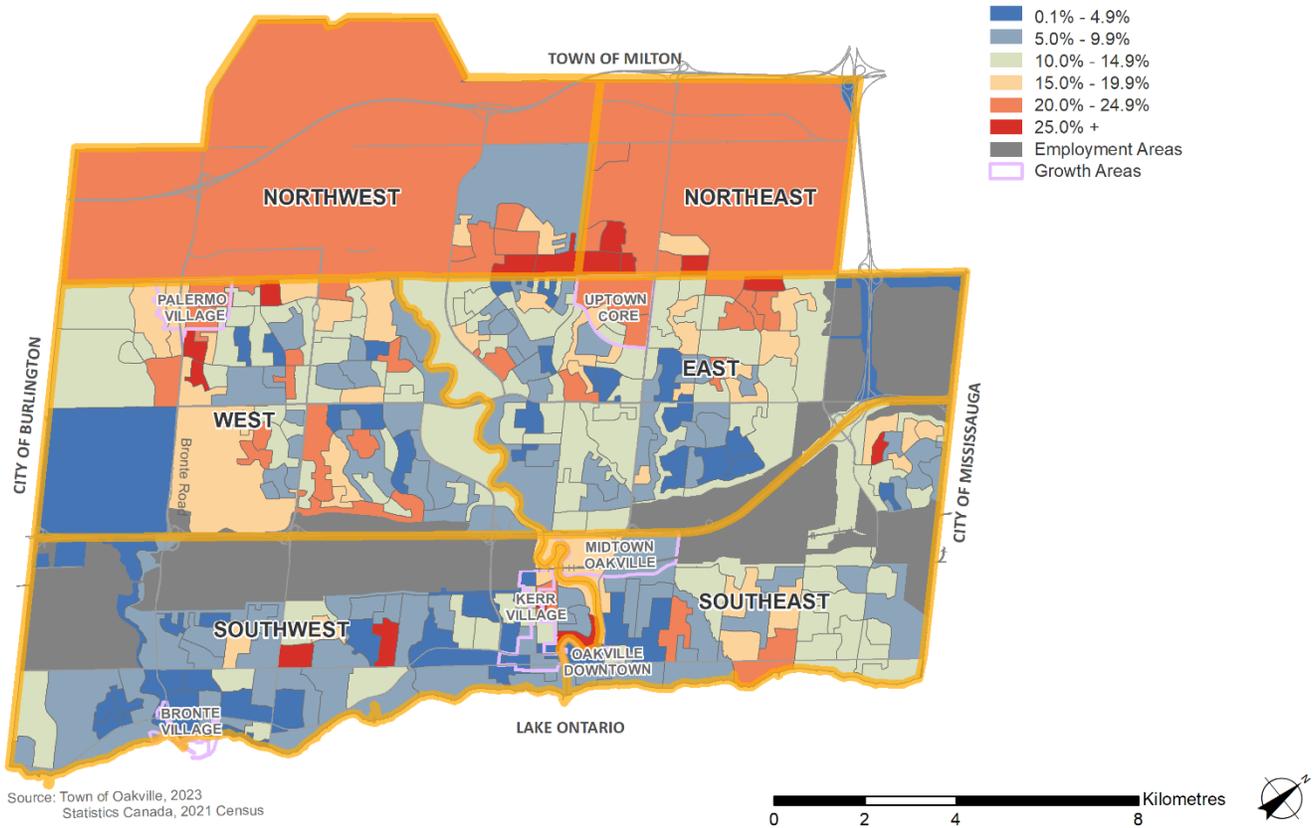
**Figure 15: Language spoken most often at home, Oakville (2021)**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

The following map illustrates areas of Oakville with concentrations of people who are recent immigrants to Canada (2011 to 2021). As the town has grown to the north, its population has also become more diverse. Newcomers to Canada are more likely to reside in North Oakville, as well as new communities in the West and East plan areas.

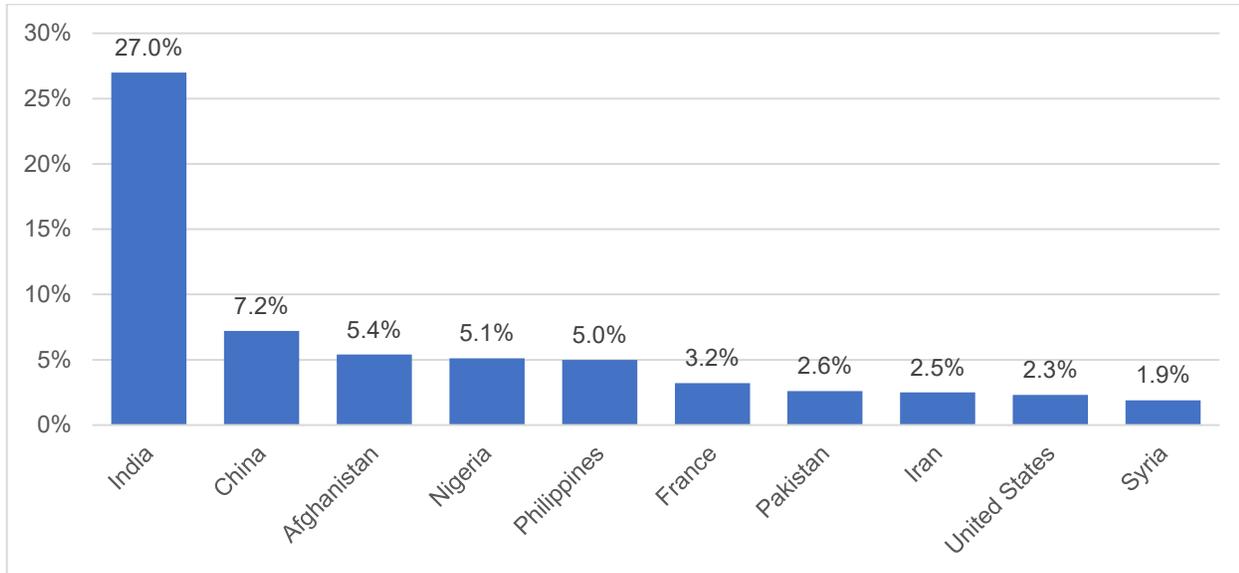
**Figure 16: Recent Immigrants (2011-2021) as a Percent of Total Population**



Nearly one in four Canadian residents are landed immigrants or permanent residents and this proportion is rising. In 2022, Canada welcomed 437,120 permanent residents (with 42% choosing to settle in Ontario) and aims to increase this figure to 500,000 by 2025, stabilizing at this level moving forward<sup>1</sup>. Of this amount, approximately 60% will receive residency as economic migrants, 24% through family reunification, and 16% through refugee and humanitarian streams. In 2022, India was the leading source of immigration for Canada, followed by China.

<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada. 2024-2026 Immigration Levels Plan. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/supplementary-immigration-levels-2024-2026.html>

**Figure 17: Top 10 Places of Birth of New Canadian Permanent Residents in 2022**



Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2023<sup>2</sup>

### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Oakville is becoming more ethnically diverse. While newcomers have many similar leisure needs to long-time Canadians, many also bring their own activities, sports, and traditions to Oakville. This is creating new demands on parks systems (e.g., picnic and special event spaces, cricket fields, etc.), recreation services (e.g., culturally-appropriate programming, etc.), and libraries (e.g., multi-lingual resources). Parks, recreation, and library spaces are vital to supporting newcomers and celebrating our many cultures, underscoring their importance to a growing Oakville.

### **Income**

Research has found that income and education levels influence (or at least are an indicator of) participation levels in parks, recreation, and library opportunities. As indicated by the 2021 Census, the Town of Oakville’s median total income of household in 2020 was \$128,000. This was greater than the Halton Region median and substantially higher than the Ontario median, and represented a 12% increase from 2015. This contributes to the high expectations that residents have of facility provision and service delivery from the town.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cicnews.com/2023/02/ircc-unveils-the-top-10-source-countries-of-new-immigrants-to-canada-in-2022-0233180.html#gs.0oq589>

**Table 15 - Median Total Income of Households (\$) (2016 and 2021)**

	2016	2021
Oakville	\$112,666	\$128,000
Halton Region	\$103,009	\$121,000
Ontario	\$74,297	\$91,000

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Income disparity is a growing concern in Ontario as less affluent individuals are less likely to participate in sports than their more affluent peers. Municipalities are mindful of offering more low-to-no cost recreation offerings where possible. While Oakville’s households have higher incomes than most communities, the town has taken steps to minimize financial barriers through its Recreation Connection Subsidy.

Despite its relatively high median incomes, Oakville has a higher proportion of low-income residents than Halton Region, with 8.6% living below the low-income measure (after tax) in 2021. By comparison, 6.7% of residents within Halton Region and 14.4% of residents in the province live below the low-income measure (after tax). Collectively, the rates for Oakville, Halton Region and Ontario decreased between 2016 and 2021.

**Table 16 – Prevalence of low-income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (2016 and 2021)**

	2016	2021
Oakville	9.7%	8.6%
Halton Region	8.2%	6.7%
Ontario	14.4%	10.1%

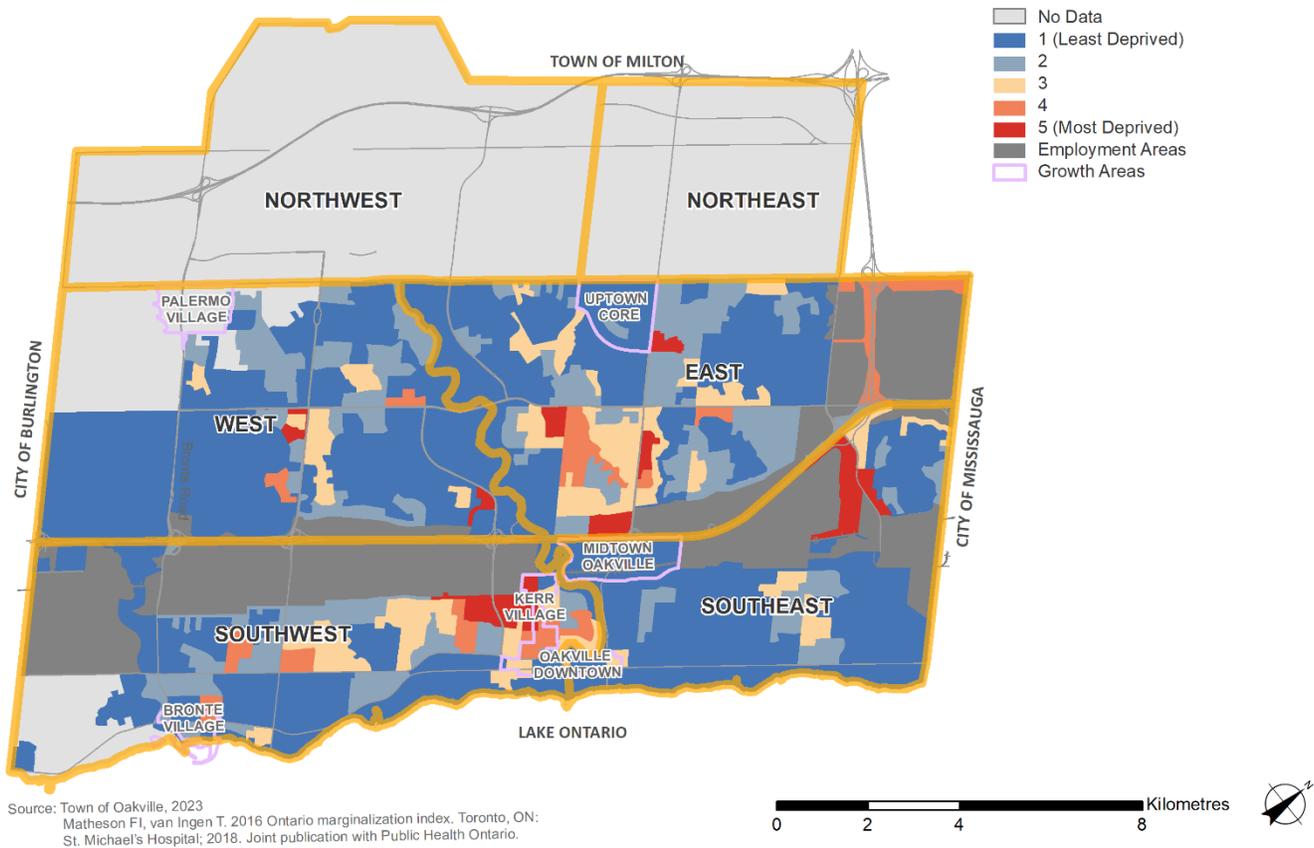
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

The following map illustrates areas with concentrations of people who are closely connected to poverty based on their inability to access and attain basic material needs (i.e., material deprivation). This map illustrates a measure created for the Ontario Marginalization Index (2016) that includes characteristics such as income, quality of housing, educational attainment, and family structure characteristics.<sup>3</sup> The greatest concentrations of people experiencing income-related marginalization are situated near the centre of Oakville, both north and south of the QEW.

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<sup>3</sup> Matheson FI, van Ingen T. 2016 Ontario marginalization index: user guide. Toronto, ON: St. Michael’s Hospital; 2018. Joint publication with Public Health Ontario.

**Figure 18: Material Deprivation (2016), Town of Oakville**



Note: Material deprivation is a measure that simultaneously assesses education, employment, income, housing conditions and family structure.

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

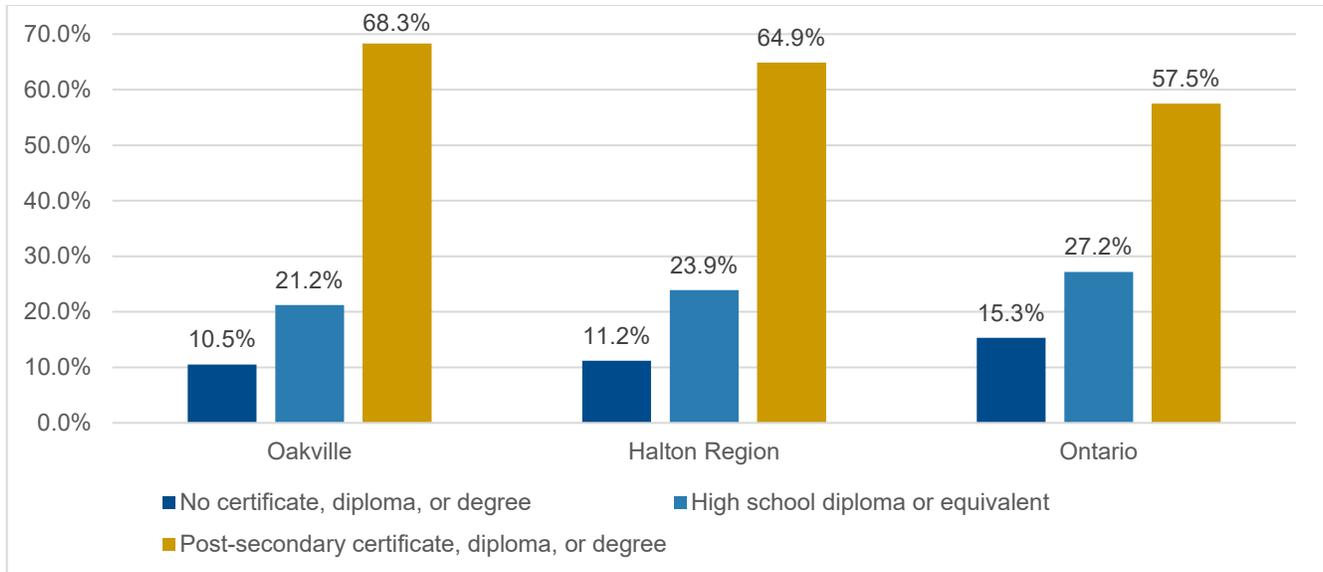
The average Oakville resident generates more income than the average Ontarian. Cost of living aside, this means that many area residents have a greater ability to participate in leisure activities and also to access a wider range of providers (including private sector businesses).

At the same time, Oakville has many low-income families and the current economic circumstances are challenging for many. Lower-income residents face several barriers in accessing leisure opportunities such as lack of transportation, unaffordable user fees, equipment costs, lack of awareness of programs, and lack of places for both informal and structured recreation. Accessible spaces and affordable services are critical to ensuring that everyone can participate fully.

## **Education**

Education is strongly correlated with income and past research has shown that higher levels of education are correlated with increased participation in recreational activities. The proportion of residents in Oakville that have completed a post-secondary certificate, degree or diploma (68.3%) suggests at least two in three residents have completed this level of education. The town's rate is above Halton Region (64.9%) and Ontario (57.5%), suggesting that Oakville is more likely to be home to a greater proportion of active participants.

**Table 17: Postsecondary Certificate, Diploma or Degree (2021)**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

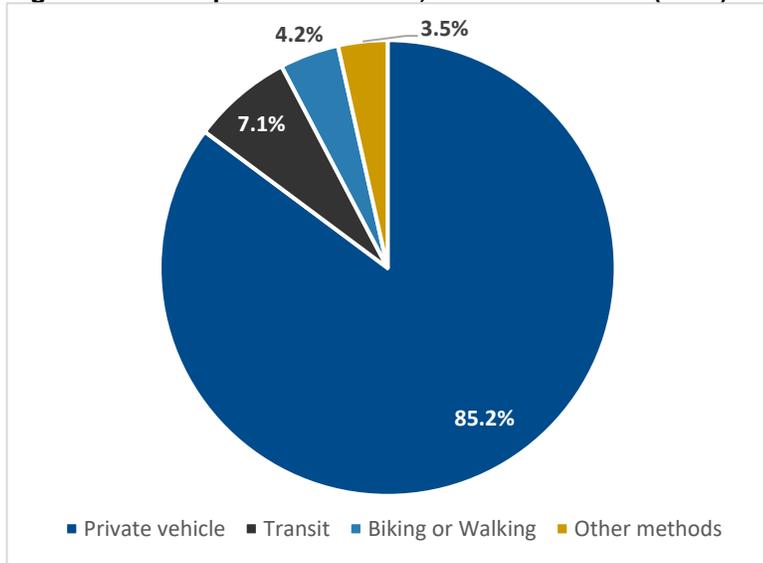
### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Oakville's residents have strong education rates compared to Ontario as a whole. This suggests that residents are more likely to place a value on participating in parks, recreation, and library activities. Demand for traditional library services can also be positively affected by a more highly educated population.

## **Modes of Transportation**

Main modes of transportation for how resident's commute to work can be understood as an indicator of resident's willingness to travel for parks, recreation, and library services. The town's primary mode of transportation is vastly represented by private vehicles (85.2%). Transit is represented by a rate of 7.1%, followed by biking or walking (4.2%), and other methods (3.5%).

**Figure 19: Transportation Modes, Town of Oakville (2021)**



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

For the large majority of Oakville residents, private vehicles are the primary mode of transportation. This suggests that these residents are capable of traveling longer distances to access parks, recreation, and library services. At the same time, the local transit system is expanding and improving, offering greater service to those that need or prefer this mode of transportation.

**Persons with Disabilities**

The town’s 2022 Diversity and Inclusion Current State Inclusivity Report noted the following as being typical under-represented demographic groups: women (51.7% of Oakville’s population); racialized persons (30.8%); Indigenous persons (0.7%); persons with a disability (22.0%); and LGBTQ2S+ persons (5.1%).

One-quarter (24%) of Ontarians 15 years and older live with a disability (i.e., persons who report a limitation in their day-to-day activities) as reported by the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability. If this percentage was applied locally, this would equate to 54,000 residents of Oakville. This proportion increases with one’s age, with 43% of those age 65 years and older living with disabilities. Disability is also correlated with income, with lower-income households exhibiting greater proportions of persons with disabilities.

Oakville is committed to providing services and facilities that are accessible to all persons in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The town actively works to remove barriers to accessibility in keeping with applicable legislation, such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

### Considerations for the Master Plan:

There is a growing requirement to ensure barrier-free accessibility to public spaces and services as the number of residents with disabilities increases. This includes not only physical accessibility, but also inclusive spaces and services for those with cognitive disabilities and sensory needs. The town and public library offer a wide range of services to ensure that persons with disabilities can engage fully in leisure activities, with the help of partners and guidance from the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

## 4.2 Growth Forecasts

For the purposes of this master plan, a current year population estimate of **225,000** will be used as a baseline. However, Oakville continues to grow.

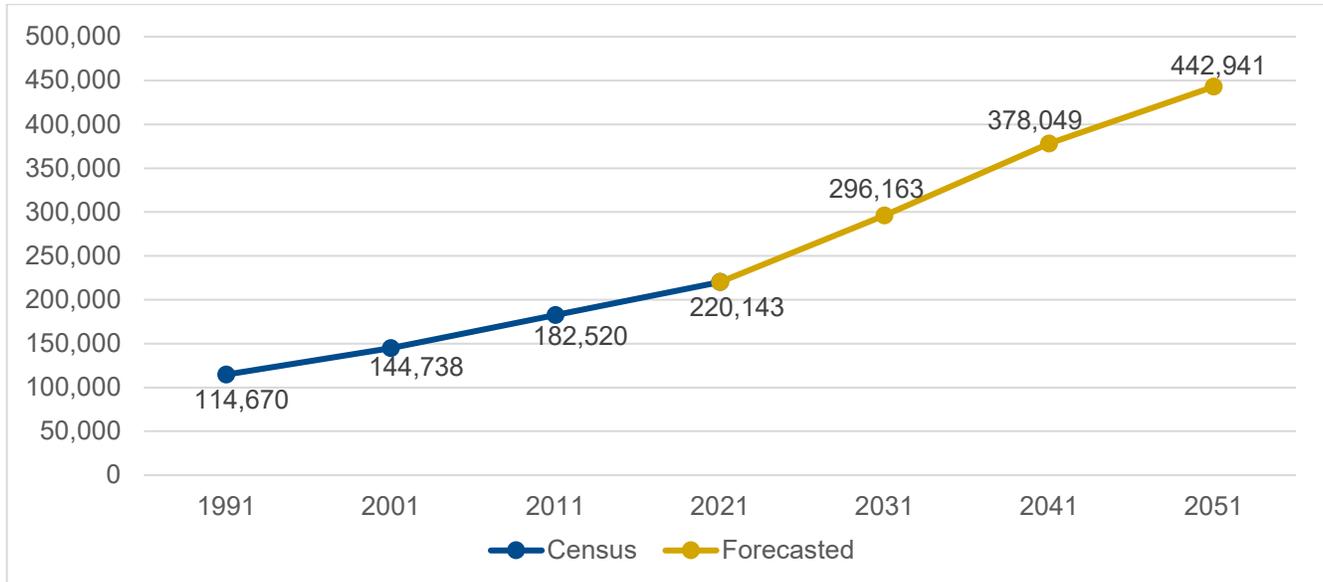
In 2023, the Province of Ontario established municipal housing targets for its largest and fastest-growing municipalities to address the current and anticipated housing supply gap. The Town of Oakville was assigned and has agreed to a housing target of 33,000 units to be achieved by 2031/32. This works out to Oakville delivering 3,300 units per year for the next decade (for comparison, Oakville has realized almost 2,000 new units annually in recent years). This accelerated growth scenario has significantly altered the timing and extent of the town's growth forecasts. The town is currently updating Official Plan policies for identified strategic growth areas to align with these housing targets.

In September 2023, draft population forecasts were presented to Town of Oakville Council. The "Joint Best Planning Estimates" were prepared by Halton Region in collaboration with area municipalities to inform the region's infrastructure master planning work that; they also help to form the basis for more localized planning, such as this Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan.

These planning forecasts are modeled after a substantially changed provincial planning framework as well as the results for the Regional Official Plan Review process. The figures include population, employment, and housing forecasts in ten-year increments from 2021 to 2051. They are considered preliminary and draft until finalized by Halton Region in Q4 2023; however, only minor refinements may be expected.

The population forecasts for Oakville are higher than previous estimates, but reflect the town's municipal housing target and accelerated growth occurring regionally and beyond. **The 2051 forecasted population for Oakville is now nearly 443,000, an increase of 218,000 persons over the current estimate of 225,000 persons – a near doubling of the population in less than 30 years.** The figure below displays the town's population growth since 1991, along with forecasted growth to 2051.

**Figure 20: Historical and Forecasted Population, Town of Oakville (1991 to 2051)**



Sources: 1991-2011: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada; note: excludes undercount. Interim Joint Best Planning Estimates, v3.032 (September 2023).

The population estimates allocate at least 73% of Oakville’s future population growth between 2021 and 2051 to strategic growth areas, which are a series of nodes and corridors supported by higher order transit. The balance of future population is allocated to greenfield development in North Oakville (19%) and other opportunities for gentle density in the town’s established neighbourhoods (9%).

Oakville’s strategic growth areas and population allocation are depicted on the following map. The table that follows illustrates anticipated population changes for specific communities across Oakville. By 2051, 26% of the town’s growth (about 59,100 persons) is allocated to Trafalgar Urban Core (north and south) and another 14% (31,800 persons) is forecasted for Midtown Oakville. Much of the town’s near-term growth will occur in North Oakville (Glenorchy and Joshua’s Meadows), although development will get well underway or continue in many of Oakville’s other strategic growth areas.



**Figure 22: Oakville Population Forecasts by Area, 2021 to 2051**

Policy Area	Plan Area	2021	2031	2041	2051	Growth 2021-2051	% of town-wide growth
<b>Strategic Growth Areas (SGA)</b>							
Bronte MTSA	SW	0	609	1,990	4,555	<b>4,555</b>	2%
Bronte Village	SW	2,164	3,653	4,360	5,053	<b>2,889</b>	1%
Downtown Oakville	SE	1,086	1,678	2,706	2,967	<b>1,881</b>	1%
Dundas Urban Core (E)	NE	0	1,072	2,217	3,352	<b>3,352</b>	2%
Dundas Urban Core (W)	NE/NW	1,010	3,614	5,365	7,107	<b>6,097</b>	3%
Hospital District	NW	0	1,034	2,372	4,062	<b>4,062</b>	2%
Kerr Village	SW	4,646	6,983	8,662	10,891	<b>6,245</b>	3%
Midtown UGC	SE	639	11,710	24,142	32,468	<b>31,829</b>	14%
Neyagawa Urban Core	NW	529	2,984	6,542	10,500	<b>9,971</b>	4%
Palermo Village	NW/W	4,672	6,739	13,169	19,621	<b>14,949</b>	7%
Trafalgar Corridor	E	8,967	10,254	14,062	17,823	<b>8,856</b>	4%
Trafalgar Urban Core (N)	NE	4	4	8,151	17,673	<b>17,669</b>	8%
Trafalgar Urban Core (S)	NE	3,642	18,178	31,390	45,089	<b>41,447</b>	19%
Uptown Core	E	6,567	9,384	12,098	14,404	<b>7,837</b>	4%
<b>Strategic Growth Areas Subtotal</b>		<b>33,926</b>	<b>77,896</b>	<b>137,226</b>	<b>195,565</b>	<b>161,639</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>North Oakville (non-SGA)</b>							
Glenorchy	NE/NW	14,664	28,112	36,355	37,233	<b>22,569</b>	10%
Joshua's Meadows	NE	1,865	10,342	18,962	19,726	<b>17,861</b>	8%
N.O. Transitional Area (E)	NE	16	145	250	281	<b>265</b>	0%
N.O. Transitional Area (W)	NE/NW	8	1,120	1,120	1,120	<b>1,112</b>	0%
<b>North Oakville (non-SGA) Subtotal</b>		<b>16,553</b>	<b>39,719</b>	<b>56,687</b>	<b>58,360</b>	<b>41,807</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Rest of Oakville (non-SGA)</b>							
Iroquois Ridge	E	24,132	24,621	25,210	25,699	<b>1,567</b>	1%
Oakville East	SE	6,960	7,099	7,265	7,410	<b>450</b>	0%
Oakville Southeast	SE	19,463	20,724	22,211	23,533	<b>4,070</b>	2%
Oakville Southwest	SW	35,598	37,244	38,151	39,153	<b>3,555</b>	2%
Oakville West	W	57,972	62,130	63,981	65,392	<b>7,420</b>	3%
River Oaks	E	25,265	26,456	27,044	27,551	<b>2,286</b>	1%
<b>Rest of Oakville (non-SGA) Subtotal</b>		<b>169,390</b>	<b>178,274</b>	<b>183,862</b>	<b>188,738</b>	<b>19,348</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Employment Areas</b>	n/a	274	274	274	278		
<b>Oakville</b>		<b>220,143</b>	<b>296,163</b>	<b>378,049</b>	<b>442,941</b>	<b>222,798</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Interim Joint Best Planning Estimates, v3.032 (September 2023)

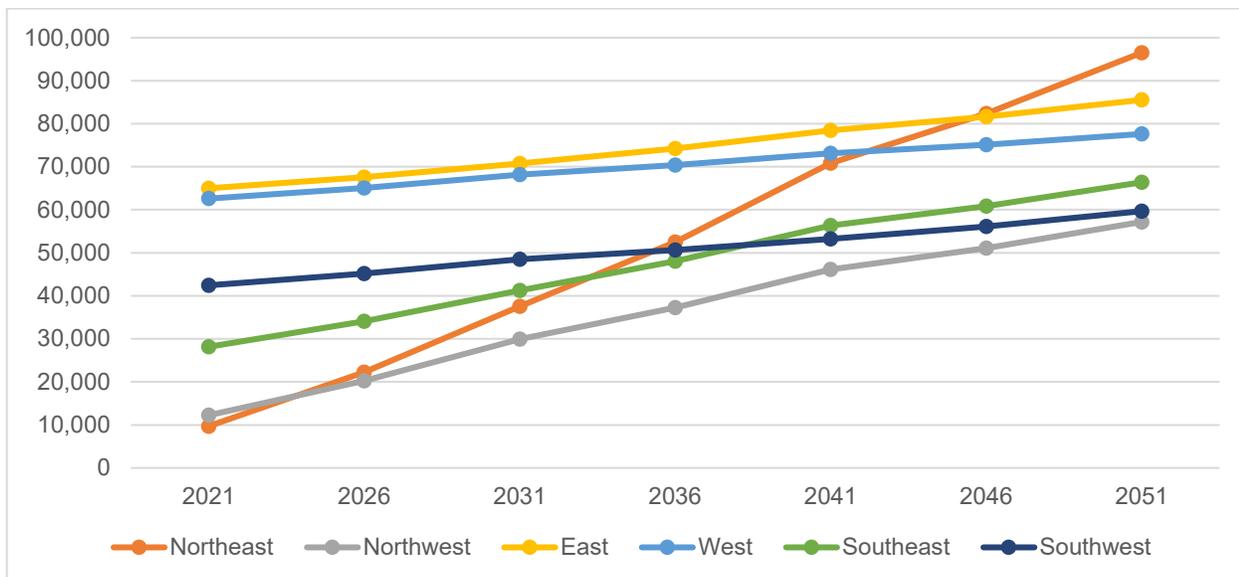
In terms of the six plan areas, 59% of town's growth to 2051 (131,753 persons) will occur north of Dundas Street, with 39% in the Northeast and 20% in the Northwest (using Sixth Line as the dividing line). Driven by the build-out of Midtown, the Southeast plan area is projected to grow by 17% (38,230 persons). Growth will be slower in most other areas as they are largely encompassed by stable, mature neighbourhoods.

**Table 18: Forecasted Population by Plan Area, 2021 to 2051**

Plan Area	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051	Change (2021-51)	% of Town-wide Growth
<b>Northeast</b>	9,704	22,234	37,548	52,512	70,805	82,376	96,516	<b>86,812</b>	39%
<b>Northwest</b>	12,246	20,214	29,952	37,241	46,142	51,112	57,187	<b>44,941</b>	20%
<b>East</b>	64,999	67,606	70,783	74,250	78,482	81,662	85,545	<b>20,546</b>	9%
<b>West</b>	62,594	65,094	68,136	70,365	73,089	75,131	77,619	<b>15,025</b>	7%
<b>Southeast</b>	28,161	34,046	41,224	48,028	56,337	60,864	66,391	<b>38,230</b>	17%
<b>Southwest</b>	42,439	45,173	48,520	50,625	53,194	56,120	59,683	<b>17,244</b>	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220,143</b>	<b>254,367</b>	<b>296,163</b>	<b>333,021</b>	<b>378,049</b>	<b>407,265</b>	<b>442,941</b>	<b>222,798</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Interim Joint Best Planning Estimates, v3.032 (September 2023)

**Figure 23: Forecasted Population by Plan Area, 2021 to 2051**



Source: Interim Joint Best Planning Estimates, v3.032 (September 2023)

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Oakville’s population growth rate is rising. New parks, recreation and library facilities and services will be required to address growth-related demands, as well as changes in participation patterns. Greater pressure will also be placed on existing assets to meet the demands of a growing population. Planning for current and new residents is a primary objective of this master plan.

The Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan will use the latest joint best planning estimates as the basis for analysis, ensuring alignment with other planning initiatives. Recognizing that there are many factors that may impact the pace of growth in Oakville, the master plan will use population thresholds rather than specific years as references for identifying growth-related capital requirements. Mitigation strategies and phasing options may also be required should there be funding shortfalls for growth-related requirements.

## 5. Trends and Best Practices to Consider

This section identifies several trends that are influencing the demand for and delivery of parks, recreation, and library services in Canadian municipalities. Some of these trends have emerged as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, while others have been affecting service provision for several years. These trends should be balanced against other study inputs (such as public consultation and local usage levels) through the master plan's upcoming development stages.

### 5.1 Key Parks and Recreation Issues and Trends

#### General Participation Trends, Behaviours, and Policy Responses

##### 1) Promoting Health and Wellness

Community health and wellbeing is a fundamental objective of the parks and recreation sector. Brought into focus through the COVID-19 pandemic and the emerging health and wellness needs of individuals, parks and recreation departments are being valued as community wellness hubs that provide equitable access to vital programs, services, and spaces that advance health equity, improve health outcomes, and enhance the overall quality of life for everyone.

A holistic and multi-faceted approach to health and wellness (including health promotion, socialization, mindfulness and management of stress and anxiety) is contributing to a greater emphasis on active living. A recent study found that over 2.2 million cases of health conditions were prevented in Canada in 2019 as a result of sport and physical activity participation (including over 600,000 each for coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes and depression), for a total health savings of \$23.4 billion<sup>4</sup>.

The town provides a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities that aim to encourage physical activity, health, and wellness. These programs are complemented by those delivered by community groups and sports organizations to provide a well-rounded portfolio of opportunities focused on physical activity and mental wellness, mindfulness, inter-generational opportunities, and outdoor programs (e.g., meditation, nature walks, yoga, etc.).

##### 2) Engaging the Aging Population

Canada's population has been getting older for many decades. In 2021, the median age in Canada was 41.6 years, an increase of four years since 2001 (37.6 years). Aging is a significant driver of increased health care costs and is also significantly influencing parks and recreation opportunities. Furthermore, people are living longer and spending more time in retirement, which means that service needs are growing as they want to stay active

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<sup>4</sup> The Impact of our Sector. Sport Industry Research Centre. Fitness Industry Council of Canada. <https://4global.com/app/uploads/2022/08/Canadian-Social-Value-Report-Eng-V5.pdf>

throughout this stage of life. An aging population may also mean demand for activities that support social connections and healthy active aging, including more daytime services.

In response, municipal recreation departments are offering an increased variety of older adult programming opportunities for those wishing to remain active as they age, including those seeking lifelong learning opportunities, persons managing chronic illness and disease, and those that are seeking low-impact, therapeutic, and rehabilitative programs. However, there can be significant variation among different segments within the older adult community based on age, abilities, lifestyles, and interests – as a result, there is no “one size fits all approach”. Age-friendly planning has also been a prominent theme for nearly two decades now as municipalities seek ways to increase participation and access for persons of all ages and abilities.

### **3) Combating High Levels of Physical Inactivity**

Physical inactivity rates remain alarmingly high and levels of inactivity rose further during the COVID-19 pandemic as more sedentary activities took hold, particularly among children and youth in both school and community settings. The 2021 national ParticipACTION report card on physical activity graded overall physical activity levels a “D”<sup>5</sup> for children and youth and “F” for adults, reflecting a decline from prior years as activity levels dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic. Reliance on automobiles (as opposed to walking or biking) has contributed to a culture of physical inactivity, while activities such as watching television, playing video games, or using a computer further exacerbate sedentary behaviours.

Physical inactivity has been found to be a contributor to Canada’s growing obesity problem. In 2017, a study by Statistics Canada found that nearly one-third of Canadian children and youth (age 5-17) are obese or overweight, which was an increase from 23% reported in 1979.<sup>6</sup> During the same period, almost two-thirds (64%) of adults over the age of 18 were found to be obese or overweight, which was an increase from 49% in 1979.<sup>7</sup> The downstream health care costs are significantly higher than the upfront preventative costs associated with active living.

For many, municipal parks and recreation services provide critical supports to maintain personal health and physical literacy by addressing inactivity levels, social isolation, stress and anxiety. Access to outdoor spaces, physical literacy, and affordable, accessible leisure activities are key determinants in engaging people in active recreation. There is evidence that larger parks have a more direct impact on physical activity as they have the space to accommodate a wider variety of amenities and experiences. Proximity to parks and facilities is also correlated with higher levels of physical activity.<sup>8</sup> Dog ownership is often linked to higher levels of activity and social engagement, providing support to the provision of off-leash dog parks and pet-friendly public spaces.

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<sup>5</sup> The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults (2021) and Children and Youth (2022).

<https://www.participaction.com>

<sup>6</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. Tackling obesity in Canada: Childhood obesity and excess weight rates in Canada. 2017.

<https://www.canada.ca>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Urban Institute. The Health Benefits of Parks and their Economic Impacts: A Review of Literature. February 2022.

Education initiatives can focus on both raising awareness of the importance of increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviours. Piloting new programs that fit physical activity into peoples' daily lives should also be encouraged, including participation in outdoor activities such as walking, wheeling, or cycling along the municipal trails system.

#### **4) Participating in Sport**

Prior to the pandemic, about 75% of Canadian children aged 5 to 17 years participated in organized sport<sup>9</sup> and participation increased from 2005 to 2016<sup>10</sup>. Rates of sport participation are largely the same for girls and boys, but participation decreases with age – 70% of teens aged 13–19 reported participating in sport, compared with 83% of youth aged 5–12.<sup>11</sup> Participation is consistently lowest in lower-income and other marginalized groups, indicating that more can be done to include all persons in affordable and accessible sport opportunities.

Amongst adults, just over one-quarter (27%) participate in sport, a figure that has varied little over the years. Men are nearly twice as likely to participate in sport as women, and participation generally declines with age (from 44% of people aged 18 to 24 years, to 16% of adults aged 65 years or older). Those with higher levels of income and educational attainment are also significantly more likely to participate in sport. However, a lower rate of sport participation was observed among immigrants (21%) compared to Canadians overall.<sup>12</sup>

#### **5) Growing Concerns over Affordability**

Affordability is a concern for many households given the current challenging economic climate and the fact that participation in leisure activities is one of several spending choices for discretionary income. Income can be a significant barrier to participation in organized sports where equipment, travel and rental fees result in greater costs to the participant. For households experiencing financial barriers, the provision of subsidy programs and low-to-no-cost programming options can help reduce the financial burden of participation.

Research from 2018 found that the cost of children's activities put a strain on the finances of a majority (55%) of Canadian parents. Further, as many as one in three (32%) Canadians used debt to fund the extracurricular activities of their children. Hockey topped the list as the most expensive extracurricular activity (an average cost of nearly \$750) and the research found that parents were increasingly less likely to enroll their children in hockey as a result. Conversely, swimming was one of the most affordable and popular after-school activities for children.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Canadian Heritage. (2013). *Sport Participation 2010*. Ottawa, Canada: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada.

<sup>10</sup> Barnes, J. D. & Tremblay, M. S. *Changes in indicators of child and youth physical activity in Canada, 2005–2016*. *Can. J. Public Health Rev. Can. Santé Publique* 107, e586–e589 (2016).

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Fitness & Lifestyle Research Institute. *Kids CAN PLAY! Bulletin 2: Participation in organized physical activity and sport*. 2018. [https://cflri.ca/sites/default/files/node/1671/files/CPLY%202014-2016%20Bulletin%20%20-%20Organized\\_EN.pdf](https://cflri.ca/sites/default/files/node/1671/files/CPLY%202014-2016%20Bulletin%20%20-%20Organized_EN.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> CFLRI. *2019-2021 Physical Activity Monitor*.

<sup>13</sup> Ipsos. *One in Three (32%) Families Going into Debt to Fund their Children's Extra-Curricular Activities, Up 5 Points from Last Year*. 2018. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/back-to-school-2018>

## 6) Meeting the Demand for Unstructured, Self-Directed Activities

Participation is gradually shifting away from structured programs and set schedules as people are demonstrating a desire for more drop-in, unstructured, and self-directed participation options. This is compounded by changes in demand for prime-time access – more adults and seniors are seeking activities during the evening, a shift from traditional daytime (seniors programming) or late-evening provision (in the case of many adult sports). Participation in adult recreational activities is also growing at the same time that municipalities seek new ways to engage youth in meaningful activities.

A lack of free time is commonly identified as a barrier to participation. Activities such as organized sports, particularly at competitive levels, often require considerable time commitment for training, practices, travel and other league activities. With increasingly busy lifestyles, competing interests, and inability for people to commit to structured activities, unstructured activities can help to fill the void as many do not require advanced registration and can be self-scheduled. Many municipalities are working to provide flexible opportunities to engage in casual activities and increasing the range and frequency of drop-in programs.

There is also a growing desire for innovative programming and space for unstructured activities. Increasingly, this is leading to opportunities that go beyond traditional activities and by creating “experiences” often linked to broader interests in community life, the arts, and more. Municipalities that have typically just been “facility providers” are evolving into “activity enablers”, often through partnerships with other service providers. Spaces and activities that are “Instagram-worthy” – meaning that they can be widely shared on social media – are highly sought after.

## 7) Encouraging Outdoor and Free Play

A majority (57%) of Canadian parents believe that children these days spend too much time in organized activities, and not enough time just playing.<sup>14</sup> According to some, the erosion of play has become a silent emergency across the world, with 1 in 5 children saying they are ‘too busy’ to play.<sup>15</sup> Play is so important to children’s holistic development that both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the UK Children’s Commissioner have called for “play prescriptions” from public health authorities.

We are living in an ever increasingly urban world, with more children growing up in cities than ever before. In addition, lifestyles are changing, with a growing prevalence of insecurity and parental risk aversion, the increasing role played by technology in our lives, and a recurring time-scarcity problem, each of which impact children’s play experiences. Play is often seen as an activity confined to playgrounds or schools, but communities are increasingly looking for ways to design public spaces and the built environment to support play and learning opportunities for children, including the introduction of more natural play features and loose toys/tools for imaginative play. Everyday activities such as walking and cycling can also support a physically active population.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Real Play Coalition. *Reclaiming Play in Cities*. 2020.

<https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/reclaiming-play-in-cities>

## 8) Accommodating Emerging Activities

The variety of activities and sports available today is much broader than in the past and the popularity of recreation and sport activities are affected by a variety of socio-demographic and lifestyle trends. Many of these new recreational pursuits have emerged in the past few decades that were never contemplated in the design of most older parks and facilities.

There are several emerging trends regarding the use of parks and recreation spaces, including:

- Residents are choosing more informal and individual recreation activities that are more convenient and affordable;
- Activities and spaces such as pickleball, cricket, off-leash dog parks, splash pads, sport courts, disc golf, skateboarding and BMX biking, outdoor skating, challenge courses and adventure play, and trails are increasing in demand;
- Public fitness opportunities are in higher demand (e.g., exercise equipment and loops), particularly for seniors;
- Casual group spaces for diverse exercise and recreation experiences are in high demand (e.g., tai chi, BBQ pits, picnic spaces, etc.);
- Greater frequency of requests by private groups to schedule community events, permitting the public to be involved in programming;
- Demand for digital infrastructure, such as Wi-Fi in parks and facilities;
- Changes to drinking laws that have prompted some Ontario municipalities (e.g., Toronto, Stratford, etc.) to pilot programs to allow the consumption of alcohol in parks (with restrictions); and
- Passive recreation spaces that support casual and informal activities are equally important to active programming (e.g., community gardens, outdoor classrooms, unstructured spaces, etc.).

In terms of sport, national registration figures indicate that, where once ice hockey and baseball were dominant, soccer has taken rise since the 1990s. Additionally, the once popular sports of curling and racquetball are on the decline in many communities. More recently, a national study found that interest in children's activities was beginning to shift away from these sports towards other less formal extracurricular activities, such as music lessons, dance lessons, language classes, and drama classes.<sup>16</sup>

## 9) Focusing on Inclusion and Access

Efforts to serve people of all ages and abilities is a key goal for municipal recreation departments. To maximize access, several potential barriers to participation should be considered, such as: economic (e.g., costs associated with participation); information (e.g., knowledge and information sharing about available opportunities); geographic (e.g., equitable distribution of facilities and services), and inclusivity (e.g., ensuring all participants feel welcomed and supported). The town's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Diversity and

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<sup>16</sup> Ipsos. One in Three (32%) Families Going into Debt to Fund their Children's Extra-Curricular Activities, Up 5 Points from Last Year. 2018. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/back-to-school-2018>

Inclusion Action Plan outline several ways that Oakville has responded to ensure that its recreation opportunities are inclusive of all residents.

## **10) Improving Gender Equity and Women’s Sports**

A substantially higher percentage of boys and men participate in sport compared to girls and women. Starting in late adolescence, one-in-three women leave sport (including, but not limited to, ice sports) as compared to one-in-ten boys<sup>17</sup>. This trend has worsened since the onset of the pandemic, when it was reported that 90% of female sport participants were negatively impacted (specifically young women ages 6 to 18 years old). The research suggests that young women are participating substantially less than they did pre-pandemic and that 25% are not committed to returning to sport after the pandemic<sup>18</sup>. Among the barriers cited, girls stated low levels of confidence, low body image, lack of skills and feeling unwelcomed in a sport environment.

Many municipalities and recreation providers have been instrumental in providing leadership opportunities, gender-specific sport leagues, and local engagement initiatives. To bolster participation among women, the Federal government established a goal of achieving equity in sport participation by the year 2035.

Beyond sport, thoughtful design of public spaces can make them more fun, safer for diverse groups, and generally more inclusive of everyone. Examples include providing a wider variety of play opportunities, including gender-neutral forms of play such as climbing (e.g., natural elements) and building (e.g., loose parts).

## **11) Using Parks and Recreation to Support Indigenous Reconciliation**

Indigenous awareness, recognition, understanding, and reconciliation are addressed through a number of sectoral documents, such as Parks for All (2017) and the calls to action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The following Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) relate to “Sports and Reconciliation” and are applicable to all levels of government:

- 87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.
- 88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

All communities have a role to play in recognizing the importance of Indigenous voices in parks, recreation, and sport. For example, many municipalities are showcasing Indigenous history through public art and plaques in community centres and parks, along with exploring sports programs and ceremonial events that deepen our understanding of these cultures. A

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<sup>17</sup> Canadian Women & Sport. The Rally Report. 2020. [https://womenandsport.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Canadian-Women-Sport\\_The-Rally-Report.pdf](https://womenandsport.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Canadian-Women-Sport_The-Rally-Report.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Canadian Women & Sport and E-Alliance. COVID Alert Pandemic Impact on Girls in Sport. 2021. Retrieved from: <https://womenandsport.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/COVID-Alert-final-English-July-2021.pdf>.

recent survey saw that 59% of Canadians want to see Indigenous place names restored and 68% support more Indigenous representation through art, native plant gardens, and signage.<sup>19</sup> Reconciliation is an ongoing process that must occur in a respectful manner recognizing Indigenous cultural traditions and practices. Ensuring that Indigenous voices are sought and included in planning and policy development is growing as a priority for many municipalities.

## **12) Offering Safe Spaces for Marginalized and Displaced Populations**

The pandemic has intensified social inequities and negatively impacted vulnerable populations such as lower-income households, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities. The research is clear that marginalized populations have been disproportionately impacted and finding it harder to remain active. Intentional decisions and meaningful action are required to improve equity in resource provision and access to recreation services for all populations.

For example, 90% of large Canadian cities have indicated that homelessness in parks, trails and recreation spaces is a challenge.<sup>20</sup> Many municipalities are evaluating the role of parks in response to the housing crisis and encampments, ensuring that our most vulnerable have access to essential services and opportunities to safely spend time outdoors. In addition, some recreation facilities can play a role in supporting under-housed and displaced populations, serving as cooling centres, community showers, food pantries, and safe spaces. Most parks and recreation departments are not well equipped to deal with this complex challenge and greater education and dialogue are often required. While policies and approaches for accommodating transient residents may differ, municipalities are increasingly serving a wider range of needs and working with other sectors to connect residents to essential services.

## **13) Sport Specialization and Long-term Player Development Models**

Competitive development experiences and opportunities are in high demand. The higher the level of play and the greater the focus on athlete development, the more time that is required for practices, games, and camps. While this “professionalization” of youth sports helps to support skill development for many athletes, it also comes at a cost (in terms of both time and money) that can raise barriers for many families, making some sports out of reach for lower-income households.

The sport community has made strides in recent years to improve and sustain “quality sport” experiences, including the establishment of long-term athlete development (LTAD) resources to help participants achieve their goals. This can have an impact on how facilities are scheduled and designed; for example, in 2018, Hockey Canada mandated that novice participants play half ice (or cross ice), requiring the use of portable boards systems that must be set up and then stored away when not in use. While there are concerns around early

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<sup>19</sup> Park People. Reclaiming Urban Spaces is a Decolonial Act. 2022.

<https://ccpr.parkpeople.ca/2022/stories/inclusion/reclaiming-urban-spaces-is-a-decolonial-act>

<sup>20</sup> Park People. 2020 Canadian City Parks Report. 2020.

age sport specialization and rising year-round training, multi-sport development is encouraged.

## **Service Delivery Trends**

### **1) The Necessity of Partnerships**

Municipal parks and recreation departments throughout Ontario are increasingly challenged to provide and maintain top quality facilities, programs, and services within defined budget envelopes. With municipalities facing increasing demands for new amenities, many are turning to partnerships with non-profits and community groups to bring local expertise, new programming, and new funding. Public sector top-down and bottom-up partnership initiatives are viewed as opportunities for Oakville.

Partnerships can offer benefits such as the sharing of costs and risks, as well as economies of scale and shared expertise. Most municipalities have a long history of working with public libraries, school boards, service clubs, or other providers to maximize resources. The Town of Oakville has an agreement with local school boards whereby they administer community rentals on behalf of the schools.

Looking ahead, the sector is likely to see more partnerships than fewer. Sport for Life reported that 72% of organizations have reached out to work with others and/or support one another in starting initiatives.<sup>21</sup> The pandemic has also strengthened existing and created new forms of collaboration with other sectors, something that may carry forward into the future. Many of these new roles – including community-based supports (e.g., food security, health service coordination, homelessness, etc.) – will require additional policy direction, training, and support.

### **2) Data, Technology and Digital Transformation**

Data is becoming more accessible and mainstream, with increased data literacy enabling more informed decision-making. Parks and recreation departments are gaining access to growing amounts of data geared specifically towards the sector. Many municipalities (such as Oakville) are also using mobility data and drone technology to gather information such as topography and geographical distribution, to surveillance of parks.<sup>22</sup> These advanced analytics allow for more in-depth analysis on trends and tendencies that can support predictive modelling.

Technological advances are also enabling service providers and users to be more aware of leisure opportunities in their communities. From online services (e.g., online registration, mobile outdoor games such as Pokémon GO or Biba, etc.), virtual programming (which was vital for many during the pandemic, including subscription-based activities that allow people to participate individually while being connected to a larger community virtually), and mobile and wearable technologies, the integrated application of technology in recreation service

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<sup>21</sup> Sport for Life. [Impacts of COVID-19 on Local Sports Organizations Nationwide Survey Results](https://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/National-Report-Impacts-of-COVID-19-on-Local-Sports-Organizations-1.pdf). Sport for Life, June 2020, <https://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/National-Report-Impacts-of-COVID-19-on-Local-Sports-Organizations-1.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> National Recreation and Parks Association. [Parks & Recreation](#). 2022.

delivery can assist in enhancing client experiences and engaging a wider segment of the population.

Digital technology is becoming pervasive in the public realm, enhancing client experiences beyond the walls of community facilities. Some examples include public Wi-Fi, charging stations, digital kiosks/wayfinding, digital public art, and smart street furniture and transportation infrastructure (e.g., parking sensors, smart benches, etc.). Advancements are also allowing for efficiencies and environmentally-friendly approaches to operations, such as the use of robotic line painters and the introduction of electric vehicle fleets.

Oakville has embraced the use of technology in many ways, such as through the provision of virtual programming and targeted marketing practices. The Recreation and Culture Department has also recently transitioned to a new recreation software system that allows for added insights into customer behaviour and improved tracking of drop-in programs (most of which now require pre-registration). The town is also currently working on the development of a Digital Strategy and a Data Management Strategy was recently completed in 2022.

### **3) Declining Volunteerism**

Volunteers are critical to the delivery of community-based parks and recreation activities and events. Two-fifths (41%) of all Canadians aged 15 years and older are considered active volunteers across all sectors (not just recreation and sport), giving an average of 131 hours per year in 2018. However, the number of volunteers and their commitment are declining. In 2018, Canadian volunteers devoted about 1.65 billion volunteer hours, down from 1.96 billion in 2013 – a 16% decrease in only five years.<sup>23</sup> The pandemic has further accelerated this trend, as older generations more likely to limit their volunteer activities than younger generations.

In 2022, one-quarter (27%) of Canadian adults reported volunteering in a sport activity, spending approximately 105 hours per year on average. The most important factor preventing individuals from volunteering in sport was “time or busy schedule” (58%). The primary reasons for volunteering in sport consist of contributing to the community, meeting people, and social networking. More adults volunteer in an informal capacity (especially young adults), compared to a formal capacity (which is more common amongst older adults). The role of younger volunteers is vital to the sustainability of sport, especially in light of the pandemic and its greater impact on older populations.<sup>24</sup>

## **Infrastructure Trends**

### **1) Rationalizing and Addressing Aging Infrastructure**

The 2019 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card found that approximately one-third of Canada’s sports and recreation facilities (including arenas and pools) were considered to be in fair to very poor condition (ranking only behind bridges and roads) and in need of

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<sup>23</sup> Statistics Canada. 2018 General Social Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating.

<sup>24</sup> CFLRI. Monitoring & Tracking the Field: Volunteering in Sport. 2022.

revitalization and expensive repairs.<sup>25</sup> Many of these facilities have various design and age-related deficiencies that are impacting their operational efficiency and ability to adequately serve their customers.

Facility renewal and reinvestment projects have been a focus for local governments for some time, often requiring alternative funding sources such as senior government grants, naming rights, operating partnerships, land swaps, and more. Due to the current economic situation and resultant cost escalations, many communities will require increased financial commitments from all levels of government to facilitate the redesign, development and retrofitting of parks and recreation facilities. The infrastructure deficit provides an opportunity not only to modernize facilities by making them more multi-use, but also to consider facility conversion or adaptive re-use options that accommodate emerging activities. Oakville has reinvested in its existing infrastructure and most notably completed renovations to the Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre that was completed in 2020.

## **2) Designing Facilities to be Sport-Friendly**

Organized sport in general – but particularly at high-performing levels – occasionally requires access to specialized facilities such as aquatic centres, arenas, and sports fields. Increasingly, athletes and organizations serving the competitive sport market are seeking recreation infrastructure that is built to be “competition-ready” in order to accommodate elevated training and sport tourism opportunities.

Private training facilities have sprung up in many communities, offering paid instructors that teach sport-specific skills. This had led to growing requests for time at municipal facilities from commercial renters representing broad geographic memberships.

In evaluating the needs of sport in the design of new and redevelopment of existing recreation facilities, municipalities must factor in existing and future demand, as well as opportunities for sport tourism. Sport tourism offers a number of economic benefits, supporting amenities such as hotels, restaurants, and parking, among other industries. “Tourna-cations” – families of athletes scheduling family vacations to coincide with athletic tournaments – is a recent trend and means that facilities must consider the needs of both participants and spectators (e.g., Wi-Fi, charging stations, higher-end concessions, family entertainment options, wayfinding kiosks, pet-friendly public spaces, etc.).

There are many ways for recreation facilities to support the needs of all users along the sport spectrum. This process can be informed by a comprehensive sport plan that identifies opportunities and priorities and further informs the facility design and partnership work that is critical in serving the sport tourism community.

## **3) Parks as Critical Outdoor Spaces**

Access to outdoor space matters as parks are increasingly being seen as critical social, health, and environmental infrastructure. Green spaces in urbanized areas often offer places of respite and improve air quality, provide venues for physical activity, and conserve natural

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<sup>25</sup> Monitoring the State of Canada's Core Public Infrastructure: The Canadian Infrastructure Report Card 2019. <http://canadianinfrastructure.ca/downloads/canadian-infrastructure-report-card-2019.pdf>

and cultural heritage landscapes. However, with many communities experiencing fast growth in population and density, most are finding it challenging to develop new parks to meet growing demand due to land scarcity and rising land values. Recent surveys have found that 87% of Canadians support more investment in parks, including more places to experience nature close to home<sup>26</sup>.

The increasing focus on the integration of “places” and “destinations” through urban design practices seeks to create comfortable, connected and sustainable streetscapes. Park development can increase the attractiveness and marketability of new development areas, while redevelopment of parkland can similarly act as a catalyst for revitalizing established neighbourhoods.

Parks were a lifeline during the pandemic and they are increasingly helping communities achieve their environmental goals by offering more naturalized spaces close to where people live, and contributing to climate resilience and urban biodiversity. Additionally, investments in urban parks can also result in positive economic impacts, although it is noted that construction costs of urban/hardscape parks are quite significantly greater than traditional neighbourhood parks. A recent study found that the development of a small urban park will result in direct annual benefits of \$133,000 per year (mostly through the avoided economic burden of physical inactivity) and over \$4 million per year when including the economic value of higher life satisfaction.<sup>27</sup>

As municipalities continue to grow inwards and upwards, it has become more challenging to assemble parkland in areas of intensification such as strategic growth areas due to land scarcity and land cost. The Town of Oakville Parks Plan 2031 offers direction in this regard, as does the town’s campus of parks initiative.

## **5) Supporting Active Transportation**

Active transportation offers many personal health and wellness benefits and is a core element of complete communities. During the pandemic, municipalities observed a surge in recreational trail use as residents participated close-to-home and sought connections with nature. Expanded use of these networks can be expected to continue – interest in bike lanes, off-road trails and cycling infrastructure are common requests in most communities. Active transportation is environmentally-friendly as it reduces road congestion and vehicle-related greenhouse gas emissions.

## **6) Growing Emphasis on Neighbourhoods and Local Opportunities**

Our changing urban structure and community composition has a significant influence on recreation needs and participation. For example, locally-accessible spaces and services will be needed to address increasingly busy lifestyles and growth areas, including new ways of delivering services in higher density areas.

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<sup>26</sup> Park People. <https://parkpeople.ca/blog/park-people-parks-platform-2023-toronto-parks-as-core-urban-infrastructure>

<sup>27</sup> Wilson J, Xiao X. The Economic Value of Health Benefits Associated with Urban Park Investment. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 2023; 20(6):4815. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20064815>

Furthermore, most populations have been somewhat or significantly more active at home and around their neighbourhood during the pandemic. Even before this time, there was a strong trend toward close-to-home recreation. This could continue to enhance interest in neighbourhood parks and other local and low-cost activities. Recently, the concept of a “15-minute city” has been gaining prominence, requiring that neighbourhoods be designed to allow people access to basic and essential services at distances that can be accessed by foot or bicycle within 15 minutes of their home.

## **7) Increasing Focus on Environmental Design and Climate Change**

The climate is warming and we are witnessing increased extreme weather events. As a result, there is an increasing need to reduce our impact on the environment to be more sustainable and resilient to climate change. The way in which we design and operate our parks, facilities, and services can help us meet our environmental objectives. Increasingly, municipalities are designing facilities to meet “net zero” and “carbon neutral” targets using technologies that enhance energy efficiency, reduce waste, and lower our greenhouse gas emissions. Although these enhancements often come with a higher initial capital cost, they must be balanced against improved sustainability, resiliency, and potentially longer-term operational savings.

Already thought of as “green infrastructure”, parks are being positioned to be more environmentally sustainable through reducing grass cutting and naturalization initiatives, planting of native species, tree canopy targets, and programs that educate about local natural heritage features (e.g., outdoor classrooms or interpretive signage). More communities are also experimenting by piloting new approaches in parks, such as bioswales, rain gardens, pollinator gardens, habitat restoration, and biodiversity initiatives. Green infrastructure strategies that include directions for parks are becoming more common and helping to ensure these practices become standard.

Fortunately, the many environmental benefits of parks and public spaces – such as reducing the urban heat island effect, mitigating flooding, and improving air quality – illustrate the critical importance of their role as public infrastructure and lend support for further investment. As noted by the Town Parks Alliance, “urban parks are not luxuries – they make cities more livable, environmentally resilient, attract business and jobs, increase economic competitiveness, and create new revenue streams – all while saving billions on traditional infrastructure costs.”<sup>28</sup>

The town has a Corporate Energy Management Program that seeks to reduce energy consumption and related greenhouse gas emissions from town owned and operated facilities. Oakville routinely examines opportunities to be more environmentally sustainable and resilient to climate change through facility and park designs and retrofit projects. Some examples include LEED certification, energy retrofits, geothermal heating and cooling, solar panels, changing over to electric equipment and fleet where possible, and partnership with groups such as OakvilleReady.

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<sup>28</sup> City Parks Alliance. *Infrastructure Principles: Parks are Infrastructure*. 2020. <https://cityparksalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/infrastructure-principles-1.pdf>

## **Facility-specific Demand and Design Trends**

The following trends look at many of the specific facility types that are considered in this master plan.

### **1) Multi-use Community Centres**

In this era of user convenience and cost recovery, most municipalities are centralizing multiple recreational and cultural facilities under one roof to offer a “one-stop-shop” experience. Most of Oakville’s community centres are multi-use, including the new Sixteen Mile Community Centre that – when completed – will offer a variety of indoor and outdoor parks, recreation, and library spaces at a single destination, providing something for people of all ages and abilities. Best practices in facility design consider safety, comfort, and opportunities for community gathering and socialization. This may include strategic placement of seating areas, proximity to washroom facilities, and open concept design features.

Increasingly, these facilities are being designed as “community hubs” that provide a central access point for a range of needed health and social services – along with cultural, recreational and greenspaces – to nourish community life. Partnerships with service providers can help municipalities leverage resources and reach new audiences. This may include partnering with public libraries, school boards, service clubs, or other emerging activities.

### **2) Aquatics (indoor and outdoor)**

Swimming is the most popular organized recreation activity and pools are used to deliver aquatic programs for a wide range of age groups, interests, and abilities. While municipal outdoor pools provide a similar range of recreation experiences in the summer, indoor pools deliver year-round aquatic programming in a controlled environment. With that said, indoor aquatic centres are among the most intensive and expensive recreation facilities to operate and their provision must be carefully evaluated.

The most common minimum design template for a publicly-operated indoor pool is a 25-metre rectangular tank with six swimming lanes. Trends in pool construction and retrofitting have seen an evolution in public pool design that offers more variety and that accommodates a growing diversity of users, thereby raising the bar in facility quality. Facility providers including the Town of Oakville are responding to user demands for modern amenities including, but not limited to, family or gender-neutral change rooms, warmer pool temperatures, spray features, updated viewing galleries, and universal design elements. Smaller secondary pool tanks are sometimes incorporated into facility design to support warm water therapy, training, and lessons for young children, older adults, or persons with disabilities. Indoor pools are frequently co-located with other recreation facilities such as gymnasiums, fitness space, and/or seniors recreation space in order to bolster overall usage, provide opportunities for cross-programming cross-subsidization among facility operating units, and create a holistic and convenient experience at a single destination.

Outdoor aquatic provision models have changed substantially over the past twenty years, partially due to the growing number of indoor pools and splash pads. Most municipalities have shifted to the provision of splash pads as an alternative to outdoor swimming pools and wading pools since splash pads have proven to be more cost effective to operate; they are also highly sought after by families with young children seeking affordable and accessible opportunities to cool down on a hot day. Splash pads tend to be located in community-level parks as they serve multiple neighbourhoods and are complementary to other on-site recreation facilities such as playgrounds, washrooms, and off-street parking.

### **3) Arenas**

Although Canada is internationally regarded for its ice sports, there are signs that the participation in these sports has plateaued or is even declining. Data from Hockey Canada indicates that participation in minor hockey in Ontario declined 16% between 2008/09 and 2019/20.

The declines in hockey participation over the past decade are largely due to declining birth rates and immigration trends since the country's growth is being driven by newcomers arriving from countries that do not have strong ice sport programs. Other influences may include the high cost of participation, concerns over safety, competing interests, aging populations, and competition from leagues/organizations that are not sanctioned by Hockey Canada. Declining participation has resulted in surplus arena capacity in many communities, particularly on weekends and during shoulder hours that fall just outside of prime time. Although participation rates are steady to declining, many communities have reported increased demand for ice time due to growing competitive programs and ice time requirements for skill development.

This nation-wide decline in participation is most prevalent amongst boys as participation in girls' hockey has been rising. In Ontario, girls' hockey represented one-fifth (21%) of all participants affiliated with Hockey Canada for the 2018/19 season. Interest in skating programs is also on the rise, including learn-to-skate programming as many families make up for lost time during the pandemic.

### **4) Gymnasiums**

Gymnasiums facilitate a variety of indoor sports and recreation opportunities that require a hard surface, a large open space, and high ceilings, such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, group fitness, and other active programs. While many other activities may take place in these facilities (e.g., special events), non-sport related rentals are sometimes discouraged to ensure that gymnasiums are used for high demand recreation uses and to protect floor finishes from damage.

Gymnasiums are designed with adaptability and flexibility to accommodate a wide range of activities. While there is no standard template, gymnasiums are typically influenced by community needs, although the minimum gymnasium size should be large enough to accommodate a school-sized basketball court with high ceilings. It is common for larger communities to provide gymnasiums large enough for multiple basketball courts, with dividing walls to facilitate simultaneous activities, and various painted lines that delineate several

indoor sports. Gymnasium amenities may also include storage, change rooms, seating areas, a stage, and/or kitchen.

The supply of municipal gyms is typically bolstered by school boards that provide after school access to their gyms through the Province's Community Use of Schools initiative. This approach has strong merits in principle as it reduces the need for municipalities to construct their own facilities and avoid tax-funded duplications in service, while maximizing geographic distribution. Unfortunately, public access to school gyms can be unaffordable to some groups since schools have a mandate to recover their costs. Furthermore, some school gyms are of an older and smaller design that may not be conducive to quality sport and recreation activities and schools also have discretion about the type of activities that can take place and can bump regular renters for school programs, disrupting the community programs (often on short notice). The Town of Oakville has a long history of working with Halton Region school boards to maximize public access to these facilities.

## **5) Fitness (indoor and outdoor)**

The growing emphasis on personal health and wellbeing is translating into increasing demand for private and public sector fitness services, including active living programming centred on general health and wellness, weight-training, cardiovascular training, and stretching activities.

The provision of fitness space varies by municipality due to the robust nature of private-sector fitness centres. The private sector can often expend greater resources to provide an enhanced level of service to their members. For municipalities (such as Oakville) that operate their own fitness centres, the rationale is usually to promote overall community health and to offer members a high quality fitness experience as an affordable alternative to the private sector.

Group fitness programming has become one of the fastest growing segments of the fitness sector, requiring additional spaces within many facilities to accommodate the various requirements. Indoor walking tracks are also more commonly being provided within municipal facilities (as they have with Oakville's newest community centres) as they offer a safe and controlled year-round environment for walking.

Oakville has integrated outdoor fitness equipment within its parks and trails system in response to growing demands for outdoor exercise. Popular throughout the United States and Europe, Canadian municipalities have begun introducing outdoor fitness equipment that allow people to participate in free outdoor activities and engage residents within the public realm.

## **6) Older Adult and Seniors Recreation Spaces**

Older adult and seniors recreation spaces are valuable community assets that are regarded as an important part of the health care and recreation sectors. However, only about 10% of Ontario's older adult population make use of their services. In general, older adult centres province-wide have been most successful in attracting older seniors from lower or middle income brackets, including a very high portion of single women. Because older adult centres are designed to appeal to such a wide age range, many members stay involved for a very

long time. Members of older adult centres tend to be very healthy and have strong activity patterns that help them remain physically well.<sup>29</sup>

Membership in the town's Seniors Centres is open to residents age 50+. According to the 2021 Census, this age group made up 37% of Oakville's population (accounting for 79,145 persons), which is a growth from 33% in 2011. This finding is consistent with trends in other communities and it is expected that this age group will be the fastest growing segment of the community over the next decade and beyond. This trend is driven by the aging baby boomer generation, who are generally wealthier and more physically active than previous generations. The town recognizes that seniors are a significant and growing part of the population in Oakville and provides a number of dedicated spaces, programs and services for this age group.

With the baby boomer generation being known for higher levels of physical activity than past generations, there is a shift away from traditional seniors' programs. Instead, many older adults are seeking activities that focus on active living, health and wellness, education, and other activities that centre upon cognitive stimulation and socialization, although a balanced program offering is necessary to ensure that there is something for all interests and abilities.

## **7) Soccer Fields**

Registration in Ontario Soccer's affiliated organizations have been declining for well over a decade. In 2018, Ontario Soccer reported approximately 287,000 players which is 25% below registrations from 10 years prior.<sup>30</sup> This decline is driven by factors such as demographic trends, growing competition from other sports and activities, and the emergence of elite soccer clubs and academies that are not affiliated with the provincial governing body. Despite this, soccer continues to be a popular sport due to its worldwide appeal, high fitness quotient, and relatively low cost to participate.

Since Ontario Soccer adopted its LTAD model, organizations have been evolving the delivery of their programs. With less emphasis on scoring and winning, LTAD focuses on improved coaching, fewer games, more ball time, and skill development throughout the year. Some of these new standards have a direct impact on the provision of fields, particularly with respect to standards for field sizes and the number of players per team, which has influenced the demand for field time.

## **8) Football Fields**

Participation in youth football is cyclical in nature, with many regional differences across the province. Greater concerns over head injuries have been a limiting growth factor, although some groups have introduced flag football (non-contact) with good success. Some organizations have difficulty securing field access due to the large field dimensions and potential for turf damage from older age groups. Artificial turf fields help to mitigate field damage by shifting use away from grass fields. Football groups tend to appreciate the quality

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<sup>29</sup> Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario. 2010. Building Bridges to Tomorrow: User Profile of Older Adults Centres in Ontario. p.4, p.68.

<sup>30</sup> Ontario Soccer Association. Annual General Meeting Reports.

of synthetic surfaces and value these fields' resilience to inclement weather that can occur in the spring and fall.

## **9) Ball Diamonds**

After being considered a sport in decline, baseball and its variations (including softball, fastball, etc.) have been experiencing a resurgence in recent years. Baseball Ontario reported over 15,000 competitive participants in 2019, which was a growth of 36% compared to 2009, though that figure excludes recreational/house leagues and non-affiliated ball groups (thus actual participation figures are greater).<sup>31</sup> The renewed interest is driven by several factors such as a greater focus on skill development, and grassroots programs to engage children and youth at a young age to participate in the sport. Suitable competition formats and facility types are core components of the Long-Term Player Development model, which has implications on ball diamond types and sizes that are required. Full size diamonds with lights are in the greatest demand in most municipalities; many diamonds built decades ago are too small to accommodate adult sports and may require expansion or netting.

## **10) Cricket Fields**

Cricket is experiencing strong growth in Canada due to immigration from cricket-playing countries (largely from South Asia and the Caribbean). Cricket Canada estimates that there are approximately 130,000 players and 820 clubs across the country, with the largest concentration of players residing in Southern Ontario. With Oakville's diverse population, the town can expect pressure for cricket facilities to increase; the town's first regulation cricket field is under construction at Sixteen Mile Sports Park.

Due to its fast growth and large land requirement, there is generally a shortage of cricket fields across the province. At the community level, many groups have adapted the sport to make it more accessible, such as short-format cricket (e.g., T20/T25 which can be played within a one to four hour period) and tape-ball cricket (which uses a wrapped tennis ball for added safety). A field overlay consisting of a wicket between two soccer fields is a common practice for municipalities that are looking to balance field demands. An overlay allows for one sport to be played at a time; cricket demand is highest on weekends, while soccer groups have historically concentrated their programming on weekdays.

## **11) Playgrounds**

Playgrounds can be found in nearly all park types. They provide amenities that benefit childhood development, foster cognitive development and social skills, and encourage physical activity. Playgrounds are typically provided within walking distance of major residential areas (5 to 10 minute walk), without having to cross major barriers such as arterial roads, highways, railways, and waterbodies. Traditional playground equipment generally consists of swings, slides, and an array of climbing structures designed to offer creative and unique play experiences. Accessible playgrounds and playground components are also becoming standard elements in locations such as community parks.

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<sup>31</sup> Baseball Ontario. Annual General Meeting Reports.

As an alternative to the traditional and creative playground model, natural and adventure playgrounds are becoming more popular around the world. Using the existing landscape and materials such as wood, logs, ropes, stones, and boulders, these playgrounds allow users to create more daring opportunities and are proven to stimulate greater sensory and imaginative play compared to traditional plastic structures. Natural/adventure playgrounds are designed in compliance with provincial standards but appear more precarious, which aligns to the concept of “risky play” to encourage imagination, risk-taking, decision-making and resiliency amongst children.

## **12) Tennis Courts**

Research suggests that tennis is experiencing a resurgence over the past several years. Tennis Canada reported that 6.5 million Canadians played tennis at least once in 2018 (45% of these are considered frequent players), translating to growth of more than 32% since 2012. The study also found that over 50% of Canadians have played tennis in their lifetime and 61% of Canada’s tennis players utilize outdoor courts.

The popularity of tennis can be attributed to a number of factors such as the growing segment of baby boomers that seek social, lower impact activities (tennis has the second fewest injuries after baseball), and its appeal to diverse populations (23% of Canadian tennis players were born outside of the country). There is also a focus on promoting the sport at the grassroots level. Tennis Canada reported that in 2018, over 2 million children and youth age 17 years and under played tennis in the past year.<sup>32</sup> Part of this growth can also be linked to the success of Canadian men and women currently competing on the professional tours.

Many municipal tennis courts were built in the 1970s and 1980s during a wave of popularity and are deteriorating. Some are being repurposed to other uses (e.g., pickleball courts, basketball courts, etc.), while others are being redeveloped to today’s standards. Furthermore, most tennis players want to play year-round. In 2019, Tennis Canada prepared a Municipal Tennis Facilities Strategy and Partnership Framework to advocate for more covered courts and to get more people playing tennis more often.

## **13) Pickleball Courts**

Pickleball is experiencing a popularity boom across North America. Older adults wishing to remain physically active and have fun are driving participation growth in pickleball to levels where it is now the fastest growing recreational sport in Canada. Pickleball is a lower intensity sport that can be played on a modified tennis court (pickleball courts are smaller in size with a slightly lower net height) and in gymnasiums. It is an accessible, affordable, and social sport, able to be played by newcomers and more seasoned players alike. Due to its primary demographic, daytime usage is more frequent than evening use.

As the sport of pickleball matures in Canada, participation is becoming broader and more diverse. This includes more competitive leagues (leading to the establishment of sport organizations and advocates for higher-quality facilities) and instructional programs for youth (it is beginning to be taught in schools). Additionally, exposure to the sport is growing and

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<sup>32</sup> Tennis Canada. 2019. Let’s Play Year-Round. Retrieved from <https://www.tenniscanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/02.-Executive-Summary.pdf>

there are now three North American professional tours and hopes of the sport qualifying for the Olympics as soon as 2032.<sup>33</sup>

A survey<sup>34</sup> completed in January 2022 by Pickleball Canada showed that 8% of Canadian households report at least one household member plays pickleball once per month. This suggests that there are now one million Canadians playing pickleball at least once a month, a near tripling of the number of pickleball players in Canada in two years.

As an emerging sport, Ontario municipalities are gradually adopting strategies to address needs, although most responses would appear to be ad hoc, testing demand along the way. For example, it has now become common for pickleball lines to be painted on outdoor public tennis courts, sometimes at the time of court resurfacing. This may be supported by designated times or court booking systems for the two sports to avoid conflict. In many cases, the two sports use the same net (although regulation pickleball net height is slightly lower); however, some communities have provided storage boxes to provide for the use of portable pickleball nets that can run cross-court, creating multiple pickleball courts on one tennis court. This approach of creating shared courts is often seen in communities where there is capacity for added use due to lower demand for tennis. Where demand is significantly lower, some courts are converted over permanently to pickleball. Compared to tennis, which is generally played with two or four players, a group of 16 pickleball players can occupy the same amount of court space.

The provision of purpose-built dedicated pickleball courts is also becoming more common, either through new construction or the permanent conversion of tennis courts. Multi-court complexes of 4, 8, 12, and 16 courts (accompanied by access to parking, washrooms, and shade) are becoming commonplace, often in partnership with local pickleball clubs.

Increasingly, municipalities have cited problems with pickleball courts being located too close to residential areas due to both the racquet noise and the social nature of the game. There have been successful court challenges in Ontario that have resulted in pickleball activity being eliminated from various locations. The British Columbia Parks and Recreation Association recently conducted an acoustics study to evaluate potential setbacks and noise attenuation measures for pickleball (e.g., earth berms, engineered barriers, etc.). Recommendations for residential setbacks ranged from 30 to 160 metres depending on the use of noise barriers and the nature of terrain between the courts and residences.

The private sector has generally been responsive to pickleball, recognizing that it is an emerging market and potential revenue stream. Many tennis clubs have begun offering pickleball and most are having difficulty keeping up with demand.

#### **14) Basketball Courts**

The popularity of basketball is on the rise due to its affordability and growing appeal, with courts becoming a standard element of park design. Compared to some other sports, basketball is easy to learn, safe, affordable, and can be played individually or in small groups.

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<sup>33</sup> <https://torontosun.com/sports/other-sports/pickleball-craze-has-canadians-of-all-ages-headed-for-court>

<sup>34</sup> <https://pickleballcanada.org/january-2022-survey-national-release/>

Outdoor basketball courts range from simple asphalt to high quality acrylic surfaces with lights for evening play. Some municipalities have had success with multi-use court templates that are designed to accommodate a variety of activities throughout the year (e.g., ball hockey, futsal, ice skating, etc.).

## 15) Skate Parks

All-wheels parks (skateboarding, scootering, biking), skateboard parks, and pump tracks are now a standard level of service in most municipalities. They respond to increasing interest in unstructured, low-cost activities and support physical activity. Participation in these sports has a broad appeal to both youth and young adults, as well as an emerging market for young families. For many youth, action sports are an outlet for self-expression and an opportunity to find a sense of belonging that they cannot get elsewhere. By their very nature, action sports build independence and resilience.

Skateboard parks take many forms and formats depending upon their intended type of use, skill level, and fit within a park and its surrounding land uses. Many parks are designed to accommodate not only skateboards, but a growing number of two-wheel scooters, in-line skaters, BMX users, etc. Scooters are now the predominant type of equipment seen at many skate parks.

### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Oakville is changing and recreational needs are expanding as different interests and new trends emerge. Pickleball and outdoor activities are just some of the options that residents are looking for within the town's parks, recreation, and library system. Flexible and inclusive spaces are needed to address current priorities and those to come. Monitoring of trends in sports and activities allows the town to look toward a balanced range of amenities when and where they are needed. Flexibility in park and facility design also helps the town respond to these changing participation patterns.

## 5.2 Key Public Library Issues and Trends

The following is a discussion of broader trends seen in public libraries in North America. Many elements of these trends are reflected in the current strategic plan for Oakville Public Library. Although not intended to be an exhaustive list, relevant OPL initiatives and successes have been incorporated into the narrative where possible. It is also acknowledged that public libraries today are experiencing incredible transitions, and that the trends described in this report may evolve and be revised as libraries continue to adapt to their environment and to the needs of their communities.

## **Flexibility and innovation will be key to service delivery and space allocation**

### **Libraries as Third Places**

In *The Great Good Place*, sociologist Ray Oldenburg suggests that people need three places in their lives, with home as the “first place”, work/school as the “second place”, and an undefined “third place” that represents public life and community. Oldenburg writes: “The third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public spaces that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.”<sup>35</sup>

Fundamentally, third places are community spaces that are free or inexpensive, accessible, welcoming, and comfortable. People choose to visit and spend time in third places – they are not required to be there and can come and go as they please. Third places are warm and welcoming, and foster belonging and community pride. And third places are levelling spaces, where everyone is accepted, valued, and encouraged to participate, regardless of their background, identity, or socio-economic status.

Libraries play an important role as third places in communities. Regardless of one’s age, cultural background, income level, gender identity, etc., libraries offer safe, accessible, and welcoming spaces for all. Public library spaces and services support civic engagement, social inclusion and equity, a culture of learning and multiple literacies, and economic vitality in our communities.

### **Connecting Libraries to the Outdoors**

The pandemic brought outdoor spaces to the forefront, although even before this time outdoor spaces on library grounds were trending in popularity. Outdoor spaces create a connection between a library and the neighbourhood that it services. Incorporating outdoor library spaces increases usable space while reducing the intensity from the number of customers using library services indoors while connecting library users with the benefits associated with being outside and/or natural surroundings.

Libraries use these outdoor spaces in different ways depending on what the site offers. Commonly seen in outdoor library spaces are community gardens, which can provide cultural opportunities for all ages, food security, and learning opportunities with hands on experience. To engage all library users, outdoor spaces can be segregated into multiple sections by using natural barriers such as trees or shrubs. Creating an exploratory area or incorporating interactive features such as outdoor musical instruments will attract youth to these areas. By incorporating seating and tables, teens and adults have a space to study, read, or socialize. Additionally, a small outdoor auditorium or similar feature will provide a space for groups to gather or programming space for the library. The outdoor patio at the Glen Abbey branch is an example of the potential for the utilization of outdoor space to extend the library’s footprint and enhance its connection to the community and its neighbourhood.

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<sup>35</sup> Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. Philadelphia: Dacapo Press, 1989.

Building new library branches to meet the needs of growing communities is often subject to limitations of space, time, and money. OPL and other library systems have looked to prefabricated buildings in response, offering simple structures that can be built within a factory so that disruption with construction is minimized. Oakville's Sixteen Mile Branch is a 5,000 square foot prefabricated structure that was first opened as a pop-up to maintain library services during the construction of a new permanent building and can be disassembled and moved to another location once the permanent branch is complete.

At a smaller scale that does not involve bricks and mortar construction are book vending machines and holds lockers that can be integrated into community centres, transit stations, condominiums, and other locations that give people convenient access to library materials. Oakville Public Library also has several 'Express' locations in community centres and arenas that allow library users to pick up their holds, return items and browse popular collections. Kingston Frontenac Public Library and Middlesex County Library and both provide a "Novel Branch" (kiosk) that are placed in municipal buildings such as Town Halls, community centres and high schools; Library users scan their library card and enter a PIN to open the kiosk, and then browse and borrow materials; the kiosk tracks and records what is removed using RFID. Oakville Public Library's current strategic plan addresses this approach in its pillar entitled, "Expanding Our Reach."

## **Libraries will balance the need for inclusion with challenges to Intellectual Freedom and providing a safe welcoming space for all**

### **Intellectual Freedom**

Intellectual Freedom has always been a cornerstone of public libraries. Indeed, The Canadian Federation of Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom "" affirms that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy."<sup>36</sup>

In staying true to their core values, public libraries will be tested from time to time on their commitment to free speech. In the past, this has taken the form of challenged books. While efforts are happening in Canada regarding tracking the number of banned books across the country, 2022 data from the American Library Association indicates that there were 1,269 challenges to library books and resources, the highest number since the association began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago.<sup>37</sup>

Public Libraries in Canada such as the Ottawa Public Library have drafted updated statements on Intellectual Freedom to clearly state that libraries will facilitate access to information and resources so long as it is considered legal by Canadian courts.<sup>38</sup> More recently public libraries have also been challenged for hosting controversial speakers at programs whether it be an opponent of LGTBQ rights or a Drag Queen Storytime. It has

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<sup>36</sup> Canadian Federation of Library Associations. [Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/statement-on-intellectual-freedom-and-libraries/). Reviewed April 12, 2019. (Accessed on June 19, 2023)

<sup>37</sup> Laucius, Joanne. By the book: Ottawa Public Library takes a stand on intellectual rights, book bans and cancel culture. [The Ottawa Citizen](https://o.canada.com/news/local-news/by-the-book-ottawa-public-library-takes-a-stand-on-intellectual-rights-book-bans-and-cancel-culture). June 12, 2023. (Accessed: June 15, 2023).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Laucius, 202

highlighted that the tenets of democracy and of the values of the profession of librarianship are being called into question more frequently than ever before.

## **Safe Places for All**

While debate is acceptable and healthy in a democracy, libraries and librarians are now on the front lines of the culture wars that are playing out around the world. Public libraries must prepare and educate their staff, their library boards, and their municipal councils to be at the ready when a challenge to a library program, book or service occurs. They must also be at the ready to be advocates for free speech, intellectual freedom and the role of librarians and public libraries in a democratic society. Public libraries must identify opportunities to proactively engage their community through programming, town halls with staff and through presentations to council and other funders. For example, Oakville Public Library hosted a conversation in 2022 hosted by the library's Board Chair with special guest James Turk to discuss Intellectual Freedom. More recently, the library CEOs of Halton Region issued a public statement in June 2023, which is also Pride Month, to affirm their commitment to LGBTQ Communities and to providing a safe and welcoming space for all.

In the new normal brought about by the pandemic, Library leadership and staff are balancing the needs of marginalized communities with the need to provide a safe working environment for their teams as well as a safe space for everyone else using the library. It has become apparent that all public libraries but especially those in urban areas are finding themselves problem solving for customers who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health challenges, and poverty. Public libraries in the United States and Canada have addressed these new service demands by employing social workers and youth workers. The strain on both the operating budgets of Libraries and the workload of front-line library workers has been identified more recently by library leaders, library staff, and unions. These strains and challenges have also been widely reported in the media. Libraries have always been good partners and there are instances when public library systems should take the role of 'coordinator of services' as opposed to directly delivering services. This relates specifically to vulnerable populations such as refugees, the disabled, the unemployed and the unhoused<sup>39</sup>. Library space can be used to facilitate the physical coordination and collaboration with other social service agencies that directly serve at risk and marginalized populations.

## **Food Security**

Food security means that all people, always, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.<sup>40</sup> Food justice is a similar principal to food security, however, is a social movement oriented to provide access to healthy, nutritious, and affordable food particularly where there may be "food deserts." Progressive library systems across North America are promoting food justice primarily through distribution of food through branches; food literacy and food education/nutrition programs; culinary instruction; and supporting community-based organizations with a mandate towards food justice through promotion and/or partnerships. Oakville Public Library began offering community fridges and lockers in 2019 at Central Library in partnership with Food for Life. Another element to be considered in

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<sup>39</sup> Vinjamuri, David & Huberty, Joseph. 2021. *Designing for the Future - The Post-Pandemic Library*. Ditto Press.

<sup>40</sup> Report of the World Food Summit, 1996.

the future may be extending this initiative to outdoor spaces by creating community gardens attached to stand alone Oakville library locations and in partnership with municipal community centres.<sup>41</sup>

## **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

Oakville Public Library has a solid foundation for reflecting the principles of equity, inclusion, and diversity in its operations. The challenge will be to strive to create meaningful changes in the future to sustain the library's initial efforts to serve Oakville's growing diverse community. Internally, this also has implications for all types of staff engagement from the recruitment process, the hiring process, training, and professional development. The impacts on institutions, staff members and citizens during the last three pandemic-stricken years has highlighted the importance of the community's and staff's role in crafting future tactics to strengthen the lenses of equity, inclusion, and diversity. OPL acknowledges this commitment in its strategic plan under the pillar, "Enriching lives and building healthy communities."

The Canadian Center for Diversity and Inclusion provides a plethora of toolkits and resources to aid the library in its work to ensure barriers to inclusion are mitigated. The information and examples are invaluable support in the pursuit of devising an overall Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy for the library so that each initiative either completed or in progress is articulated, measured, and added to the story of the library's work in the pursuit of a more inclusive workplace.

## **Truth and Reconciliation**

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) assembled a committee to review the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and identify specific ways libraries could address each Action. The CFLA's Committee recommended to: "Encourage libraries, archives and cultural memory institutions to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action, several of which have been identified as having a direct impact on libraries and archives and are prioritized in this report, and to implement a status report on a yearly basis to monitor their implementation."<sup>42</sup> The body of the document outlines several ways that public library space can be utilized for culturally appropriate programming, for multilingual collections, to house expanded resources on the history of residential schools within the local history collections and finally, to create safe spaces for local members of the Indigenous community.<sup>43</sup>

Oakville Public Library is committed to action regarding the principles of Truth and Reconciliation through its current strategic plan. It also consistently employs Land Acknowledgements, provides local indigenous resources through the library's website and participates in local initiatives. There is opportunity to expand programs and service offerings for all public libraries in Canada based on the recommendations provided by the CFLA's Committee Report.

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<sup>41</sup> Urban Libraries Council. The Role of Libraries in Food Justice. ULC Webinar. [Urbanlibraries.org](http://urbanlibraries.org) (Accessed: June 14, 2023).

<sup>42</sup> Canadian Federation of Library Associations. Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations. [http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/indigenous/trc\\_report/](http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/indigenous/trc_report/). (Accessed: June 19, 2023).

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. CFLA, 2018

## **Technology will bridge the digital divide for the underserved and will be essential in the retention of current and future users**

### **Role of Technology and Digital Inclusion**

Technology has been integrated into library operations for at least two decades; however, the role of technology in libraries and society overall has significantly changed from its earliest inception. Technology is no longer just a tool but now an integral part of productivity, communication, learning, and belonging in society today. Indeed, the overarching goals for technology in libraries encompass providing access to connectivity, new and emerging technologies; and skills and training so people can fully participate in society and the economy.<sup>44</sup>

Libraries are also viewing technology through the lens of equity. In addition, libraries have recognized the huge role they play in advancing not only digital literacy but also digital inclusion. Without equity of access to technology, society risks a widening digital divide placing the library in an essential role as the bridge.<sup>45</sup>

The future will include focusing on what aspects of technology integration leverage the library's mission through service delivery while navigating the tension between access and risks associated with security and privacy. The ability of the library to demonstrate the impact that its technology initiatives have on improving the lives of its citizens will also be key to its success.

Access to the library's programs and services are reflective of the way individuals access a multitude of commercial and government services every day. The services that are integral to the library's mission, including programs and borrowing items/resources, directly contribute to improved digital literacy and digital inclusion.

### **Makerspaces and Experiential Activities**

Modern libraries are not only focused on literacy programs, but also support experiential activities that provide library users with opportunities to embrace their creativity through traditional means and modern technologies. A leading trend in the library sector is the emergence of makerspaces, which are shared, community spaces that foster creativity and innovation, support collaboration and interaction amongst peer and like-minded individuals, and facilitates skill development and life-long learning. They provide access to low- and high-tech tools and equipment for free, teach people how to use tools, and introduce them to new techniques and skills through workshops, training, and educational programming. Newer features such as these will be more important than ever before because it will act as a means of reducing barriers for those who do not have access to these skills or equipment.

Another distinction that has emerged in recent years is the sophistication of current and emerging technologies. At one time, libraries were focused on helping users to navigate through word processing programs or showing users how to set up an email account or a

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<sup>44</sup> Nordicity. 2018. [Technology Access in Public Libraries: Outcomes and Impacts for Ontario Communities](#). Prepared for Toronto Public Library.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Nordicity, 2018

social media account. Today's technology is more complex and blending seamlessly with learning strategies, communication formats and employment expectations. Libraries have adapted and must continue adapting. The Maker movement is a great example of creating environments within library spaces that are more advanced, innovative and beyond the traditional offerings of public libraries. More than 10 years on since the first Makerspace was introduced in libraries, it is evident that each library has created these spaces to reflect their own community's needs as well as tailor them to available budgets and staffing. Oakville Public Library's Creation Zones at Glen Abbey and Iroquois Ridge are relevant examples.

## Rising Expectations

Now more than ever, libraries must work hard to plan services that integrate more advanced skill building for its community as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and other emerging technologies become mainstream<sup>46</sup>. The challenge is and will continue to be the library's ability to build capacity, skills and knowledge on the staffing front while having a robust technology budget to update and acquire hardware and equipment to keep pace with future technology needs.

Users will expect technology to be seamless with access via one platform, 24/7. People have returned to their local libraries post-pandemic but still want robust, responsive virtual services as well.<sup>47</sup> The tension between the virtual and physical space requires a balance to be achieved according to the resources and community needs of each local library.

The concept of customer service has evolved from more transactional functions to the employment of more retail like tactics in public libraries. However, the concept of customer service now includes the 'experience.' As one scholar has described it, "Nowadays the last best experience that the customer has anywhere becomes the minimum expectation for the experience he wants everywhere."<sup>48</sup> This creates an added dimension to the development of future customer service strategies in public libraries as a library user's desires, behaviors and beliefs are now at the centre. The intended result is more engagement with library users, to amplify their emotional connection to the library.

Specific demographic may also reveal gaps or unfulfilled expectations of service delivery amongst certain groups. They are referred to as the 'impatient user'. This is a group who expects immediate answers with no patience for rules or formality. As a result, they will turn to other sources of information that may not be of the same quality that the library would provide but can be considered 'good enough.' The IFLA Trends Report identified generations that have grown up with the Internet and online sources as the group with these expectations.<sup>49</sup> There are technological tools that can address some of these challenges, such as, AI or BOTS that can provide 24/7 chat service. Perhaps, these tools can be seen as tactics that allow technology to take on duties previously done by staff, freeing up resources to be directed to aspects of the customer experience that require more in-depth attention.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Urban Libraries Council, 2020

<sup>47</sup> IFLA. 2021. *IFLA Trend Report 2021 Update: Insights from the IFLA Trend Report*. pp.15-16

<sup>48</sup> Mocanu, R. 2020. *The Expanding Role of Customer Knowledge Management and Brand Experiences during the Pandemic Crisis*. Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy,6(4)

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. IFLA, 2021. p.11, p.15

While communications efforts are substantive, the library's broad reach to many market segments/audiences is a challenge given the wide range of age groups, interests, and ways that residents receive information. Today's society is one where there is an abundance of information competing for an individual's attention and are driven by sophisticated and big business marketing budgets; it is easy for the library's message to get lost.

## **Libraries as Co-working Space**

The IFLA Trends Report highlights some newer customer profiles that public libraries are seeing more frequently. For example, the prevalence of remote working or self-employment has created a larger mobile workforce.<sup>50</sup> This means that individuals may choose to visit the library for the comfort, quiet, and free Wi-Fi to work instead of an office, a coffee shop or their home. The concept of 'residency' becomes less important, as the library becomes a coworking space. This means part of the 'experience' is dependable wireless, good quality, clean furniture, and pleasant comfortable surroundings.

## **Library materials will need to perform equally strong both in print and non-print**

### **Digital Collections and Streaming**

Use of digital collections increased considerably during the pandemic, and it is likely that strong demand for non-physical resources will continue. Increases in non-physical materials also speaks to the impacts of 'Streaming'. According to a poll conducted by Angus Reid, "more than four-in-five Canadians (85%) say they subscribe to at least one streaming service. A majority (65%) of Canadians subscribe to more than one."<sup>51</sup> Quite apart from e-book circulation, streaming is a newer offering that presents many challenges to public library collection development strategies –not the least of which is estimating use and cost. According to Wyatt, in the United States, budget allocations for streaming services increased to 6% in 2021 from 3% in 2020. Different forms of 'caps' were placed on patron's ability to stream content from library's collections to contain costs. <sup>52</sup>This has a huge impact on spending for libraries.

Libraries have always strived to meet user expectations by ordering a title in numerous formats, but in the last eight years, the acquisition of e-book titles has created added pressure on library material budgets due to the circulation limits per e-book that each publisher imposes on the library. According to a Library Journal survey, public libraries increased spending in 2020 and 2021 for streaming services, e-books, and downloadable audiobooks. Conversely, spending was decreased for CD's, physical audiobooks, and DVD/Blu-Ray formats.<sup>53</sup> At the very least, Libraries will need to maintain their current level of funding for materials just to hold their ground. The preferred option would be to secure operating budgets that consider the trends in the pricing models of digital resources, inflation, and the value of the Canadian dollar. This would ensure that both print needs and e-resource

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. IFLA, 2021, p.11, p.14

<sup>51</sup> Angus Reid Institute. Streamed Out: Cost of living crunch prompts one-in-three to cancel streaming subscriptions in last six months. <https://angusreid.org/netflix-streaming-canada-cord-cutting-tv-landlines/>. Accessed: June 19, 2023.

<sup>52</sup> Wyatt, Neall (2022) Collection Rebalanced: 2022 Materials Survey. Library Journal, July 11, 2022.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. Wyatt, 2022

needs are met while preventing the library's titles per capita from falling to lower than the present rate.

All library systems are balancing the cost implications of offering digital resources alongside print. Supporting multiple formats and acquiring the sheer volume of resources is becoming logistically challenging and cost prohibitive. Library Journal's survey in 2022 indicated that Librarians had witnessed a pronounced presence of the 'hybrid user.'<sup>54</sup> In Canada, BookNet estimated that, on average, library users borrow 5.5 items monthly which typically consists of 68% print material, 25% e-books and 7% audiobooks. While most library customers demonstrate a mixed preference for both print and nonprint materials, they also identified new users who began accessing library materials during the pandemic who preferred e-books exclusively.<sup>55</sup> The current pricing models for licensing e-books means that libraries are challenged to respond to the needs of this emerging user group. The limitations placed on Library's acquiring both e-books and e-audiobooks also makes it difficult to serve library users who rely on e-materials because of accessibility issues or who are homebound. These items are cost prohibitive or simply are not made available to public libraries by publishers.<sup>56</sup>

### **Locally Acquired Collections**

To ensure a sustainable collection acquisitions strategy for the future, more thought will be needed around assembling networks of resources that represent a mix of local, external, and collaborative resources. In so doing, collection development may take on less of a focus on locally acquired collections.<sup>57</sup> This is already happening with consortium purchasing for e-resources between libraries in Ontario and elsewhere. However, more emphasis on open access, resource sharing networks and even the facilitation of self publishing platforms will all need to be explored to enhance and augment the locally acquired collections as access to resources begins to overtake ownership of resources.<sup>58</sup>

The library collection of the future will see locally acquired collections targeted to the specific needs of the community it serves. This presents a significant opportunity for public libraries to leverage special collections like local history and archives to share externally through digitization of items. The role of preserving and sharing the community's memory collections will begin to move to the fore front and though public libraries will continue to provide access to popular collections, it will be as a facilitator of access and less about ownership and access. The boundaries between discovery and delivery will be more fluid as libraries help users access resources even if they may not be locally acquired.<sup>59</sup>

A collective comprised of the Hamilton, Mississauga, Burlington, Kingston Frontenac, London, and Ottawa Public Libraries have partnered to share their digital catalogues and give their users to place holds and borrow from each other's libraries. Working together allows these libraries to enable a wider range of access to titles and collections for their respective

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Wyatt, 2022

<sup>55</sup> BookNet Canada. 2022. On Loan: Library Use in Canada 2021.

<sup>56</sup> Oakville Public Library Board Report. The Digital Content Landscape. April 2023

<sup>57</sup> Dempsey, Lorcan. 2021. Pandemic Effects on Collections. OCLC Research.

<sup>58</sup> Gregory, Vicki, L. 2019. Collection Development and Management for 21st Century Library Collections.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. Dempsey, 2021

residents. Oakville Public Library has reciprocal borrowing with the public libraries in Halton Region (Burlington, Milton, and Halton Hills).

## **The potential to reimagine library space has never been greater than today**

### **Demand for Physical Space**

The footprint for the library's physical space will need to align with the space needs for the library collection but also for the needs of programming, partnerships, collaborative study, coordination of non library services for the at risk, and storage. The size of the library's collections in the future will have an impact on the library's overall physical footprint as the library strives to activate its spaces more effectively. According to BookNet, in 2021, 73% of book borrowers visited the library in person as compared to 59% in 2020. Interestingly, 97% of e-book borrowers visited the library, which is more frequent than book borrowers.<sup>60</sup> This data would suggest that preference for e-books does not mean that borrowers use the library's physical space less but perhaps use the space for different purposes.

New preference and usage patterns also have an impact on collection maintenance. The importance of attractive, high interest collections will be critical. Other considerations, such as ensuring the collection is inclusive and representative of diverse creators will also be important. As allocation of space for multiple purposes becomes more urgent, continued attention will need to be paid to outdated nonfiction, and less popular formats such as CDs, DVDs and physical audio books. They will continue to represent a smaller portion of the physical collection. The public libraries' ability to define their 'core collection' and where and how it will be accessed is more important than ever. These deliberations are leading to a reduced collections footprint in new and reconfigured libraries. Reduced collections and stacks favour open building designs with room for more seating, meeting, and study areas. For example, Calgary Public Library reduced the size of its collection by 13% in 2015 to accommodate more study space, collaborative functions, and programming. Items are still available for access; however, they are stored offsite.<sup>61</sup> Physical collections will continue to coexist with emerging digital formats for the foreseeable future and illustrates the necessity of maintaining a diverse collection to meet the needs of the entire community.

### **The Library of Things**

The Oakville Public Library already has a robust 'Library of Things' collection which makes available items such as loanable kits for storytimes, sports and connectivity. Conservation and Park passes are also on offer for loan as well and during the warmer weather, life jackets. The concept of 'The Library of Things' promotes the circular and sharing economy which has many benefits for the environment. However, there can be space implications for these items as they are often larger than a book and may require electronic outlets for charging among other considerations.

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<sup>60</sup> BookNet Canada. 2022. [On Loan: Library Use in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>61</sup> Hune-Brown, Nicholas. Have you been to the Library lately? [The Walrus](#). June 12, 2023.

## Lending Laptops

There are similar considerations for the introduction of lending laptops with an added nuance for laptops that are only loaned for in library use. Prior to the pandemic, use of the public computers in libraries were beginning to decrease. The availability of Wi-Fi and the increased ownership of mobile devices saw libraries gradually reducing the number of workstations in their facilities. The use of public computers post-pandemic has still not increased significantly which has led some libraries to further reduce the number of workstations available and to repurpose these spaces with stations to charge devices through USB ports and electrical outlets.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, this is just one example of the ways that libraries can choose to reimagine space previously allocated for public computer stations.

## Leveraging Library Space for Impact

The International Federation of Library Association's (IFLA) awarded the Missoula Public Library in Montana the Library of the Year Award in 2022 for its efforts to design a library that, among many features, was able to seamlessly integrate four community partners under its roof. The Jury lauded the library for its ability to play a "multifunctional role as a library and knowledge, learning and community centre." This example embodies the essence of the future of public libraries.

Public libraries are recognized as a community destination and an attractive public space with an enjoyable atmosphere. Many libraries are embracing their role as a community hub and are focusing efforts to becoming civic integrators, particularly through partnerships and a focus on directly providing information or acting as a referral point for other civic services. The evolution of libraries as gateways and hubs of civic activity have resulted in non-traditional library spaces for creation, collaboration, socialization, and programming.

### **Considerations for the Master Plan:**

By offering safe welcoming spaces for all, public library facilities, materials, and services remain in high demand amid shifting behaviours in how residents prefer to access and consume information. Demand for both print and non-print collections are strong and many residents also look to the library for access to technology and a growing array of services. Flexibility and innovation will be key to service delivery and the potential to reimagine library space has never been greater.

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<sup>62</sup> Davidson, Nikki. Are Public Computers in Libraries Becoming Obsolete? [Government Technology](#). June 5, 2023.

## 5.3 Pandemic Impacts and Possible Future Implications

### **Social Infrastructure is Vital to our Mental and Physical Health**

The pandemic impacted personal levels of stress and anxiety and caused challenges associated with work/life balance for many. Parks, recreation, and library services play a critical role in the mental and physical health recovery of citizens – particularly those living in urban environments – and play an equally important role in community economic revival.

The large majority (82%) of Canadians said that parks and outdoor spaces have become more important to their mental health during COVID-19 and 70% indicated that their appreciation for parks and green spaces had increased during the pandemic<sup>63</sup>. Access to public spaces and programs is a fundamental service for Canadians and we are living in a time where we need more public space, not less. Oakville residents have consistently identified parkland acquisition as a high priority for maintaining quality of life.

### **Parks Continue to be Appreciated and Well Used**

Communities witnessed increased park use and demand for unstructured outdoor recreation activities within parks and trails during the COVID-19 pandemic as people found or rediscovered new ways to remain active and connected. Parks were increasingly used as “outdoor living rooms” across all four seasons, strengthening connections with nature and introducing many people to new activities within their neighbourhood.

As a result of this renewed interest, residents expect more from their parks in terms of amenities and quality. Many communities are reimagining existing spaces in creative ways, such as car-free streets (or temporary street closures), outdoor workout areas, and open space enhancements that allow for creative programming and community interaction (e.g., Wi-Fi in parks, increased seating options, creation of new activity zones, etc.). Public demand is especially strong for year-round washrooms in parks and natural areas. Although meeting these needs will be a challenge due to rapidly rising costs and supply chain issues, a recent report suggests that there is substantial support for public investment – 87% of town residents support more public funding for parks.<sup>64</sup> Further, there continues to be great potential to animate unused or non-traditional outdoor spaces for community activities and nature-based programming.

### **Virtual Programming has Emerged as an Option**

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted municipal programming as a result of facility closures and capacity restrictions. During this time, close-to-home recreation and at-home fitness became common, with one-third (33%) of Canadian gym-goers streaming exercise videos at home<sup>65</sup>. While virtual programming will provide municipalities with an additional tool

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<sup>63</sup> Park People. COVID-19 and Parks Survey. July 2020. <https://parkpeople.ca/2020/07/16/covid-19-and-parks-highlights-from-our-national-surveys>

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> IHRSA. The COVID Era Fitness Consumer. IHRSA, Oct. 2020, <https://www.ihrsa.org/publications/the-covid-era-fitness-consumer>.

by which to deliver their services in the future, it is less accessible for many vulnerable populations and does not offer nearly the same revenue potential as traditional models.

The pandemic also accelerated online services and technology. In addition, many communities in the United States are now offering Esports programming as it becomes more of a mainstream activity that engages and connects with older youth. The global Esports audience has grown exponentially and is projected to increase from 474 million in 2021 to 577 million in 2024.<sup>66</sup> Research shows a strong correlation between gaming and weekly physical activity, suggesting that participation in both Esports and actual sports is not mutually exclusive.<sup>67</sup>

### **Many are Returning to Play, but Affordability is a Rising Concern**

Sport participation was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to public health restrictions and facility closures. A report from 2022 found that nearly one-half (45%) of parents indicated that their child was no longer playing sports.<sup>68</sup>

Parents are noticing adverse effects of this on their children, highlighting the connection between sport and mental health. 74% of Canadian parents indicated that their children feel isolated and lonely, 69% indicated that their children are showing signs of decreased physical fitness and 64% said their children are finding it difficult to reduce their stress and anxiety.<sup>69</sup>

Sport organizations were significantly impacted by the pandemic, with a 2021 report finding that one-third (33%) of organizations were bankrupt or were nearing having to file for bankruptcy and 30% of organizations had temporarily or permanently closed during the pandemic.<sup>70</sup> In 2022, another report found that 75% of sport organizations indicated that the costs of running sport programs had increased and 94% were concerned that youth will be particularly impacted.<sup>71</sup>

Fortunately, more recent surveying finds that sport organizations are predicting a shorter path to “normalcy” than initially feared. With public health restrictions now lifted, programming is beginning to rebound to pre-pandemic levels for many activities such as certain youth sports leagues, childcare and camps, adult fitness classes, and holiday events/festivals.

However, affordability has now emerged as the latest threat to participation. A 2023 study found that 44% of Canadian parents indicate that they cannot afford to register their children for organized sports. Furthermore, most (62%) sports organizations say the current economic situation has led to reduced sign-up rates for their programming.<sup>72</sup> Municipalities must continue to focus on community programs that address inequities, promote healthy participation, and encourage lifelong play.

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<sup>66</sup> Newzoo. Global Esports & Live Streaming Market Report. 2021.

<sup>67</sup> Bhatt, Neelay. Shaping the future with next practices for programs, places and paying for it all. Parks & Recreation. January 2022.

<sup>68</sup> Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. Jumpstart State of Sport Report. 2022.

<sup>69</sup> Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. Jumpstart State of Sport Report. 2021.

<sup>70</sup> [https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0122/8124/9892/files/Jumpstart\\_State\\_of\\_Sport\\_Report\\_March\\_2021.pdf?v=1616793836](https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0122/8124/9892/files/Jumpstart_State_of_Sport_Report_March_2021.pdf?v=1616793836)

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. Jumpstart State of Sport Report. 2022.

<sup>72</sup> Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. Jumpstart State of Sport Report. 2023.

## **Evolving Financial and Staffing Challenges**

Parks and recreation department budgets were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as facilities were closed and revenue streams dried up. Now, as operations resume and ramp up to pre-pandemic levels or beyond, most municipalities are experiencing escalating cost factors and staffing shortages that are leading to rapidly rising capital and operating budget needs, along with delays in much-needed capital projects. In December 2022, there were nearly 300,000 jobs in Ontario going unfilled across all sectors.<sup>73</sup> As time goes on, this may lead to greater reliance on self-serve tools.

The effects of the current economic situation will be felt for some time and are likely to cause most communities to more actively seek out alternative funding sources. Some options include grants, naming rights, and innovative partnerships. The recreation sector has a history of “doing more with less” and finding creative ways to ensure that residents are able to participate and engage fully in these essential services.

Furthermore, at the onset of the pandemic, many parks and recreation departments experienced a decline in their number of employees, particularly part-time staff and seasonal workers. Due to the low availability of qualified workers and rising operating and staffing costs, there is concern that non-profit agencies may stop offering affordable programming (e.g., before- and after-school programs, summer camps, etc.). For example, several YMCAs in Ontario have permanently closed due to significant membership losses during the pandemic, leaving a void in many communities.

## **Public Library Usage and Services are Evolving**

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that libraries could no longer rely heavily on their physical spaces to deliver technology<sup>74</sup>. Using online platforms, digital content was also created by library staff as an on-demand option for library users. Now that libraries have reopened, public libraries will need to assess their experiences with virtual programming to identify any best practices that have emerged that can be applied to current program planning. The format, live versus virtual, will now need to be given a heightened level of consideration along with the content and age category. Online programming may be appropriate in some circumstances but may not be efficient or effective in other situations.

Further, the ability to loan tablets, laptops, and hot spots for Wi-Fi access at home became an important way for libraries to continue to provide access to technology. While this was happening pre-pandemic, the added value of this service during the pandemic could not be denied. Clearly, for those who did not have the means to own hardware or to pay for internet access at home, this was crucial to their ability to continue to learn, work and communicate through the pandemic. In fact, according to the Urban Libraries Council, “In Canada, 66% of households with incomes less than \$32,000 don’t have broad band access or computers.”<sup>75</sup>

Research also confirms that the pandemic altered the evolution of library resource preferences by library customers. In 2020, e-book loans increased by 38% due to lock downs

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<sup>73</sup> <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1002844/province-building-ontario-by-doubling-economic-immigration>

<sup>74</sup> Urban Libraries Council. 2020. Leadership Brief: Digital Equity in the Age of Covid-19.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. Urban Libraries Council, 2020

and closures of public libraries, while Overdrive also saw a 33% increase in e-book circulation.<sup>76</sup> Although circulation of physical materials remains strong, continued growth in e-resources is anticipated.

Lastly, the pandemic has exacerbated many social divides and challenged our ability to address the needs of vulnerable residents. Increasingly, public libraries are playing a role in facilitating services to close these gaps.

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

The pandemic will have a lasting impact on parks, recreation, and library facilities and services, which are increasingly being viewed as essential not only to physical health, but also mental wellbeing. For example, unstructured park use has increased, helping people stay active and connected. Many recreation activities have grown or emerged through the pandemic as people have found new interests and are trying to catch up for lost time (although rising costs are becoming a new concern for many). Libraries are seeing increased demand for e-resources, co-working space, and non-traditional lending. Long-term planning and strategic investment are vital to support the significant role that these spaces play in our personal, social, and economic recovery and revitalization.

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<sup>76</sup> BookNet Canada. 2022. On Loan: Library Use in Canada 2021.

## 6. Capital Inventory and Preliminary Observations

This Stage 1 Report articulates the current state of the Town of Oakville's parks, recreation, and library system. It does not contain recommendations as these will arise after subsequent project phases have been completed.

### 6.1 Facility Inventory and Municipal Benchmarking

Parks, recreation, and library facilities play an important role in the daily life of Oakville residents. The town invests in infrastructure to promote physical activity, healthy lifestyles, skill development, athletic competition, community building, and economic growth. This section summarizes the capital assets that are provided and permitted by the town.

Detailed listings of Town of Oakville parks, recreation, and library facilities are contained in **Appendix C, D and E** – analysis of these inventories will be contained in the Stage 3 Report. The inventory is accurate as of January 1, 2023, although capital projects planned for 2023 are also included.

Additionally, listings of **challenges and opportunities for each municipal community centre, arena, and library branch** have been compiled by the consulting team (see **Appendix C and E**). These considerations are not to be interpreted as recommendations, but rather items for future analysis.

When undertaking plans of this nature, there is often interest in the number of facilities and services provided in other communities – a way to benchmark the town against others. A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to collect information on facility provision levels in other jurisdictions. This data is one of several inputs that has informed the development of provision targets for the master plan.

The data represents a snapshot in time and must be viewed in context with other factors. For example, the benchmarking data does not address the difference between facility quality, size, access, and service, all of which contribute greatly to the value provided by each of these facilities. Combining the observations from this exercise with other analyses will allow the master plan to achieve balance in defining the needs of future growth, historically underserved areas and changing trends.

The comparator group used to benchmark facility provision includes eight regional and/or large urban municipalities in Ontario: Burlington, Kitchener, Markham, Milton, Mississauga, Oshawa, Richmond Hill, and Vaughan. Unless otherwise noted, the data includes facilities that are owned and/or permitted for public use by the municipality, including facilities that are leased or under agreement (such as school board fields and facilities for which the Town of Oakville has an agreement for public use).

**Table 19: Town of Oakville Inventory Summary and Benchmarking**

Note: Data is accurate as of 2023 and does not include capital projects planned for 2024 or beyond, unless otherwise noted.

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Level (2023)	Municipal Benchmarking
<b>Community Centres</b>	<b>7 facilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glen Abbey CC</li> <li>- Iroquois Ridge CC</li> <li>- Oakville Trafalgar CC</li> <li>- QEPCCC</li> <li>- River Oaks CC</li> <li>- Sixteen Mile CC (2025)</li> <li>- Trafalgar Park CC</li> </ul>	1:32,150	1:32,850 <small>(note: community centre size and amenities vary considerably by municipality)</small>
<b>Indoor Pools</b>	<b>6 locations with 9 pools:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glen Abbey CC</li> <li>- Iroquois Ridge CC (2)</li> <li>- Oakville Trafalgar CC (2)</li> <li>- QEPCCC</li> <li>- Sixteen Mile CC (2) (2025)</li> <li>- White Oaks Pool</li> </ul>	1:37,500 (locations)	1:46,650 (locations)
<b>Outdoor Pools</b>	<b>5 pools:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bronte</li> <li>- Brookdale</li> <li>- Falgarwood</li> <li>- Lions</li> <li>- Wedgewood</li> </ul>	1:45,000	1:129,650
<b>Gymnasiums (municipal)</b>	<b>10 gymnasiums at 5 locations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glen Abbey CC (2)</li> <li>- Oakville Trafalgar CC (2)</li> <li>- QEPCCC (3)</li> <li>- Sixteen Mile CC (3) (2025)</li> <li>- Trafalgar Park CC (1)</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: IRCC and ROCC include small gymnasium-like spaces</i></p>	1:22,500 <small>(excludes permitted school gymnasiums)</small>	1:27,450
<b>Fitness Centres</b>	<b>7 locations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glen Abbey CC</li> <li>- Iroquois Ridge CC</li> <li>- Oakville Trafalgar CC</li> <li>- QEPCCC</li> <li>- River Oaks CC</li> <li>- Sixteen Mile CC (2025)</li> <li>- Trafalgar Park CC</li> </ul>	1:32,150	1:45,740
<b>Seniors' Facilities</b>	<b>5 locations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Iroquois Ridge CC</li> <li>- QEPCCC</li> <li>- Sir John Colborne (stand-alone)</li> <li>- River Oaks CC</li> <li>- Trafalgar Park CC</li> </ul>	1:45,000	1:53,050

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Level (2023)	Municipal Benchmarking
<b>Arenas</b>	<b>13 ice pads:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glen Abbey CC (2)</li> <li>- Joshua's Creek (2)</li> <li>- Kinoak (1)</li> <li>- Maple Grove (1)</li> <li>- River Oaks CC (2)</li> <li>- Sixteen Mile (4)</li> <li>Trafalgar Park CC (1)</li> </ul>	1:17,300	1:26,800
<b>Indoor Turf Facilities</b>	<b>1 location (divisible into 4 fields)</b>	1:225,000	1:212,150
<b>Arts and Culture Facilities</b>	<b>5 locations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oakville Centre for Performing Arts</li> <li>- Oakville Galleries (2)</li> <li>- Oakville Museum</li> <li>- QEPCCC</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a
<b>Public Libraries</b>	<b>108,301 square feet (increasing to 121,607 square feet with the opening of the permanent Sixteen Mile branch) at 7 locations (plus 5 OPL Express)</b>	0.48 sf/cap	0.51 sf/cap
<b>Other Indoor Facilities</b>	Various partnerships with groups such as indoor soccer, curling, gymnastics, etc.	n/a	n/a
<b>Soccer and Multi-use Fields (outdoor)</b>	<b>85 fields (98 unlit equivalents – see note 1) consisting of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 artificial turf fields (12 ULE)</li> <li>- 10 major lit fields (15 ULE)</li> <li>- 24 major unlit fields (24 ULE)</li> <li>- 27 mini fields (27 ULE)</li> <li>- 20 school fields (20 ULE)</li> </ul>	1:2,650 (total fields)	1:2,850 (total fields)
<b>Other Dedicated Rectangular Fields (football, rugby, field hockey, lacrosse)</b>	<b>1 field hockey field</b>	1:225,000	n/a
<b>Ball Diamonds</b>	<b>54 diamonds (69 unlit equivalents – see note 2) consisting of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 major hardball – lit (6 ULE)</li> <li>- 1 major hardball – unlit (1 ULE)</li> <li>- 3 minor hardball – lit (6 ULE)</li> <li>- 4 minor hardball – unlit (4 ULE)</li> <li>- 8 major softball – lit (16 ULE)</li> <li>- 12 major softball – unlit (12 ULE)</li> <li>- 1 minor softball – lit (2 ULE)</li> <li>- 13 minor softball – unlit (13 ULE)</li> <li>- 9 school diamonds (9 ULE)</li> </ul>	1:4,150 (total fields)	1:4,550 (total fields)
<b>Cricket Fields</b>	<b>2 fields</b>	1:112,500	1:137,250
<b>Tennis Courts (dedicated)</b>	<b>60 dedicated courts</b> (19 public lit, 25 public unlit, 11 club lit, 5 school courts)	1:3,750 (1:2,500 including multi-use courts)	1:4,200

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Level (2023)	Municipal Benchmarking
<b>Pickleball Courts (dedicated)</b>	<b>13 dedicated courts</b> (2 lit, 11 unlit)	1:17,300 (1:5,200 including multi-use courts)	1:68,650
<b>Tennis and Pickleball Courts (shared use)</b>	<b>30 shared courts</b> (7 lit, 22 unlit, 1 school)	1:7,500	n/a
<b>Basketball Courts</b>	<b>20.5 full court equivalents</b> (7 half courts, 16 full courts, and 1 ball hockey court – see note 3)	1:11,000	1:8,050
<b>Splash Pads</b>	<b>24 splash pads</b>	1:9,375	1:16,000
<b>Playgrounds</b>	<b>43 parks</b>	1:1,575 (locations)	1:2,650 (locations)
<b>Outdoor Fitness Locations</b>	<b>3 Calisthenics Parks</b>	1:75,000	1:35,350
<b>Skateboard Parks</b>	<b>7 skate parks</b>	1:32,150	1:51,850
<b>BMX Bike Parks</b>	<b>1 location</b>	1:225,000	1:388,900
<b>Outdoor Skating Rinks</b>	<b>2 artificial rinks</b> (plus approx. 12 natural rinks)	1:112,500	1:166,700
<b>Leash-free Dog Parks</b>	<b>7 locations</b>	1:32,150	1:86,450
<b>Community Gardens</b>	<b>4 locations</b> (219 plots)	1: 56,250	n/a
<b>Disc Golf Courses</b>	<b>0 locations</b>	n/a	1:388,900
<b>Other Park Facilities</b>	Various partnerships with groups such as lawn bowling, bocce, etc.	n/a	1:212,150 (lawn bowling) 1:27,450 (bocce)
<b>Active Parkland</b>	<b>548.5 hectares</b> (including developed Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks, Buffer Blocks)	2.44 ha/1000	2.27 ha/1000

Notes:

The 2023 town-wide population estimate is 225,000. The inventory includes several sports fields owned by HDSB/HCDSB schools that are permitted by the town, but excludes permitted HDSB/HCDSB gymnasiums.

Note 1: Each lit soccer field is equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields; each lit artificial turf field is equivalent to 3.0 unlit fields (unlit turf is equivalent to 1.5 fields).

Note 2: Each lit ball diamond is equivalent to 2.0 unlit diamonds.

Note 3: Each half court is equivalent to 0.5 of a full basketball court.

When compared to the benchmarked communities, on a per capita basis the Town of Oakville generally provides more:

- Pickleball courts
- Leash free dog parks
- Outdoor pools
- Playgrounds
- Ice pads and arenas
- Splash pads
- Outdoor skating rinks
- Skateboard and bike (all wheels) parks

When compared to the benchmarked communities, on a per capita basis the Town of Oakville generally provides fewer:

- Outdoor fitness / calisthenics parks
- Outdoor basketball courts

These preliminary findings are subject to change and will be explored further and refined during the next stage of analysis.

Additionally, there are a wide range of **non-municipal service providers** that operate various facilities within Oakville. While most of these facilities are restricted access (e.g., memberships, students, etc.), many offer some level of access to organizations that also utilize Town of Oakville facilities and thus contribute to the town’s overall level of service. Below is a non-exhaustive list of notable facility providers currently operating in Oakville.

**Table 20: Notable Non-municipal Recreation Facility Providers in Oakville**

Provider	Facility Details
<b>YMCA of Oakville</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor pool (4 lanes)</li> <li>• Fitness centre</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
<b>Appleby College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arena (single pad)</li> <li>• Double gymnasium and small gymnasium</li> <li>• Indoor 20m, 5 lane Indoor pool</li> <li>• Squash courts (3) Outdoor multi-use grass fields (4) and artificial turf field (1)</li> <li>• Outdoor tennis courts (5), basketball court, sand volleyball court, and running track</li> </ul>
<b>Sheridan College</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use field (artificial turf)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> <li>• Weight and cardio room</li> <li>• Squash courts (2)</li> </ul>
<b>Kings Christian Collegiate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use field (artificial turf)</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> </ul>
<b>Canlan Sports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arena (4 pads)</li> </ul>

Provider	Facility Details
Toronto Rock Athletic Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor artificial turf rink (2)</li> <li>Outdoor artificial turf field</li> <li>Weight and cardio room</li> </ul>
Oakville Hockey Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small ice rinks, 120'x50' (2)</li> <li>Goalie pad and shooter/goalie pad</li> </ul>
Private Fitness, Martial Arts, Dance Academies, Gymnastics Clubs, etc. (various)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity-specific spaces (varies)</li> </ul>
Elementary and High Schools (various)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sports fields (many permitted by the town)</li> <li>Gymnasiums (many permitted by the town)</li> </ul>

**Considerations for the Master Plan:**

Facility provision ratios and municipal benchmarking are just some of the tools that are used in identifying long-term infrastructure needs. At a preliminary level, this data recognizes some gaps in facility distribution and identifies key priorities for growth-related facility development. With guidance from past master plans, the town has several projects in the planning and construction pipeline that will help address growing needs relative to multi-use community centres, basketball courts, skate parks, and more.

## 6.2 Considerations for the Master Plan

The following items have been identified throughout this Stage 1 Report for further consideration through the master planning process:

- 1. Previous Master Plans:** Previous master plans have effectively guided the capital planning programs of the town and public library for about five-years at a time. Short-term planning helps the town to respond to emerging needs in a timely fashion, while taking the long-view ensures that major infrastructure can be integrated into long-range financial plans. By integrating both capital facility and park needs with service planning, the master plan will be a comprehensive strategy that serves as a living document for the town and library.
- 2. Project Alignment:** Recent and relevant policy direction and public input (see Stage 2 Report) will provide a strong foundation upon which to build this Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan. Livability, sustainability, and connectivity are just some of the common threads that are woven throughout the town's planning documents – the master plan's strategic framework will seek alignment wherever possible.

**3. Guiding Documents:** Provincial policies recognize parks, recreation, and libraries as important elements of complete communities and there is strong support for continued investment. Common goals shared by various provincial and sectoral reports emphasize collaboration, inclusion, community connectivity, healthy environments, and activation/conservation of existing resources. These items should be considered within the master plan’s strategic framework.

**4. Parks and Recreation Utilization:** Oakville and its partners offer an extensive list of parks and recreation services and programs and are more progressive than most communities in leveraging related data to support continuous improvement initiatives.

In 2019, recreation program registration was approximately 8,200 persons (excluding drop-ins and memberships) with a capacity rate exceeding 80%. Most programs serve youth and/or aquatics services. While the pandemic has caused significant disruptions to staffing and training, past studies have identified opportunities to attract more users to municipal programs and to create a more balanced portfolio of programs. The new Sixteen Mile Community Centre will also assist in this regard.

**5. OPL Utilization:** Public library services were significantly impacted by the pandemic, but OPL’s usage figures indicate that most services are rebounding. For example, OPL is seeing strong library material circulation rates (both physical and digital) at most library locations, which bodes well for library services in Oakville.

Additionally, the current and future expenditure budgets for materials should be reviewed to confirm that OPL will be able to deliver at current services levels when the population increases, respond to future user preferences, and to ensure a diverse range of materials both in format and content.

**6. Budgets and Funding:** The sweeping changes introduced by Bill 23 in late 2022 represent a significant area of uncertainty for the Town of Oakville and all Ontario municipalities, most notably as they relate to municipal finance and infrastructure investment. Parks, recreation, and library services account for approximately one-fifth of the town’s operating and capital expenditures, and growth-related spending relies heavily on development charges and community benefits charges that have been substantially altered through Bill 23.

The town is aligned with the provincial goal of building 1.5 million new homes (including 33,000 units in Oakville). However, additional study will be required to fully understand the impact on the funding and delivery of parks, recreation, and library services that are required to serve this growth.

**7. Population:** As Oakville grows, its urban structure is changing. The town’s planning policies support higher population densities in new growth areas, including North Oakville which has been the most recent focus of housing growth. Higher residential densities often mean less private space (e.g., living space, backyards, etc.), making it more critical that public spaces be accessible, well designed, and capable of accommodating more intense use.

**8. Age Composition:** The number of older adults and seniors has been growing in Oakville and across Canada for many years. This is leading to increased demand for services and spaces to serve this age group, including both active pursuits (e.g., pickleball, hiking, etc.) and more passive activities (e.g., hobbies, socials, special events, etc.).

Children and youth are a core market for parks and recreation departments and public libraries and exhibit strong participation rates. These younger age groups have been growing slower than the overall population, leading to emerging requests for adult and senior-oriented activities. As Oakville grows, demand for activities and services across the full age spectrum can be anticipated.

**9. Household Composition:** Lone-parent families and households with a range of age groups living under the same roof (including multi-generation households) may require more convenient and diverse leisure options in their neighbourhood to meet their needs.

**10. Diversity and Language:** Oakville is becoming more ethnically diverse. While newcomers have many similar leisure needs to long-time Canadians, many also bring their own activities, sports, and traditions to Oakville. This is creating new demands on parks systems (e.g., picnic and special event spaces, cricket fields, etc.), recreation services (e.g., culturally-appropriate programming, etc.), and libraries (e.g., multi-lingual resources). Parks, recreation, and library spaces are vital to supporting newcomers and celebrating our many cultures, underscoring their importance to a growing Oakville.

**11. Income:** The average Oakville resident generates more income than the average Ontarian. Cost of living aside, this means that many area residents have a greater ability to participate in leisure activities and also to access a wider range of providers (including private sector businesses).

At the same time, Oakville has many low-income families and the current economic circumstances are challenging for many. Lower-income residents face several barriers in accessing leisure opportunities such as lack of transportation, unaffordable user fees, equipment costs, lack of awareness of programs, and lack of places for both informal and structured recreation. Accessible spaces and affordable services are critical to ensuring that everyone can participate fully.

**12. Education:** Oakville's residents have strong education rates compared to Ontario as a whole. This suggests that residents are more likely to place a value on participating in parks, recreation, and library activities. Demand for traditional library services can also be positively affected by a more highly educated population.

**13. Modes of Transportation:** For the large majority of Oakville residents, private vehicles are the primary mode of transportation. This suggests that these residents are capable of traveling longer distances to access parks, recreation, and library services. At the same time, the local transit system is expanding and improving, offering greater service to those that need or prefer this mode of transportation.

- 14. Persons with Disabilities:** There is a growing requirement to ensure barrier-free accessibility to public spaces and services as the number of residents with disabilities increases. This includes not only physical accessibility, but also inclusive spaces and services for those with cognitive disabilities and sensory needs. The town and public library offer a wide range of services to ensure that persons with disabilities can engage fully in leisure activities, with the help of partners and guidance from the Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- 15. Growth Projections:** Oakville’s population growth rate is rising. New parks, recreation and library facilities and services will be required to address growth-related demands, as well as changes in participation patterns. Greater pressure will also be placed on existing assets to meet the demands of a growing population. Planning for current and new residents is a primary objective of this master plan.
- The Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan will use the latest joint best planning estimates as the basis for analysis, ensuring alignment with other planning initiatives. Recognizing that there are many factors that may impact the pace of growth in Oakville, the master plan will use population thresholds rather than specific years as references for identifying growth-related capital requirements. Mitigation strategies and phasing options may also be required should there be funding shortfalls for growth-related requirements.
- 16. Parks and Recreation Trends:** Oakville is changing and recreational needs are expanding as different interests and new trends emerge. Pickleball and outdoor activities are just some of the options that residents are looking for within the town’s parks, recreation, and library system. Flexible and inclusive spaces are needed to address current priorities and those to come. Monitoring of trends in sports and activities allows the town to look toward a balanced range of amenities when and where they are needed. Flexibility in park and facility design also helps the town respond to these changing participation patterns.
- 17. Public Library Trends:** By offering safe welcoming spaces for all, public library facilities, materials, and services remain in high demand amid shifting behaviours in how residents prefer to access and consume information. Demand for both print and non-print collections are strong and many residents also look to the library for access to technology and a growing array of services. Flexibility and innovation will be key to service delivery and the potential to reimagine library space has never been greater.
- 18. Pandemic Implications:** The pandemic will have a lasting impact on parks, recreation, and library facilities and services, which are increasingly being viewed as essential not only to physical health, but also mental wellbeing. For example, unstructured park use has increased, helping people stay active and connected. Many recreation activities have grown or emerged through the pandemic as people have found new interests and are trying to catch up for lost time (although rising costs are becoming a new concern for many). Libraries are seeing increased demand for e-resources, co-working space, and non-traditional lending. Long-term planning and strategic investment are vital to support the significant role that these spaces play in our personal, social, and economic recovery and revitalization.

**19. Preliminary Facility Needs Assessment:** Facility provision ratios and municipal benchmarking are just some of the tools that are used in identifying long-term infrastructure needs. At a preliminary level, this data recognizes some gaps in facility distribution and identifies key priorities for growth-related facility development. With guidance from past master plans, the town has several projects in the planning and construction pipeline that will help address growing needs relative to multi-use community centres, basketball courts, skate parks, and more.

## 6.3 Next Steps

This Stage 1 report serves as a technical background report to the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan. A second background document produced under separate cover is the Stage 2 Community Engagement Report. Both Stage 1 and Stage 2 Reports will remain in draft form until the master plan is finalized, with updates undertaken as necessary.

The next and final phase of the project is **Stage 3** – development of the master plan. Key tasks in this stage include (but are not limited to):

1. Development of Guiding Principles / Strategic Framework
2. Recreation Service and Program Delivery Assessment, including Recreation Cost Recovery and Pricing Review
3. Library Service and Program Delivery Assessment
4. Recreation and Library Facilities Assessments, including Technology Review
5. Parks and Open Space Assessments, including a review of the North Oakville Parks Facilities Distribution Plan and compiling the Parks and Trails Development Manual
6. Draft Master Plan and Implementation Strategy
7. Public Feedback
8. Master Plan Finalization

# Appendix A: Status of Recommendations from 2017 Master Plan

Recommendations from the Town of Oakville’s 2017 Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan Review are contained in the following table, accompanied by a status update (current as of 2023). See also Section 2.1 of the Stage 1 Report.

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
<b>Recreation Facilities</b>				
1. Proceed with the development of the South East Community Centre in the short-term. The facility should have a focus on multi-generational wellness activities. Potential components, subject to budget and space availability, may include a 25-metre pool (as a replacement for Centennial Pool), gymnasium (with elevated walking track), fitness centre, multi-purpose space, and community rooms.	Short-term (2020)	Southeast	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre opened (Fall 2020) (53,550 sq ft.) Closure of Centennial Pool (17,640 sq ft.)	Complete
2. Develop a multi-use community centre as a second phase to the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex, consisting of an indoor aquatic complex, fitness/active living centre, dedicated space for youth, multi-use programming space (including one or more gymnasiums), and a branch library. The timing for this project is currently anticipated to be in or around 2026, but may be refined through the Sixteen Mile Community Centre Market Study.	Medium to Long-term (2026+)	North	Opening targeted for 2025.	In Progress
3. Work with the Oakville Public Library to explore potential operating and building models for the shared facility proposed in the Palermo area. The first phase of construction should consist of a library branch, while a future phase may accommodate neighbourhood-level recreation programming through spaces such as activity and multi-use rooms, senior and/or youth centres, teaching kitchen, etc.	Short-term (Phase 1) Long-term (Phase 2)	North / West	Timeframe not reached.	Incomplete

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
4. Develop an indoor aquatic facility (25-metre and leisure pools) as part of the proposed Sixteen Mile Community Centre.	Medium to Long-term (2026+)	North	Opening targeted for 2025. Amenities to be similar to Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre.	In Progress
5. Develop a 25-metre indoor aquatic facility as part of the proposed South East Community Centre, to replace Centennial Pool. Consideration may also be given to the provision of a smaller therapeutic pool to enhance aquatic programming for all residents, especially older adults, young children, and persons with disabilities. A 50-metre pool at this location is not supported.	Short-term (2020)	Southeast	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre opened (Fall 2020) (53,550 sq ft.). 25-metre lap pool swimming pool kept at 84°F. Warm water pool kept at 92°F	Complete
6. Review the potential long-term demand for additional ice pads through the next five-year Master Plan Update (or earlier if supported by positive registration trends).	Medium-term (2022)	n/a	Existing 13 pad inventory, impacted annually by capital replacement projects as well as unplanned maintenance has been offered to the community. Major user groups are supplementing ice needs through private organizations and other municipalities.	Incomplete
7. Monitor the condition of Kinoak and Maplegrove Arenas as these facilities are approaching the limit of their functional lifespan. Any major reinvestment in these facilities should be supported by a detailed analysis of current and future use.	Ongoing	Southwest / Southeast	Investment at Kinoak Arena required due to unplanned mechanical issues for the 2022/2023 ice season. – New Header.	In Progress
8. Seek opportunities to maximize older adult spaces, including weekend programs and activities.	Short-term	n/a	Programming impacted by pandemic.	In Progress
9. Reassess future space needs for older adults following a review of the new Trafalgar Park Community Centre model (scheduled to open in 2018), along with consideration of the pending Older Adult Review.	Medium-term (2022)	n/a		In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
10. Dedicated space for older adults is not recommended at the South East Community Centre, but rather a focus should be placed on age-specific and general community programming enabled through the multi-use and activity rooms, gymnasium, aquatic centre, and fitness centre.	Short-term (2020)	Southeast	Addressed through programming of Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre.	Complete
11. Continue to review the viability of the Bronte Youth Centre, along with alternative service options for youth outreach in this community.	Short-term	Southwest	Bronte Youth Centre closed in 2018.	Complete
12. Develop a new youth centre in East Oakville in the short-term.	Short-term	East	Nottingham Youth Centre opened in 2016. Closed in 2019.	Incomplete
13. Provide dedicated space for youth to complement non-exclusive activity space as part of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre.	Medium to Long-term (2026+)	North	Multi-use space being planned for Sixteen Mile Community Complex, with specific program offerings for youth.	In Progress
14. Consider gymnasiums and multi-use activity space for all future multi-use community centre developments and redevelopments, including the South East and Sixteen Mile Community Centres.	Ongoing	n/a	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre - Double Gym offers two regulation-sized volleyball courts, four regulation-sized pickleball/badminton courts, one NBA-sized basketball court, two youth basketball courts and a dividing wall.  Similar amenities planned for Sixteen Mile Community Complex.	Complete
15. Include a fitness centre and studio space as part of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre.	Medium to Long-term (2026+)	North	Opening targeted for 2025.  Amenities to be similar to Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre.	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
16. Consider a fitness centre and studio space as part of the South East Community Centre.	Short-term (2020)	Southeast	Fitness centre featuring diverse strength and cardio equipment with built-in technology, including a new step rehabilitation stationary bicycle, and Oakville's longest indoor track	Complete
17. Explore the viability of expanding the fitness programming area within the Glen Abbey Community Centre; monitor fitness trends at this location to determine the need and timing of future study.	Short-term	West	Feasibility Study planned for 2024.	In Progress
18. Encourage opportunities to integrate cultural programs and activities through shared spaces within existing and future community recreation facilities and parks.	Ongoing	n/a	Culture programs have been expanded in existing facilities and being considered in program offerings in planned facilities.	In Progress
19. Utilize a formal partnership framework to evaluate capital proposals from community organizations, with consideration given to the town's ten year capital forecast and the town's capacity to participate in such projects.	Ongoing	n/a	This recommendation was strengthened in the 2019 report from Blackline Consulting - Recreation and Culture Service Delivery Model Review. Delayed due to the pandemic.	In Progress
<b>Park Facilities</b>				
20. Recent declines in organized soccer suggest that past projections of field needs were over-estimated. Additional information on demographic and participation factors is required to fully reassess future needs. In the interim, the preliminary assessment indicates that up to 19.5 additional fields will be required by build-out (note: these are unlit equivalents, where each lit field equals 1.5 unlit fields and each lit artificial field equals 3.0 unlit fields). Most new fields should be provided in North Oakville.	Short-term (reassess) Short-term (4), Medium and Long-term (15.5)	North (primarily)	New soccer field being at Sixteen Mile Sports Park (formerly known as North Park). Two new mini-soccer fields about to be constructed with Oakville Park. One additional full sized field planned for NP5 in NE Oakville	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
21. Develop two (2) multi-use fields in North Oakville to meet the collective needs of sports such as field lacrosse, football, field hockey, soccer, etc. Explore opportunities to accelerate the construction of one of these fields in the short-term.	Short-term (1), Medium-term (1)	North	One new (lit) multi-use field being constructed at Sixteen Mile Sports Park (SMSP) and existing artificial field was recently (2023) lined for multi-sports.	In Progress
22. Monitor demand for rugby and work with the local club to ensure that the long-term needs of this sport are addressed.	Ongoing	North	To be assessed through Master Plan, along with football. Active discussions with Crusaders Club as the lease on those lands is set to expire in less than ten years.	In Progress
23. Develop a minimum of six (6) additional ball diamonds in North Oakville (note: these are unlit equivalents, where one lit diamond equals two unlit diamonds).	Short-term (3), Medium and Long-term (3)	North	Two new diamonds built at George Savage and William Rose Parks. Another diamond planned for NP8.	In Progress
24. Existing ball diamonds should be optimized, with support from a more detailed scheduling analysis and improvements to selected diamonds (in consultation with local organizations). Registration figures for both youth and adult ball players should be monitored in order to confirm the facility provision target to assist in evaluating capacity on an ongoing basis.	Ongoing	n/a	Town collects registration data and works with organizations to maximize permitting.	In Progress
25. Develop a cricket pitch in North Park across two soccer fields in the short-term. Opportunities to establish a temporary pitch may be explored with area clubs in the interim.	Short-term	North	Dedicated cricket pitch being constructed at Sixteen Mile Sports Park.	Complete
26. Develop up to fourteen (14) tennis courts to serve population growth in North Oakville and resolve tennis court provision to the Merton area.	Short-term (6), Medium and Long-term (8+)	North / West	New courts at Fowley Park and William Rose. Additional courts planned for NP9 (McDuffe Park).	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
27. Explore opportunities to convert surplus tennis courts to pickleball, with a focus on areas south of the QEW.	Ongoing	Southeast / Southwest	Several new pickleball (dedicated and shared use) have been established. Currently working on plans to convert 1 tennis court at both Glenashton and Hopedale Parks.	In Progress
28. Develop multiple pickleball courts at one location in North Oakville. Reassess demand for additional locations through the next Master Plan update.	Short-term	North	7 dedicated pickleball courts planned at Sixteen Mile Sports Park.	In Progress
29. Develop a minimum of five (5) basketball courts (full court equivalents) to serve North Oakville.	Short-term (3), Medium and Long-term (2)	North	New basketball courts built at George Savage and William Rose. Another one planned at NP9 (McDuffe Park).	In Progress
30. Consider the development of approximately new five (5) basketball courts (full court equivalents) in gap areas south of Dundas Street by build-out. Sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with a primary focus on locations in East and West Oakville (subject to demand and opportunity, including through the conversion of underutilized assets).	Short-term	East and West (primarily)	New court also just built at Glenashton Park (replacing one removed from Valleybrook Park).	In Progress
31. Develop an Outdoor Aquatics Strategy to guide the future of outdoor pool and splash pad provision, maintenance, refurbishment, and development.	Short-term	n/a	To be assessed through Master Plan.	In Progress
32. Develop approximately five (5) additional splash pads in North Oakville East and one (1) splash pad in North Oakville West (Palermo Park).	Short-term (2), Medium and Long-term (4)	North	Splash pads added at Fowley and William Rose Parks. A small pad facility also being constructed at Travertine Park (village square). Other new facilities planned at NP5 and NP8.	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
33. Examine opportunities to add splash pads to parks in areas south of Dundas Street that have distribution gaps (e.g., Southeast Oakville, College Park, Merton, etc.). Splash pads are ideally located in parks that have access to washrooms and parking; shade is also desired.	Short to Medium-term	East, West, Southeast	New splash pad added at Martindale Park and Aspen Forest Park in 2023. Splash pad at Wynten Way also to be upgraded. Postridge Park splash pad just renovated.	Complete
34. Develop playgrounds in growing residential areas based on a minimum provision target of one playground within 800-metres of all neighbourhoods (without having to cross a major road or physical barrier); a modified target of 400 metres may be considered in North Oakville.	Ongoing	n/a	Several new playgrounds added to inventory through new park development. Almost every new park or village square includes a new playground.	In Progress
35. Barrier-free playground equipment accessible to persons with disabilities should be installed at Community Parks as part of the town's playground replacement program.	Ongoing	n/a	This will be included at Sixteen Mile Sports Park, and Coronation Park also planned for renovation in 2023/24.	In Progress
36. Reintroduce outdoor fitness equipment to the Oakville parks system through a pilot project in a community park or along a well-travelled trail.	Short-term	tbd	Existing facilities at OTCC and Memorial Park. Facility at Sixteen Mile Sports Park to be replaced, and another possible installation at NP9 (McDuffe).	Complete
37. Develop two (2) Major Skate Parks to serve the growing North Oakville area and to also provide service to the East and West plan areas; at least one facility should be provided within the short-term.	Short-term (1), Medium-term (1)	North	Major skate park added to Cornwall Road Sports Park in summer 2023. Sixteen Mile Sports Park also to include major skate park.	Complete

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
38. Minor Skate Parks (“skate spots”) may be considered for smaller residential pockets that have an identified need, as supported by community interest and local research; one potential gap worth exploring is Southeast Oakville, as well as growing areas further to the north. The network should provide a variety of skate parks (in size and style) that are equitably distributed throughout the town, guided by site selection criteria and community input.	Ongoing	North, Southwest (primarily)	Minor facility planned at NP9 (McDuffe Park).	In Progress
39. Develop an off-road bike/BMX park in North Park in 2018. This park can then be used to test demand for a second park in South Oakville in the longer-term.	Short-term (2018)	North	Bike pump track planned for Sixteen Mile Sports Park.	In Progress
40. Closely monitor usage of the planned outdoor artificial ice rink in Trafalgar Park to inform the review of outdoor rink needs through the next Master Plan Update.	Medium-term	n/a	Community uptake of the refrigerated ice-rink at Trafalgar Park has been high. The weather variable has impacted length of operation. Observed operations has been December to early March. Another facility planned at Wallace Park in 2023/24.	In Progress
41. Continue to facilitate the provision of natural outdoor skating rinks in cooperation with volunteer associations.	Ongoing	n/a	Up to 14 locations have been traditionally offered to the community, supported by community volunteers. Additional locations were offered when indoor facilities were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Complete
42. Continue to provide leash-free dog areas in response to community need (e.g., as determined by usage levels, public requests, and the identification of sponsoring organizations) and only in cases where location criteria can be met.	Ongoing	n/a	7 locations offered to the community.	Complete

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
43. Secure and establish a purpose-designed event space to serve growing community interest in special events and spaces for community gatherings.	Medium-term	tbd	NP9 (McDuffe Park) will not include any large sports park amenities. Instead, a large unprogrammed space is intended to facilitate special events.	Incomplete
44. Designate multiple existing parks as “event parks” and put into place a plan to install the proper support amenities and features. When new parks are designed, they should be assessed for their suitability for accommodating special events.	Short-term	n/a		Incomplete
45. The reintroduction of outdoor bocce courts into the Oakville parks system should only be considered where there is demonstrated need and in partnership with a local community group.	Ongoing	n/a	The town has one bocce ball court at Glenashton Park. The court is free to use. Opened in 2018	Complete
46. Expand the town’s community garden program over time, in response to local demand and opportunities.	Ongoing	n/a	4 allotment garden locations offered to the community. May develop another site at Riverstone Park, pending public consultation and final designs.	In Progress
47. Develop and adopt a town-wide standard of provision for park washrooms, giving consideration to their inclusion in larger neighbourhood and/or community parks (including unserviced parks; e.g., those located between the QEW and Dundas Street). Potential criteria may include parks containing “drive-to” amenities such as splash pads, skate parks, sports fields, and trailheads.	Short-term	n/a	Winter park program includes the redevelopment of one winterized washroom project per year.	In Progress
48. Prepare an Outdoor Recreation Strategy that examines opportunities to extend outdoor programming within Oakville’s parks system.	Short-term	n/a	Winter park program includes snow clearing on selected trails and tennis/pickleball courts.	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
<b>Active Parkland</b>				
49. Maintain a town-wide parkland provision target of 2.2 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents within classifications of Community Park and Neighbourhood Park (including Urban/Village Squares and Parkettes).	Ongoing	n/a	Active park inventory remains above this threshold. Parks Plan completed in 2022.	In Progress
50. Continue to acquire active parkland at the maximum applicable rate as permitted by the Planning Act, via the town's implementing documents (e.g., Livable Oakville, Parkland Dedication By-law), to maintain a town-wide supply of 2.2 hectares of active parkland per 1000 residents. The town should continue its practice of not accepting environmentally significant lands or hazard lands as part of the required parkland dedication.	Ongoing	n/a	Active park inventory remains above this threshold. Parks Plan 2031 completed in 2022.	In Progress
51. Explore acquisition and non-acquisition based options, if future parkland dedication amounts are not sufficient to maintain a town-wide supply of 2.2 hectares of active parkland per 1000 residents. This may include, but not be limited to: options available through current planning policies or the Planning Act; easement agreements, land exchanges, long-term land leases, land trusts, and other protection measures.	Ongoing	n/a	Town has used various tools to secure parkland, including acquisition of former Fogolars Country Club.	In Progress
52. Notwithstanding the overall town-wide parkland supply, continue to plan for the acquisition and development of local-serving parks to serve new residential development considering: proximity and access to existing parks; proposed form of development and target market; and forecasted outdoor recreation facility needs.	Ongoing	n/a	Several new neighbourhood parks and local park blocks secured and developed, guided by the North Oakville Parks Distribution Plan.	In Progress
53. To inform future planning for growth areas, the Town should complete a Parks and Open Space Strategy that: further investigates the issues and opportunities related to intensification identified in this plan; assesses the appropriate quantity and quality of parks and public spaces in future development areas; and recommends methods of acquiring or securing access to lands for future parks and public spaces.	Short-term	n/a	Parks Plan 2031 completed and adopted by Council in 2022. Updates to bring into conformity with Bill 23 were completed in 2023.	Complete

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
54. Update the Town of Oakville parkland dedication policies to address the limits imposed in Bill 73 for payment of cash-in-lieu of parkland. In doing so, the town should consider the constraints and benefits of applying the maximum allowable rate of 1 ha per 500 units, together with potential alternate rates of provision such as a sliding scale that is aligned to the size of development parcels.	Short-term	n/a	Legislative allowances have since changed.  Parks Plan 2031 completed and adopted by Council in 2022. Updates to bring into conformity with Bill 23 were completed in 2023.	Complete
55. Through the planning and development process (including the recommended Parks and Open Space Strategy), examine and consider both traditional and non-traditional means of securing parks and public open space in areas of intensification, including: development of new parks; improving connections and access to parks and facilities in other neighbourhoods; and enlisting the support of the development industry in the provision of alternate park spaces, including, but not limited to, strata parks, semi-public open space, use of Section 37 for public realm improvements, and 'shared streets'.	Ongoing	n/a	Addressed as part of Parks Plan 2031.	In Progress
56. In neighbourhoods planned for residential intensification, evaluate existing parks, open space lands, and other municipal properties for their potential to accommodate multi-functional spaces and expanded social and recreational opportunities to serve residents' needs.	Ongoing	n/a	Best practice.	In Progress
57. Do not pursue the acquisition of non-municipal land or retain such lands for park purposes (e.g., schoolyards or surplus schools) in areas that presently have adequate supplies of active parkland unless there is a justified need for additional parkland and there are no reasonable alternatives (e.g., publicly accessible neighbourhood or community parks with playground equipment) within approximately 800 metres.	Ongoing	n/a	Best practice.	In Progress
58. Continue to make implementation of the town's Active Transportation Master Plan a high priority through the proper allocation of project, operations, and maintenance funding and resources.	Ongoing	n/a	Update to the Transportation (Active Transportation) Master Plan currently underway, 2023/24.	In Progress

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
59. Develop and implement a policy that clearly articulates the parameters and standards relating to signage at trail access points and along trails. In general, promotion of trails to improve public awareness of trail locations, routes, surfaces, and support facilities (e.g., washrooms) should be made a priority.	Short-term	n/a		Incomplete
60. Wherever possible, design new trails, pathways and cycle lanes so that they connect to public transit stops (including GO stations). Appropriate bike racks should be provided at major transportation hubs.	Ongoing	n/a	Best practice.	In Progress
61. Continue to upgrade and improve the Waterfront Trail to a consistent standard through quality surfaces, signage, and crossings.	Ongoing	n/a	Improvements made as needed.	In Progress
62. Continue to promote and enhance trails through the Park Ambassador program.	Ongoing	n/a		In Progress
63. The Design of Public Spaces Standard – which is part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11) – should be referred to during the design of recreational trails, park pathways, and other pedestrian systems and design for accessibility needs should be incorporated to the extent required and feasible.	Ongoing	n/a	Best practice.	In Progress
<b>Library Facilities</b>				
64. The establishment of a new library branch in Bronte is not a priority for the Library Board at this time. To better serve this area and surrounding neighbourhoods, consideration should be given to the expansion of library services within the QEPCCC, as warranted.	Short-term	Southwest	An OPL Express Location has been established at the QEPCCC.	Complete

Recommendations	Timing	Location	Comments	Status (2022)
65. Develop a library branch in Palermo (up to 15,000 square feet) in the short-term. Securing an appropriate site and exploring potential operating and building models that include space for community events and recreation programming should be high priorities. Depending on the readiness for construction, temporary sites and service options may be considered to assist in establishing a library presence in this area.	Short-term	North / West	Land has not been secured.	Incomplete
66. Develop a library branch (approximately 17,500 square feet) during the same construction phase of the proposed Sixteen Mile Community Centre. In the short-term, explore options for instituting temporary library services in this area, such as creating a Holds Depot at the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex or establishing an interim library presence (staffed) in the vicinity (e.g., an existing retail plaza or portable building).	Short-term (temp. site) Long-term (Sixteen Mile CC)	North	Ground-breaking targeted for 2025.	In Progress
67. Continue to pursue the revitalization / replacement of the Central Branch through the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative.	Long-term	Southwest	The Downtown Cultural Hub has been identified as a priority by the current term of Council.	In Progress
68. Reassess the need for a library branch along the Trafalgar Corridor (north of Dundas Street) following the development of the Palermo and Sixteen Mile Branches, with consideration to potential changes to the Central Branch through the Downtown Cultural Hub project.	Long-term	North	Reviewing options with Realty Management.	In Progress
69. Consider expansion of alternative models (e.g., Holds Depot, etc.) and the use of interim sites as strategies in gap and/or high growth areas in place of or prior to permanent facility development.	Ongoing	n/a	OPL Express stations have been expanded to 5 locations.	Complete

# Appendix B: Summaries of Supporting Documents

Supplementing Section 2.3 of this Stage 1 Report, summaries of key reports reviewed in support of this Master Plan are provided below. Where possible, directions relevant to this Master Plan are identified, along with matters that may require further analysis through future project stages.

## Corporate Studies

### Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP)

Date Prepared: November 2017

Prepared by: WSP and Glenn Pothier (GLPi)

#### Brief Summary:

This study is an update to the previous ATMP prepared in 2009. The main purpose was to review the existing AT network, where improvements need to be made, where the 2009 recommendations have been implemented, what the impacts (if any) of those changes have been, and any lessons learned. The process involves five steps and was shaped by input gathered through the consultation process:

- Review existing active transportation conditions (what is on the ground, what has been previously planned, identify key trip generators).
- Review and confirm route selection criteria (identify a consistent set of criteria to compare the route alternatives)
- Confirm facilities and identify new route alternatives
- Investigate routes (field investigation, document)
- Confirm new routes and select facility types.

The resulting master plan is intended to be a tool to direct AT planning, “inform policies, processes and programs that are needed to respond to new community trends and the growing demand for active transportation”.

#### Relevance to Master Plan:

- Parks and recreational trails are an important component of AT infrastructure across the municipality.

- Because the quality of AT infrastructure affects how it is used, there are planning and design implications for parks, trails, and other municipal recreation infrastructure.
- Proximity to and connectivity with parks increases use of active transportation routes. Ensure new park and trail development is factored into AT planning in developing areas, particularly in North Oakville which has low walkability and bikeability scores.
- Programs and initiatives to build cycling literacy and encourage AT use. Bicycle parking and other support amenities facilitate greater use.
- Plan contains design guidelines.
- Outreach and partnerships recommendations:
  - bike racks and support amenities at municipal buildings and community centres
  - develop formal wayfinding / signage programme
  - Need to ensure these carry over / align with park design standards
- Operations and maintenance: recommendation to consider making some routes seasonal, e.g., closing some off-road routes in the winter.
- Risk Management and Liability: bikes are legally defined as vehicles, so recreational trails may need to adhere to the same standards and requirements as roads and highways. Recommendation to design to the highest standards.

Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan:

- The town is currently undertaking a new study which will serve as an update to the 2018 Transportation Master Plan and 2017 Active Transportation Master Plan. The updated TMP will focus on building walkable, cycle/transit friendly neighbourhoods integrated with accessible transportation choices for all residents.

**Oakville Urban Mobility and Transportation Strategy**

Date Prepared      2021

Prepared by      Steer

Brief Summary

Oakville has developed around the automobile, but its roads are filling up. The town would like to grow differently, shifting to more sustainable modes of transportation. How can these other modes be prioritized and encouraged? According to the report, previous studies didn't go far enough, or focus on "the critical link between land use policies and transportation". This study provides a framework for how to achieve this new vision for Oakville, by unifying land use and transportation policies.

The study reviews and consolidates previous planning work; explores current mobility trends; examines the impact of COVID-19 on how people live and move through the community, including possible challenges and opportunities for the town; presents strategies the town can implement to achieve the desired mode shift (including the two key concepts of Complete Streets and 15-Minute Neighbourhoods); and provides prioritized recommendations for future initiatives and studies.

#### Relevance to Master Plan:

- Land use: the study proposes that Oakville “concentrate on building complete 15-Minute Neighbourhoods with mixes of land uses that can accommodate the day-to-day needs of its residents, so that they no longer need to hop in the car for every little thing”.
- Transportation: Similarly, the study proposes “that Oakville adopt a multi-modal Complete Streets focus to its transportation network so that every mode is a pleasure to use”.
- Complete streets –focuses on streets/roads, not beyond. However: “To get people walking, we need to provide places they would like to walk to. It is not enough to simply improve the built form of pedestrian infrastructure, though it is certainly beneficial to do so”. The concept of placemaking is important. Parks, trails, and other recreational amenities should also be a part of this picture.
- Connectivity: ensuring gaps in the sidewalk network are filled.
- Wayfinding: signage and maps to identify destinations and routes within a 15-minute walk. Consider how this is integrated with any parks and trails focused signage. Similar for cyclists.
- Bicycle infrastructure and Bike Share Program: Secure bike parking “at key nodes”. Does this include municipal buildings, community centres, parks, etc.?
- 15-Minute Neighbourhoods: Interestingly, the overview does not specifically talk about parks and green space – just a vague reference to including places where people play.
- Ensuring Connectivity with Other Nodes: Consider how this can be achieved using parks and trails.
- Delivery of town Infrastructure: The study notes that land for parks, community centres, municipal services, and schools etc. should be set aside “from the start”, or the town may also consider public-private partnerships to bundle some services into new developments.

#### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan:

- Parks and recreation planning and design will be a key component in achieving the desired outcomes of this initiative.

- Oakville has an extensive trail network, however it is not always well linked to neighbourhoods and sidewalks. “Future master planning work should continue to consider the trail network holistically, as well as its connections to the street, sidewalk and cycling networks.”

## **Digital Oakville 2021 Plan**

Date prepared                      April 26, 2021

Prepared by                        Town of Oakville

### **Brief Summary**

The Digital Oakville 2021 Plan discusses online customer experience, digital infrastructure, and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Plan identified that improvements in 2021 would focus on the areas of: applications, permits and licenses; and registrations and bookings.

### **Relevance to Master Plan**

- New recreation and culture virtual program offerings, such as fitness, crafts, cooking, meditation, senior services and more.
- Online usage of the new community portal
- Improvements in 2021 include: new online recreation and culture registrations where residents and user groups have an improved customer experience, increased self serve options, and a more seamless registration process for both seasonal and drop-in programs; online recreation memberships and facility booking where membership purchases for program offerings, such as fitness, swimming, drop-in sports, skating and senior services will be available; Last minute ice rentals will be the first online facility rental service to be introduced, with additional facility rentals planned.
- The town’s exploring pilot partnerships that may be potential opportunities to engage, learn and test, recognizing the knowledge and experience that many local companies have in digital innovation.

### **Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan**

- Consider the town’s current pilot partnerships and potential partnerships.

## **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2018-2023**

Date prepared                        2018

Prepared by                        Town of Oakville

## Brief Summary

The Town of Oakville's 2018-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan acts as a road map and outlines key actions to meet the requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The Plan addresses several key accomplishments from 2012-2017 and key actions for 2018-2023.

## Relevance to Master Plan

- Key accomplishments include parks and open space staff consultation with the AAC, persons with disabilities, and the public on design elements of trails and outdoor play spaces.
- Opened first digital library hub at Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre.
- Provided delivery and pick-up services of library materials to program users.

## Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- Ensure ongoing compliance of the public library's key accomplishments.

## **Oakville Climate Emergency 2019-2020 Progress Report**

Date prepared                  June 26, 2020

Prepared by                      Town of Oakville

## Brief Summary

The Oakville Climate Emergency 2019-2020 Progress Report identifies several key highlights from the previous year. The report discusses the town's Corporate Energy Management Program, Community Energy Strategy, OakvilleReady, Virtual Climate Outreach, Halton Climate Collective (HCC), Climate Lens Tool Pilot, Climate Literacy, and Showcase cities.

## Relevance to Master Plan

- The town's Corporate Energy Management Program seeks to reduce energy consumption and related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from town owned and operated facilities.
- Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre has LEED Silver Certified, featuring:
  - A 500-kW solar panel system;
  - A geothermal exchange system;
  - High efficiency windows; and
  - High efficiency mechanical equipment.

## Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- OakvilleReady’s seven community resiliency hubs and their role in the community

## **Oakville Universal Design Guidelines**

Date Prepared            August 2020

Prepared by             Town of Oakville

### **Brief Summary**

Design guide is part of Oakville’s’ Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the Design of Public Spaces and Procurement Policy By-Law. Conformance is required for all town owned, leased, or operated facilities and is part of the town’s vision to be “the most livable town in Canada.”

Guide includes interior and exterior requirements and is supplement to the Ontario Building Code, Canadian Standards Association, and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The Guide defines the principles of universal design which serves to promote equitable access to all by respecting the dignity of individuals with varying abilities.

### **Relevance to Master Plan**

- For the most part, Oakville’s facilities are fully accessible with notable exceptions at some older ice rink facilities.

### **Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan**

- Dimensional requirements are much more generous than previous standards and go beyond the Ontario Building Code. This will affect anticipated program spaces and should be considered, particularly for program spaces such as libraries and change rooms where circulation constitutes a large proportion of the usable area.
- Scale of renovation to upgrade existing facilities for barrier-free access may not warrant price when compared to building new.

## **Oakville Sustainable Design Guide**

Date Prepared            April 2010

Prepared by             Town of Oakville, Facilities and Construction Management with Environmental Policy Departments

### **Brief Summary**

Sustainability design guide for all town-owned facilities including new construction, renovations, repairs, or maintenance. Guide follows LEED standards and sets

projects up for a minimum Silver Level certification with the Canada Green Building Council.

#### Relevance to Master Plan

- All town facilities are required to meet this standard. A new Sustainable Design Standard is in development and will likely replace the 2010 guide.
- Document is part of Oakville’s Environmental Strategic Plan, which aims to make Oakville the country’s “most livable town.”
- Oakville declared Climate Emergency in 2019 with a net zero carbon target for 2050 for all corporate activities in 2022.
- Efforts to achieve the net zero carbon goal will be required to lower energy use and carbon emissions of existing facilities. The town is considering deep energy retrofits for existing facilities and mandating Net Zero Carbon and a Low Energy Standard for all new construction and major renovations.

#### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- Costs associated with these mandates will impact budget projections and priorities.
- Site sourced renewable energy systems will require consideration of additional space to accommodate equipment.

## **Parks Studies**

### **North Oakville Parks Facilities Distribution Plan**

Date prepared                      July 4, 2017

Prepared by                        Town of Oakville

#### Brief Summary

Originally prepared in 2009 to assist with implementation of the North West and North East Oakville Secondary Plans, the North Oakville Parks Facilities Distribution Plan was updated in 2017. It consists of a map of community parks, neighbourhood parks, village / urban square and natural heritage system. Proposed parks are listed, along with their size (hectares and acres) and recommended facilities.

#### Relevance to Master Plan

- The total amount of parkland identified in the North Oakville Parks Distribution Plan is approximately 193 hectares. When last assessed in 2017, this supply was deemed sufficient to meet forecasted population needs to 2031 and beyond.

- Community Parks sites consists of Sixteen Mile Sports Park “North” and “South”, Joshua Meadows Community Park, West Oakville Sports Park, and Palermo Park. Some of these parks have been developed or partially developed, while others remain future capital projects.

Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- The parks inventory is current as of 2017 and needs to be updated through this Master Plan, with updates to reflect facility needs emerging from updated assessments.

**Recreational Trail Accessibility Audit and Strategy**

Date Prepared: 2019

Prepared by: Paradigm Transportation Solutions Limited

Brief Summary:

Inventory and assessment of Oakville’s trail network with regards to accessibility and AODA compliance. The study identified areas for improvement, developed standards for trail development consistent with DOPSS (part of AODA), prioritized trail improvements and replacements, updated local design standards to ensure alignment with other regulations and standards, and created a unified trail signage system.

Relevance to Master Plan:

- Accessibility of recreational trails
- Trail design standards
- Trail system signage

Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan:

- The study provides recommendations for existing town plans, standards, and guidelines to ensure they conform with the Integrated Accessibility Standards of the AODA (see page 40).
- Trail design standards (width, surfacing, amenities, lighting) are identified on page 28, signage standards on pages 51- 55, and level of difficulty ratings on pages 65-66. Ensure recommendations are aligned with these, as appropriate.
- Specific recommendations are provided for existing design standards and details (see page 42). These should be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate.

## **Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan (2008 – 2027)**

Date Prepared: 2008

Prepared by: Urban Forest Innovations Inc. and Dr. Andy Kenney

### Brief Summary:

A comprehensive 20-year strategic plan for “a more efficient approach to the management and stewardship of the Town of Oakville’s ‘green infrastructure’ than is possible with current practices” (p. vii). The plan focuses on the area south of Dundas Street, but recommends that a similar approach be taken for North Oakville (for which a plan was prepared in 2012).

The recommendations are intended to be flexible and to allow staff “to respond effectively to environmental and regulatory change, complexity, and unforeseen events”. The plan is broken down into four 5-year cycles, covering 2008 to 2027.

The ultimate goal of the plan is to protect, maintain, and enhance Oakville’s urban forest, recognizing that it is a critical environmental, economic, and social resource.

### Relevance to Master Plan:

- The recommendations have an impact on the planning, design, planting, and management of trees in parks and woodlands.

### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan:

The following recommendations may have an impact on parks and open spaces. Status updates may be necessary given the age of the plan.

- Recommendation 21: Consider adopting minimum soil volume standards for planting details.
- Recommendation 28: Develop removal and replacement plans to increase the age class and species diversity in areas identified as having a canopy dominated by mature Norway and silver maples.
- Recommendation 30: Establish a project that will identify (through GIS) areas at risk for exotic invasions (i.e. near natural areas such as woodlots, wetlands, ravines, etc.).
- Recommendation 33: Conduct a feasibility study for the creation of a municipal arboretum, to be situated in a cemetery or large park.
- Recommendation 34: Outline the creation of a pro-active under planting program in those communities at risk of decreasing urban forest canopy cover due to aging trees.

- Recommendation 36: The town’s Parks and Open Space Department will identify opportunities for Parks Naturalization that contribute to the forest canopy and prepare capital budget costs.
- Recommendation 39: Produce a GIS-based planting plan...taking into consideration the “Best Species for Air Quality Improvement” and species best suited to the changing climate.
- Recommendation 39: Adopt a 5-year pruning cycle for all intermediate and mature trees and a 3-year cycle for all juvenile trees.
- Recommendation 40: Complete the update to the Tree Protection Policy and Street Tree By-Law. Note: Two departments (PandOS and Dev. Services) are enforcing (depending on the type of project), with two different standards being applied, which undermines the effectiveness.
- Recommendation 41: Consider transferring the responsibility for private tree protection from the Development Services Department to the Parks and Open Space Department. As of 2008, there was no private tree protection by-law. “If the enforcement of the Tree Protection Policy is improved through the addition of conditions on permit issuances, the need for a private tree by-law may be diminished.”
- Recommendation 53: Hire additional staff to undertake inspections of risk trees in the street and park tree population, in woodlands and along nature trails.
- Recommendation 56: Urban Forestry Services should work with the Parks Horticultural Section to formalize a methodology for Public Engagement, based on their existing Volunteer Recognition Program.
- Recommendation 64: The town’s Finance Department and the Park and Open Space Department should review the Forestry Section Business Plan and the 10 Year Capital Forecast to ensure that operating costs for street trees and park trees and Woodland Parks are captured based on a maintenance standard recommended in the UFSMP.

## Recreation and Culture Studies

### Cultural Plan 2016-2021

Date prepared                      2016

Prepared by                        Town of Oakville

#### Brief Summary

The Plan is an update to the original “Enabling Culture to Thrive in Oakville” plan, providing recommendations in developing the town’s cultural offerings and services. The Plan recommends three directions, and provides eight recommended initiatives for reaching and engaging the whole community, the public art program, investing in

cultural anchors, public sector partnerships, arts and culture in more facilities, and the cultural lens initiative.

### Relevance to Master Plan

- The Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre makes space available for classes, exhibitions, and performances.
- Opportunities for public sector partnerships include developing partnerships with the library.
- Spaces supporting cultural activity may be considered when developing future community facilities and existing capital projects as recommended in the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan.

### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- Public sector top-down and bottom-up partnership initiatives are viewed as opportunities for Oakville. A suggestion is creating an Oakville cultural round table consisting of high-level meetings between town staff and elected officials, representatives of Sheridan College, School Boards and the Oakville Public Library.
- There is a need to address several challenges caused by the limited amenities and size of Oakville Centre for Performing Arts.

## **Cultural Hub Study (2014)**

Date prepared                  June 2014

Prepared by                      Web Management Services Inc.

### Brief Summary

The purpose of the Downtown Cultural Hub Study (DCH) is to explore opportunities to create downtown cultural and performing arts spaces that includes a performing arts centre, art gallery, library, outdoor program space, and indoor cultural space or digital hub that will become the cultural, social, and economic heart of the community. The Study examines the best locations for these activities, looking at the Centennial Square site, the Fire Hall site and the former Canada Post office building, and the options for combining these cultural facilities with residential and office uses to help finance their development.

The Plan set out five objectives to achieve its vision.

1. To contribute to a successful economically vibrant downtown
2. To create a cultural focus for the town in the downtown area
3. To provide facilities and infrastructure that meet existing and future needs

4. To protect and enhance the natural environmental and cultural heritage of downtown
5. To develop solutions that are financially sustainable

#### Relevance to Master Plan

- Three options were developed for the DCH and the preferred option (Option 3, Dispersed – New Build) includes a new Performing Arts Centre (750 seat main theatre, 325 seat secondary theatre, lobby, restaurant/lounge, space for meetings/conferences, and cultural innovation and program space) and a full gallery program and full digital library on the post office site. However, infrastructure funding programs have not provided the opportunity for the desired scale of federal-provincial contributions and Council passed a motion in March 2016 that the town would not sell Centennial Square lands or air rights to assist in project financing.
- The DCH initiative has not yet been implemented, but Council directed staff to begin capital planning in 2023 and to plan for cultural facilities distributed throughout the downtown area. The key components of the DCH include a new library, gallery and performing arts centre as well as major open space areas including a Navy Street Plaza and a new Riverfront Park.
- The DCH will follow a dispersed model which offers a better opportunity to attract residential and commercial opportunities by spreading the benefit of this substantial investment throughout the downtown area. A dispersed model is also beneficial as a tool to help manage the staging of construction across a broader area, minimizing construction disruption to the greatest extent possible.

#### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- The DCH remains an ongoing initiative that is related – but beyond the scope – of this Master Plan.

## **Library Studies**

### **OPL Annual Report 2021**

Date Prepared            2022

Prepared by             Oakville Public Library

#### Brief Summary

Annual Report of library activities and output measures for 2021.

### Relevance to Master Plan

The report is a snapshot in time for the year 2021. It also represents a more complex view of library operations as in-person programming and streaming are added to the OPL offerings. Reference to the outdoor space at Glen Abbey Library is also important as are new community partnerships, more library express options, as well as Trust and Reconciliation actions and social service initiatives.

### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- Virtual vs. in person program offerings and its impact on space requirements and operational functions.
- Output analysis for 2020, 2021 and 2022 will need to be factored into the background and recommendations.
- Further research and/or direction may be needed regarding the future physical collection (space implications), the impact of social services and new partnership initiatives on existing and future spaces, newcomer services, etc.

## **OPL Annual Report 2020**

Date Prepared            2020

Prepared by            Oakville Public Library

### Brief Summary

Annual Report of library activities and output measures for 2020.

### Relevance to Master Plan

Provides a snapshot in time for the year 2020. The report also provides a benchmark for certain functions and activities that required adaptation during COVID-19. It also provides background and some benchmarking for customer satisfaction and tracking of OPL's evolution through COVID-19 taken as a whole with the 2021 and the 2022 Annual Report.

### Matters that may require further analysis in the Master Plan

- Virtual vs. in person program offerings and its impact on space requirements and operational functions.
- Output analysis for 2020, 2021 and 2022 will need to be factored into the background and recommendations.

# Appendix C: Recreation Facility Inventories, Profiles and Preliminary Observations

## Recreation Facility Inventories

Contained below is a listing of indoor recreation facilities owned and/or operated by the Town of Oakville. All data was provided by the town and is current as of January 1, 2023. Capital projects that are expected to be underway in 2023 are noted where known.

### Community Centres

	Community Centres	Plan Area	Number
1	Glen Abbey Community Centre	W	1
2	Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre	E	1
3	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre	SE	1
4	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	1
5	River Oaks Community Centre	E	1
6	Sixteen Mile Community Centre (2025)	NW	1
7	Trafalgar Park Community Centre	SW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>

### Indoor Pools

	Indoor Pools	Plan Area	Number of Tanks
1	Glen Abbey Community Centre	W	1
2	Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre	E	2
3	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre	SE	2
4	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	1
5	Sixteen Mile Community Centre (2025)	NW	2
6	White Oaks Pool (HSDB)	E	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>6 locations (9 tanks)</b>

## Arenas

	Arenas	Plan Area	Number of Pads
1	Glen Abbey Community Centre	W	2
2	Joshua's Creek Arenas	E	2
3	Kinoak Arena	SW	1
4	Maplegrove Arena	SE	1
5	River Oaks Community Centre	E	2
6	Sixteen Mile Sports Complex	E	4
7	Trafalgar Park Community Centre	SW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>

## Seniors' Facilities

	Seniors' Facilities	Plan Area	Type
1	Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre	E	Integrated
2	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	Integrated
3	River Oaks Community Centre	E	Integrated
4	Sir John Colborne Seniors Centre	SW	Stand-alone
5	Trafalgar Park Community Centre	SW	Integrated
	<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>

## Gymnasiums

	Gymnasiums	Plan Area	Number
1	Glen Abbey Community Centre	W	2
2	Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre*	E	1
3	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre	SE	2
4	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	3
5	River Oaks Community Centre*	E	1
6	Sixteen Mile Community Centre (2025)	NW	2
7	Trafalgar Park Community Centre	SE	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>5 locations (10 gyms) plus 2 non- regulation spaces</b>

\* non-regulation size gymnasiums

Note: The town also permits gymnasiums maintained by the HDSB and HCDSB.

## **Fitness Centres**

	Fitness Centres	Plan Area	Number
1	Glen Abbey Community Centre	W	1
2	Iroquois Ridge Recreation Centre	E	1
3	Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre	SE	1
4	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	1
5	River Oaks Community Centre	E	1
6	Sixteen Mile Community Centre (2025)	NW	1
7	Trafalgar Park Community Centre	SW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>

## **Indoor Turf Facilities**

	Indoor Turf Facilities	Plan Area	Number of Fields
1	Pine Glen Soccer Centre	W	4

## **Arts and Culture Facilities**

	Fitness Centres	Plan Area	Number
1	Oakville Centre for Performing Arts	SE	1
2	Oakville Galleries	SE	2
3	Oakville Museum	SE	1
4	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>

# Recreation Facility Profiles and Preliminary Observations

The consulting team visited each Town of Oakville community centre and arena to observe current conditions and design attributes. Commentary from municipal staff was helpful in framing the context for each location. Summarized below for consideration within next phases of Master Plan development is high-level information on each facility and preliminary challenges and opportunities identified by the consulting team. These are not to be interpreted as recommendations, but rather items for future consideration and analysis.

## **Glen Abbey Community Centre (GACC)**

### About the Facility

- The Glen Abbey Community centre was built in 1988/89 and expanded in 2005 (second ice pad). The facility contains two ice pads, a 25-metre 4-lane leisure pool and conversation pool, fitness centre and spin bike room, four squash courts, multi-use program rooms, gymnasium, and library branch. The centre also contains space leased to the Oakville Gymnastics Club and a physiotherapy clinic.
- Recently converted Community Room B to accommodate a spin studio and other uses.
- Located within a community park, near area schools.

### Challenges

- The pool/fitness change rooms were recently renovated, but remain under-sized (e.g., family change room is small; insufficient locker space, etc.).
- The gymnasium lacks dedicated change rooms.
- The arena upper viewing area is not accessible (lacks elevator) and some arena change rooms lack washrooms (showers only).
- The original ice pad (Blue pad) is aging, but is in the capital forecast for updates in 2024.
- Controlled access to membership areas is difficult because of distance between reception desk and door.
- The facility lacks dedicated space and programming for seniors.

### Opportunities

- The town has prioritized the renewal of this facility by identifying the need to undertake a feasibility study to guide future investment (2024 capital budget).
- The centre has two staffed customer service desks, one for the centre and another for the fitness area. Furthermore, common areas within the centre are

beginning to show their age and could be updated. Renovations to these spaces may help to resolve issues.

- The fitness centre is under-sized and lacks natural light. It has been identified for expansion in previous master plans. This opportunity requires further study.
- Public interest has been expressed to maintain and/or expand the sauna facilities, which are the only public saunas associated with a pool in Oakville.
- Reconfiguration of the change room areas could allow for more efficient use of space with direct access for universal change to the pool deck.
- This is the town's busiest community centre. The new Sixteen Mile Community Centre (5-kilometres away) has the potential to provide some relief.
- The facility's aquatic hall is relatively small and could be expanded for another pool tank which would enable more programming possibilities.
- Arena change room areas have possibility of rearrangement to provide direct washroom and shower access.
- Community kitchen area now being used for storage and should be re-purposed as such.
- Renovations to the centre would allow for the opportunity to pull together the colours, fixtures and finishes as currently, there are many.
- A community room was recently lost due to the addition of a spin studio, leading to the loss of program/meeting space. An opportunity to relocate this spin studio elsewhere should be considered (e.g., under-utilized racquetball court).
- The original Diatomaceous Earth (DE) pool filtration system poses maintenance and health challenges for staff. Consideration should be given to installing a high-speed sand filtration system at the time of renovations.

## **Iroquois Ridge Community Centre (IRCC)**

### About the Facility

- Multi-use recreation centre built in 2000/01 containing fitness centre/studio, aquatics centre, single gymnasium, multi-use rooms, older adult centre, and attached library branch.
- The aquatics centre consists of a 25-metre 8-lane pool, separate leisure tank with slide, and an upper-level viewing gallery. This facility is home to the Oakville Aquatic Club.
- Most recently renovated in 2017 (change rooms, library branch, etc.).
- Co-located with Glen Ashton Park, containing sports fields and community amenities. Adjacent to high school.
- More renovations of the aquatic spectator area to accommodate more off-deck storage is planned for 2023/24.
- Kindergym, Pickleball and mini nets are popular programs within the gymnasium.

### Challenges

- Gymnasium is not ideal for sports such as basketball due to its multi-purpose flooring and small size.

- Community centre rentals are on the decline.
- Security of 'in skin' fitness space. Look to integrate the membership check-in with the doors.

### Opportunities

- Renovation planned for 2023/24 to address lobby and customer service desk upgrades (including improved sightlines), pool enclosure (e.g., HVAC, lighting, tiling, etc.).
- Reconfiguration of the Fitness and Cardio-Weight Room wing could make better use of space and take advantage underused West Ridge Room.
- Existing gymnasium space should be upgraded.

## **Joshua's Creek Arenas**

### About the Facility

- Twin pad arena initially built by private sector in 2004 and subsequently purchased by town.
- Facility also contains two shooter pads, spacious upper mezzanine, and leased office space for sport organizations.

### Challenges

- Location in industrial area limits pedestrian accessibility, though facility is easily accessed by vehicle from QEW.
- Summer use is limited due to resources and demand. Upper mezzanine space has been leased to Oakville Community Table Tennis Association, but this presents staffing and access challenges during the non-ice season.

### Opportunities

- The front-end of the building, which contains two entrances and a large customer service desk, is not well designed and could be renovated for better use of space.
- A long-term use for the upper mezzanine space, and potentially year-round use of the arena, should be considered.
- Explore a full encompassing Building Automation System (BAS).

## **Kinoak Arena**

### About the Facility

- Single pad arena built in 1966.
- Embedded within neighbourhood. No associated outdoor facilities.

## Challenges

- Aging single pad that is outdated. Approximately \$1 million in capital repairs scheduled for 2024.
- Not barrier-free (e.g., narrow door openings, stairs to benches, etc.) and significant investment would have to be made for compliance.
- Does not offer contemporary spaces or amenities (lobby is small, concession not operating, change rooms lack showers etc.).
- Single use facility. Year-round use is not viable; not used in summer due to lack of demand and resources.
- Existing building envelope does not meet today's energy efficiency standards.
- Undersized ice pad, not NHL regulation size.

## Opportunities

- May have potential for conversion to other in-demand uses (e.g., indoor dry pad, gymnasium, turf, program space, etc.), though accessibility and building envelope issues would need to be resolved.
- If town decides to continue operating the facility as a seasonal ice rink, improvements to be considered include:
  - Accessibility improvements.
  - Addition of spectator safety netting.
  - Addition of Level ice and fast ice systems to the ice resurfer to maximize utility savings and improve ice quality.
  - Explore heat recovery options in refrigeration plant.
  - Explore addition of Desiccant dehumidification in place of mechanical units to improve shoulder season ice and building environment conditions.
  - Ensure proper refrigeration plant programming through a dedicated BAS system for the refrigeration plant. Efficiencies can be realized through night set back and daytime ice temperature settings.

## **Maple Grove Arena**

### About the Facility

- Facility is a single stand-alone aging ice rink built in 1972/73. It will require significant investment or replacement.
- Arena floor is used in the summer for roller hockey.
- Embedded within neighbourhood. No associated outdoor facilities, but is connected to trails system.

### Challenges

- Facility is not barrier-free (e.g., stairs to benches, etc.).
- Does not offer contemporary spaces or amenities (lobby is small, concession not operating, etc.).

- Aging facility lacking energy efficient building envelope and systems.
- Refrigeration plant struggles to maintain temperatures on warmer fall days and older mechanical dehumidifiers struggle to maintain proper humidity levels on high humid outdoor conditions.
- Lack of spectator safety netting.

### Opportunities

- Similar to Kinoak Arena, may have potential for conversion to other in-demand uses (e.g., indoor dry pad, gymnasium, turf, program space, etc.), though accessibility issues would need to be resolved.
- If town decides to continue operating the facility as a seasonal ice rink, improvements to be considered include:
  - Accessibility improvements.
  - Addition of spectator safety netting.
  - Addition of Level ice and fast ice systems to the ice resurfer to maximize utility savings and improve ice quality.
  - Explore heat recovery options in refrigeration plant.
  - Explore addition of Desiccant dehumidification in place of mechanical units to improve shoulder season ice and building environment conditions.
  - Ensure proper refrigeration plant programming through a dedicated BAS system for the refrigeration plant. Efficiencies can be realized through night set back and daytime ice temperature settings.

## **Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre (OTCC)**

### About the Facility

- The town’s newest community centre, built on the former Oakville-Trafalgar Hospital Lands in 2020. Space contains a multi-tank aquatics centre (lane and therapeutic pools), gymnasium, walking track, fitness centre with studio.
- The parking garage from the former hospital was retained, offering ample parking.

### Challenges

- The gymnasium design does not allow for full functionality due to the second floor walking track; e.g., can only fit 4 pickleball courts in the double gymnasium.
- The therapeutic pool has a maximum depth of 1.1 metres, limiting versatility in programming.

### Opportunities

- The first-floor roof on the south side has potential to be re-purposed as a green roof or possibly an outdoor balcony / plaza space.
- Building systems:

- Explore solar heat possibilities for pool heating and domestic hot water heating.
- Recommend all future Oakville pool retrofits/replacements be Myrtha-style, taking advantage of transferable equipment and skillsets for all staff and facilities.
- Look into usefulness of therapeutic pool and explore alternative programming for the shallow pool.

## **Pine Glen Soccer Centre**

### About the Facility

- Built by the town in 2008 and operated by the Oakville Soccer Club. Facility contains one large FIFA-size indoor turf field (divisible into four smaller fields), change rooms, and board room. Co-located with Pine Glen Park, containing several outdoor soccer fields and community amenities.
- Rentals are administered by the Oakville Soccer Club under agreement with the town. Largely used to support local soccer programs, leagues and camps, but some use by rugby, baseball and other sport groups. Offer a pole walking program.

### Challenges

- The Town of Oakville has no direct programming times or access.
- Daytime and summer usage of the facility is low. Do not have flooring system to allow for non-turf usage.
- Artificial turf has degraded and will be replaced by the club in 2023.
- Floor cracking in the lobby and changeroom hallway. Mya require further investigation.

### Opportunities

- Soccer club indicates that there is sufficient demand to consider an expansion, as well as improvements to storage and spectator viewing.
- The current lease term expires in 2028 and may be renegotiated at that time.
- Addition of portable hard surface flooring would create an opportunity for additional use and revenue potential during slower turf rental times.
- Expand on HVAC BAS system to ensure Indoor Air Quality is maintained.
- Adult leagues offer opportunity for concessions and alcohol sales as a means of revenue.

## **Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre (QEPCCC)**

### **About the Facility**

- Former secondary school building built in 1975; town purchased building/property and undertook significant renovation, re-opening in 2012.
- Contains several major recreation amenities (e.g., 25M 6-lane indoor pool, gymnasiums, fitness centre), cultural spaces (e.g., black box theatre, recording studio, gallery and display space, wood working studio, ceramic studio, etc.), and other community services (e.g., OPL Express Library, older adult centre, youth centre, recording studio, third-party child care, etc.).
- Centre offers a wide range of programming (mostly town-delivered) and rentals.

### **Challenges**

- QEPCCC is a very large facility (total size is 144,000sf; there are 47 bookable spaces), requiring considerable resources.
- The facility was not purpose-built, and lacks contemporary spaces such as large family change rooms for pool.
- The Fitness Centre is performing below expectations – it is not well used by teens and lacks proper control.
- The Older Adult Centre is performing below expectations – users are seeking a larger dedicated space (possibly in other areas of town).
- Lack of space and resources for drop-in programming.
- The fundamental spatial character of the former high school remains with multiple entrances leading into long corridors and rooms closed off from each other. Moving through the facility is reminiscent of being at school and users note that the building feels empty despite the variety and popularity of the program being offered.
- Multiple exit doors are challenging for Staff to monitor.
- Continued investment into new technology for classrooms such as 3-D printers, recording studio equipment, etc. is a challenge. Some classrooms can become too small as additional updated equipment is replaced/installed.
- Programming must consider services provided by private sector so as to avoid duplication.

### **Opportunities**

- Continued enhancement of the Youth Centre by making it more youth-friendly.
- The Older Adult Centre could be removed in favour of other higher-order needs, with services shifting to another location.
- Creating a secondary large open space, similar to the main entrance, will anchor the corridors to an identifiable landmark that will help visitors orient themselves inside the building and provide a place for social engagement.
- Providing visibility (windows) into more program rooms will help introduce to visitors all that the facility has to offer.

- Environmental graphics on both exterior and interior will give the facility more character, reinforce the facility’s brand and help navigation tremendously.
- Further examine costs vs revenue for recording studio and determine with regular capital equipment replacement if there is a need to maintain, discontinue, or adopt a new delivery model.
- Expand on the digital Library vending service.
- Building Systems:
  - In an effort to maximize utility efficiencies, explore further LED lighting replacement and also look at integrating a Building Automation System for heating and cooling controls of the HVAC system.
  - Investigate efficiencies for the pool operating and heating system.
  - To further promote Health and Safety and ease of operational maintenance, look into updating the pool filtration system.

## **River Oaks Community Centre (ROCC)**

### About the Facility

- This is the town’s oldest community centre, built in 1984 and expanded to add a second ice pad in 1998. Facility contains two ice pads, fitness centre with small track, squash and racquetball courts, multi-use rooms (including gymnasium-like space), personal fitness room, etc. The centre also contains space leased to a physiotherapy clinic.
- Facility serves as a hub for activities organized by the River Oaks Mature Adults Club.
- Located within a community park, near area schools.
- A recent renovation resulted in an upgraded lobby, complete refurbishment of Pad B, and conversion of two shooter pads into multi-use rooms.

### Challenges

- Pad A (original ice pad) is slated for capital renewal in 2025.
- The large multi-use room supports activities such as pickleball, but is under-sized to be used as a full gymnasium for sports such as basketball.
- An appropriate room for fitness and spin classes is missing.
- The facility lacks a gymnasium.

### Opportunities

- Squash and racquetball courts, as well as fitness area are original spaces that have design challenges (e.g., the squash courts are North American standards, not the preferred International dimensions; racquetball courts are under-utilized; fitness centre lacks separate studio space – one large space creates noise disruptions, etc.). Furthermore, the change rooms require further renovation – whirlpools have been decommissioned but remain in place; saunas have also

been retained. Space left over for squash court viewing is underused. This entire wing could be replanned and updated.

- “The Box” – personal training, cross-fit space located at the rear of Pad B – is underutilized space that could benefit from a business plan and greater promotion.
- A youth room at this location could serve the nearby school population who spend time in the lobby after school.
- Building systems:
  - Expand on Building automation systems for refrigeration, HVAC, and lighting.
  - Ensure desiccant dehumidification is working efficiently.
  - Explore and expand on heat recovery options.
  - Expand on printed advertising opportunities such as rink board ads and ice logos.
  - Community Centre and Fitness Areas could use a LED lighting retrofit both to modernize and save utilities.
  - Offer expanded vending to capitalize on proximity to local school or lease out concession space.

## **Sir John Colborne Centre (SJCC)**

### About the Facility

- The town’s only stand-alone older adult centre.
- Built in 1991. Contains a multi-purpose lounge, activity rooms (3), games rooms, auditorium (divisible), and café.
- Governed by volunteer board of directors; cost-sharing arrangements are common. Large volunteer commitment within programs.
- Memberships and drop-in fees are affordable for most users.

### Challenges

- The facility is very busy and most spaces are used to capacity, though usage has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- Insufficient parking is a common complaint from users, as is consistent climate control within the building.
- Site is limited for large expansion given existing mature trees and park setting.
- Mechanical HVAC system requires review and possible upgrade.

### Opportunities

- Off-site programming and off-hour rentals have been shifted to QEPCCC and other locations, typically using multi-use shared spaces. Maximizing programming at this and other sites may be able to be explored further.
- A new floor (wood spring) will be installed in the auditorium in 2023/24.

- Modest expansions to facility may be possible to offer additional program, activity and gathering space, such as a larger games room.
- Building systems:
  - Perform a thorough review of HVAC and ensure all equipment and dampers are operating as they should be.
  - Look at incorporating wireless thermostats and possible incorporate into a BAS system allowing better control of temperatures.
  - In order to further maximize utility savings, develop a LED lighting replacement plan and look to secure grants such as “Save on Energy” to offset costs of lighting replacement.
  - To better accommodate 3rd party event rentals, give consideration to outfitting the facility with an access control system on all doors that would allow protocols to be inputted into the door access control system to allow entry to facility and rooms that are rented. For example, the CDVI Atrium system has a user friendly easily installed door access control system that could be incorporated.

## **Sixteen Mile Sports Complex**

### About the Facility

- Built in 2010, the first phase of this complex includes 4 indoor ice pads (including 1 Olympic-sized ice pad with seating for 1,500), 2 shooter pads, 2 community rooms, leased spaces (restaurant and pro shop), and an OPL Express Library.
- This facility is a primary hub for most minor ice sport organizations in Oakville and is frequently used for tournaments (25-30 per year) and special events.
- Annual foot count is between 850,000 to 1 million persons.
- Key location of Oakville Recreation League (ORL) programming.
- Co-located with Sixteen Mile Sports Park, the town’s largest community park, which is currently undergoing another phase of construction to install additional sports fields and community amenities (e.g., dedicated pickleball courts, cricket field, Skate Park, beach volleyball).
- Scheduled to open in 2025 is an attached multi-use community centre to consist of aquatic facilities (25-metre 6-lane pool, warm-water pool), fitness/active living centre with an athletic 150m elevated track, FIBA-regulation gymnasium, branch library (currently in temporary space), will be the town’s second largest, and flexible multi-use spaces to accommodate seniors, youth and cultural programming.
- Parking to be expanded by 200-250 spots in the lower level to accommodate increased demand.

### Challenges

- Construction of the community centre has been accelerated and the temporary branch library has been moved to a location just north of the site.

- Community consultations for the design of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre generated significant interest, but not all community requests could be feasibly accommodated due to budget, site constraints, and operational considerations (e.g., larger pool, sauna facilities, etc.).

### Opportunities

- A frequent request from user groups is for dryland training space; this and other amenities are proposed to be added through the Phase 2 Community Centre.

## **Trafalgar Park Community Centre (TPCC)**

### About the Facility

- Originally built as the Oakville Arena (single pad rink), the facility was overhauled and expanded in 2018 to include a gymnasium, walking track, older adults centre, fitness centre, and multi-purpose room (Pine Room).
- The arena – which was originally built in 1951 – was completely refurbished with the intent of serving community needs for decades to come.

### Challenges

- The Gymnasium was not built to FIBA regulation standards due to site constraints.
- The Fitness Centre is least used in the town’s inventory. Nearby fitness centres exist at the new Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre and YMCA of Oakville.

### Opportunities

- The Fitness Centre, which is least used in the town’s inventory, has potential to be converted to other in-demand uses (e.g., equipment-less fitness studio, program room, etc.).
- The Senior’s Lounge / OAC is under-performing and could benefit from additional programming and promotional efforts.
- Building systems:
  - Explore further heat recovery options in refrigeration plant to reduce utilities. E.g., Thermastor Heat recovery tanks to pre-heat domestic hot water from waste heat of refrigeration plant.
  - Consider installation of spectator safety netting as an ORFA best practice.
  - Further expand advertising and electronic displays to better promote internal programming.
  - Explore building HVAC BAS system and ensure proper parameters are in place for all HVAC controls.
  - Explore ice plant BAS and ensure proper parameters are in place for all refrigeration plant operational controls.

## **White Oaks Pool**

### About the Facility

- 25-metre 6-lane pool attached to White Oaks Secondary School; built early 1970s.
- Change rooms were renovated in 2016. Also offers two universal change spaces.
- Not included in the reciprocal agreement with the HDSB as the high school rents the facility. Certain facility duties are handled by the school custodian.

### Challenges

- Association with high school can be a barrier to broader public use.
- Pool contains chair lift, but no accessible ramp.
- While conceived as a partnership with the school, school usage has declined in recent years.
- Tarzan rope is being decommissioned because of inspection services are no longer available. Pool lacks leisure amenities.
- Suspended ceiling cables should be monitored for corrosion.
- Original ceiling having issues and a secondary drop ceiling has been added in 2014.

### Opportunities

- As a stand-alone facility with a rectangular tank, the site is well suited to use by organized aquatic clubs and its usage profile could be adjusted accordingly.
- Potential for patio space off pool deck is available if family leisure programming continues.

# Appendix D: Park Facility Inventories

Contained below is a listing of outdoor park facilities owned and/or operated by the Town of Oakville. All data was provided by the town and is current as of January 1, 2023. Capital projects that are expected to be underway in 2023 are included where known.

## Active Parkland

Park Type	Number of Parks	HA	Per 1,000
<b>Active Parkland</b>			
Community Park	46	275.04	1.22
Neighbourhood Park	212	260.19	1.16
Buffer Block	19	13.26	0.06
<b>Total Active Parkland</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>548.49</b>	<b>2.44</b>
<b>Passive Parkland</b>			
Community Link Park	44	111.33	0.49
Major Valley	14	264.05	1.17
Minor Valley	108	573.15	2.55
Tableland Woodlot	46	262.06	1.16
<b>Total Passive Parkland</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1,210.59</b>	<b>5.38</b>
<b>Total Parkland</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>1,759.08</b>	<b>7.82</b>

## Soccer and Multi-use Fields (outdoor)

	Soccer and Multi-use Fields	Plan Area	Art. Turf Soccer (lit)	Multi-Use Fields (Art. Turf)	Major Soccer (lit)	Major Soccer (unlit)	Mini Soccer (unlit)	Shared Use of School Soccer Fields
1	Abbey Park SS	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
2	Aldercrest Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-
3	Aspen Forest Park	SE	-	-	-	-	2	-
4	Bloomfield Park	W	-	-	-	1	-	-
5	Bronte Athletic Park	SW	-	1	-	-	-	-
6	Brookdale Public School	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
7	Castlebrook Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-
8	Clearview Park	SE	-	-	-	-	1	-
9	E J James Public School	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1
10	Eastview Public School	SW	-	-	-	-	-	1
11	Falgarwood Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
12	Fowley Park	NE	-	-	-	1	-	-
13	Garth Webb SS	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
14	Glen Allen Park	SW	-	-	-	1	1	-
15	Glenashton Park	E	-	-	-	-	2	-
16	Grand Oak Park	W	-	-	-	1	-	-
17	Harman Gate Park	E	-	-	-	1	-	-
18	Heritage Way Park	W	-	-	-	1	-	-
19	Holton Heights Park	E	-	-	-	-	2	-

	Soccer and Multi-use Fields	Plan Area	Art. Turf Soccer (lit)	Multi-Use Fields (Art. Turf)	Major Soccer (lit)	Major Soccer (unlit)	Mini Soccer (unlit)	Shared Use of School Soccer Fields
20	Hopedale Park	SW	-	-	-	1	-	-
21	Iroquois Shore Ridge SS	E	-	-	-	-	-	1
22	Isaac Park	NW	-	-	-	2	-	-
23	Jonathan Park	SE	-	-	-	-	1	-
24	Kingsford Gardens	SE	-	-	-	-	2	-
25	Maple Grove Public School	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1
26	Millstone Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-
27	Montclair Senior School	E	-	-	-	-	-	1
28	Morden Park	SW	-	-	-	1	-	-
29	Munns Creek Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
30	Munns Public School	E	-	-	-	-	-	1
31	Nautical Park	SW	-	-	-	1	-	-
32	New Central Public School	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1
33	Nottingham Park	W	-	-	-	-	2	-
34	Oakville Park	E	-	-	-	4	-	-
35	Oakville Trafalgar SS	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1
36	Oakwood Public School	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1
37	Oxford Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
38	Palermo Public School	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
39	Pilgrim's Way Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-
40	Pine Glen Community Park	W	-	-	4	-	-	-
41	Pinery Park	E	-	-	-	-	2	-
42	Post Corners Public School	E	-	-	-	-	-	1
43	Post Park	SE	-	-	-	1	-	-
44	Postridge Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
45	Q.E. Park	SW	-	-	-	2	-	-
46	Rebecca Gardens	SW	-	-	-	1	-	-
47	Ridgeview Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
48	River Oaks Park	E	-	1	-	-	-	-
49	Saw Whet Park	W	-	-	-	1	-	-
50	Shell Park	SW	-	-	2	2	-	-
51	Sheridan Hills Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
52	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	2	--	2	-	-	-
53	Southeast Sports Fields	SE	-	-	-	1	-	-
54	Sunningdale Park	E	-	-	-	-	1	-
55	Sunningdale Public School	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
56	T. A. Blakelock SS	SW	-	-	-	-	-	1
57	Valleyridge Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-
58	W H Morden Public School	E	-	-	-	-	-	1
59	West Oak Public School	W	-	-	-	-	-	1
60	West Oak Trails Community Park	W	-	-	2	-	-	-
61	Westbrook Park	SW	-	-	-	1	-	-
62	White Oaks SS South Campus	E	-	-	-	-	-	2
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>

## Other Dedicated Rectangular Fields (football, rugby, field hockey, lacrosse)

	Other Dedicated Rectangular Fields	Plan Area	Type
1	Glen Abbey Park	W	Field Hockey

## Ball Diamonds

	Ball Diamonds	Plan Area	Major Hardball (lit)	Major Hardball (unlit)	Minor Hardball (unlit)	Minor Hardball (lit)	Major Softball (lit)	Major Softball (unlit)	Minor Softball (unlit)	Minor Softball (Lit)	Shared Use of School Ball Diamonds
1	Bronte Athletic Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
2	Brookdale Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
3	Brookdale PS	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
4	Clearview Park	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
5	Cornwall Road Sports Park	SE	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
6	Deer Run Park	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
7	Eastview PS	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
8	George Savage Park	NW	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
9	Gladys Speers PS	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
10	Glen Abbey Park	W	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
11	Glenashton Park	E	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
12	Heritage Way Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
13	Holy Family CES	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
14	Hopedale Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
15	Langtry Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
16	Laurelwood Park	E	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
17	Lindsay Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
18	Millbank Park	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
19	Montclair Sr School	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
20	Morden Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
21	Munns Public School	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
22	Neyagawa Park	E	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	Nottingham Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
24	Oakville Park	E	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	Oakwood PS	SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
26	Palermo Park	NW	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
27	Postridge Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	River Glen Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	River Oaks Park	E	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
30	Seabrook Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
31	Sixteen Hollow Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
32	Southeast Sports Fields	SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
33	St. John CES	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

	Ball Diamonds	Plan Area	Major Hardball (lit)	Major Hardball (unlit)	Minor Hardball (unlit)	Minor Hardball (lit)	Major Softball (lit)	Major Softball (unlit)	Minor Softball (unlit)	Minor Softball (Lit)	Shared Use of School Ball Diamonds
34	Sunningdale Park	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
35	Thornlea Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
36	Trafalgar Park	SW	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
37	W H Morden PS	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
38	Wallace Park	SE	-	-	1*	-	-	-	-	-	-
39	Wedgewood Park	SE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
40	West Oak Trails Community Park	W	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
41	Westbrook Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
42	William Rose Park	NE	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
43	Windrush Park	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
44	Woodhaven Park	SW	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
45	Wynten Way Park	SE	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>

\*planned for removal in 2023/24

## Cricket Fields

	Cricket Fields	Plan Area	Number
1	Glenashton Park	E	1
2	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>

## Tennis Courts

	Tennis Courts	Plan Area	Dedicated Tennis - Club (lit)	Dedicated Tennis - Public (lit)	Dedicated Tennis (unlit)	Shared Use of School Tennis Court	Multi-Lined Court (lit)	Multi-Lined Court (unlit)	Shared Use of School Multi-Line Court
1	Aldercrest Park	W	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
2	Ardleigh Park	SE	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
3	Bishopstoke Park	SE	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
4	Bloomfield Park	W	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
5	Castlefield Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
6	Deer Run Park	SE	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
7	Forster Park	SW	-	1	-	-			
8	Fowley Park	NE	-	2	-	-			
9	George Savage Park	NW	-	2	-	-			
10	Glen Abbey Park	W	-	3	-	-	1	-	-
11	Glen Oak Park	SW	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
12	Glenashton Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	2	-

	Tennis Courts	Plan Area	Dedicated Tennis - Club (lit)	Dedicated Tennis - Public (lit)	Dedicated Tennis (unlit)	Shared Use of School Tennis Court	Multi-Lined Court (lit)	Multi-Lined Court (unlit)	Shared Use of School Multi-Line Court
13	Heritage Way Park	W	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
14	Holton Heights Park	E	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
15	Hopedale Park	SW	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
16	Jonathan Park	SE	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
17	Lawson Park	SE	-	2	-	-			
18	Leighland Park	E	-	-	1	-			
19	Litchfield Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
20	Maplegrove Park	SE	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
21	Old Abbey Park	W					-	2	-
22	Q.E. Park	SW	7	1	-	-			
23	River Glen Park	E	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
24	Saw Whet Neighbourhood Park	W	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
25	River Oaks Park	E	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
26	Shell Park	SW					3	-	-
27	Sheridan Hills Park	E	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
28	Sovereign Park	SW					-	2	-
29	Sunningdale Public School	W	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
30	Trafalgar Park	SW	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
31	Valleybrook Park	E	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
32	Wallace Park	SE	4	1	-	-			
33	White Oaks SS S. Campus	E	-	-	-	4			
34	William Rose Park	NE	-	2	-	-			
35	Windrush Park	W	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
	<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>

**Planned Tennis Courts:** Sixteen Mile Sports Park (4 dedicated lit public tennis courts planned for 2024/25)

### Pickleball Courts

	Pickleball Courts	Plan Area	Dedicated Pickleball (lit)	Dedicated Pickleball (unlit)	Multi-Lined Court (lit)	Multi-Lined Court (unlit)	Shared Use of School Multi-Line Court
1	Aldercrest Park	W			-	1	-
2	Ardleigh Park	SE			-	1	-
3	Bishopstoke Park	SE			-	1	-
4	Bloomfield Park	W			-	1	-
5	Castlefield Park	E			-	1	-
6	Deer Run Park	SE			-	1	-
7	Fowley Park	NE	4	-			

	Pickleball Courts	Plan Area	Dedicated Pickleball (lit)	Dedicated Pickleball (unlit)	Multi-Lined Court (lit)	Multi-Lined Court (unlit)	Shared Use of School Multi-Line Court
8	George Savage Park	NW	2	-			
9	Glen Abbey Park	W			1	-	-
10	Glen Oak Park	SW			-	1	-
11	Glenashton Park	E			-	2	-
12	Heritage Way Park	W			-	1	-
13	Holton Heights Park	E			1	-	-
14	Hopedale Park	SW			-	1	-
15	Jonathan Park	SE			-	1	-
16	Litchfield Park	E			-	1	-
17	Maplegrove Park	SE			-	1	-
18	Old Abbey Park	W			-	2	-
19	River Glen Park	E			-	1	-
20	River Oaks Park	E			1	-	-
21	Saw Whet Neighbourhood Park	W	2	-	-	-	-
22	Shell Park	SW			3	-	-
23	Sheridan Hills Park	E			-	1	-
24	Sovereign Park	SW			-	2	-
25	Sunningdale Public School	W			-	-	1
26	Trafalgar Park	SW			1	-	-
27	Valleybrook Park	E	-	1		1	
28	West Oak Trails Community Park	W	-	1			
29	William Rose Park	NE	3	-			
30	Windrush Park	W			-	1	-
	<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>

**Planned Pickleball Courts:** Sixteen Mile Sports Park (7 dedicated lit pickleball courts planned for 2024/25)

## Basketball Courts

	Basketball Courts	Plan Area	Basketball Courts - Full	Basketball Courts - Half	Ball Hockey Court
1	Bloomfield Park	W	1	-	-
2	Castlebrook Park	W	1	-	-
3	Falgarwood Park	E	1	-	-
4	Forster Park	SW	1	-	-
5	George Savage Park	NW	1	1	-
6	Glen Abbey Park	W	1	-	-
7	Glenashton Park	E	1	-	-
8	Hixon Parkette	SW	-	1	-
9	Hopedale Park	SW	-	1	-

	Basketball Courts	Plan Area	Basketball Courts - Full	Basketball Courts - Half	Ball Hockey Court
10	Kingsford Gardens	SE	-	1	1
11	Maplegrave Park	SE	1	-	-
12	Memorial Park	E	1	-	-
13	Nautical Park	SW	1	-	-
14	Normandy Park	SW	-	1	-
15	Old Abbey Park	W	1	-	-
16	Pelee Woods Park	E	-	1	-
17	Q.E. Park	SW	-	1	-
18	River Glen Park	E	1	-	-
19	Saw Whet Neighbourhood Park	W	1	-	-
20	Trafalgar Park	SW	1	-	-
21	Wallace Park	SE	1	-	-
22	William Rose Park	NE	1	-	-
	<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>

**Planned Basketball Courts:** Sixteen Mile Sports Park (1 full basketball court planned for 2024/25)

### Outdoor Pools

	Outdoor Pools	Plan Area	Number
1	Bronte Pool	SW	1
2	Brookdale Pool	SW	1
3	Falgarwood Pool	E	1
4	Lions Pool	SW	1
5	Wedgewood Pool	SE	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>

### Splash Pads

	Splash Pads	Plan Area	Number
1	Aspen Forest	SE	1
2	Coronation Park	SW	1
3	Forster Park	SW	1
4	Fowley Park	NE	1
5	Heritage Way Park	W	1
6	Isaac Park	NW	1
7	Martindale Park	E	1
8	Millbank Park	E	1
9	Munns Creek Park	E	1
10	Nautical Park	SW	1
11	Neyagawa Park	E	1
12	Old Abbey Park	W	1

	Splash Pads	Plan Area	Number
13	Pine Glen Community Park	W	1
14	Postridge Park	E	1
15	Reynolds Community Park	SE	1
16	Saw Whet Neighbourhood Park	W	1
17	Sixteen Hollow Park	W	1
18	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	1
19	Travertine Park	NW	1
20	Valleybrook Park	E	1
21	Valleyridge Park	W	1
22	West Oak Trails Community Park	W	1
23	William Rose Park	NE	1
24	Wynten Way Park	SE	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>

## Playgrounds

	Playgrounds	Plan Area	Playground (Junior)	Playground (Senior)	Playground (Combined)
1	Aldercrest Park	W	-	1	-
2	Algrove Park	E	-	1	-
3	Annapolis Park	SE	-	-	1
4	Applewood Park	SW	-	1	-
5	Arbourview Trail - 2	W	-	-	1
6	Ardleigh Park	SE	-	1	-
7	Aspen Forest Park	SE	-	-	1
8	Bayshire Woods Park	E	-	-	1
9	Bishopstoke Park	SE	-	-	1
10	Bloomfield Park	W	-	-	1
11	Bowbeer Parkette	NE	-	-	1
12	Brantwood Park	SE	-	-	1
13	Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park	SW	-	1	-
14	Brookdale Park	SW	-	-	1
15	Burnet Park	SW	-	1	-
16	Candy Cane Park	SW	-	-	1
17	Canonridge Park	W	-	1	-
18	Carol Park	SE	-	1	-
19	Castlebrook Park	W	-	-	1
20	Castlefield Park	E	-	1	-
21	Charnwood Park	SE	-	1	-
22	Colonel William Pond Parkette	W	-	-	1
23	Colonel William Woods Parkette	W	-	-	1
24	Cornwall Road Sports Park	SE	-	1	-
25	Coronation Park	SW	-	-	1
26	Courtleigh Park	NE	-	-	1
27	Craigleith Park	E	-	-	1

	Playgrounds	Plan Area	Playground (Junior)	Playground (Senior)	Playground (Combined)
28	Creek Path Woods	SW	-	1	-
29	Deer Run Park	SE	-	1	-
30	Dunvegan Park	SE	-	1	-
31	Elm Road Park	E	-	1	-
32	Emily Cline Park	NW	-	-	1
33	Everest Parkette	NE	-	-	1
34	Fairmount Park	W	-	-	1
35	Falgarwood Park	E	-	-	1
36	Featherstone Parkette	NW	-	-	1
37	Florence Park	SW	1	-	-
38	Forster Park	SW	-	-	1
39	Fowley Park	NE	-	-	1
40	George Savage Park	NW	-	-	1
41	Glen Abbey Park	W	-	-	1
42	Glen Allen Park	SW	-	-	1
43	Glen Oak Creek Trail North - 1	W	-	-	1
44	Glen Oak Park	SW	-	1	-
45	Glenashton Park	E	-	-	1
46	Golden Meadow Park	E	-	1	-
47	Grand Boulevard Park	E	-	-	1
48	Grand Oak Park	W	-	-	1
49	Greenwich Park	W	-	-	1
50	Grenville Park	E	-	1	-
51	Harman Gate Park	E	-	-	1
52	Heritage Way Park	W	-	-	1
53	Hixon Parkette	SW	-	-	1
54	Holton Heights Park	E	-	-	1
55	Hopedale Park	SW	-	-	1
56	Horton Way Parkette	NW	-	-	1
57	Isaac Park	NW	-	-	1
58	Jennings Park	SW	1	-	-
59	Jonathan Park	SE	-	1	-
60	Kaitting House Parkette	NW	-	-	1
61	Kingsford Gardens	SE	-	-	1
62	Kingsway Park	SE	-	-	1
63	Lakeside Park	SE	-	-	1
64	Langtry Park	W	-	-	1
65	Laurelwood Park	E	-	-	1
66	Lawson Park	SE	-	1	-
67	Lawson Playground	SW	-	-	1
68	Lindsay Park	W	-	1	-
69	Lions Valley Park	NW	-	1	-
70	Litchfield Park	E	-	1	-
71	Loyalist Parkette	NE	-	-	1
72	Lyndhurst Park	E	-	-	1
73	Maple Valley Park	SE	-	1	-

	Playgrounds	Plan Area	Playground (Junior)	Playground (Senior)	Playground (Combined)
74	Maple Grove Park	SE	-	-	1
75	Margaret Drive Park	SW	-	1	-
76	Margot Street Park	E	-	1	-
77	Marine Drive Park	SW	-	-	1
78	Martindale Park	E	-	-	1
79	Memorial Park	E	-	-	1
80	Merton Parkette	W	-	-	1
81	Millbank Park	E	-	-	1
82	Millstone Park	W	-	-	1
83	Mohawk Park	SW	-	-	1
84	Morden Park	SW	-	1	-
85	Munns Creek Park	E	-	-	1
86	Nautical Park	SW	-	-	1
87	Nena Woods Park	E	-	-	1
88	Neyagawa Park	E	-	-	1
89	Nipigon Trail - 1	E	-	1	-
90	Normandy Park	SW	-	1	-
91	North Ridge Trail Park	E	-	-	1
92	Notley Park	W	-	1	-
93	Nottingham Park	W	-	1	-
94	Oakdale Park	E	-	1	-
95	Old Abbey Park	W	1	1	-
96	Ortona Park	SW	-	-	1
97	Oxford Park	E	-	-	1
98	Pelee Woods Park	E	-	1	-
99	Pilgrim's Way Park	W	-	-	1
100	Pine Glen Community Park	W	-	-	1
101	Pinegrove Park	SW	-	1	-
102	Pinery Park	E	-	-	1
103	Pinewood Park	SE	-	1	-
104	Post Park	SE	-	1	-
105	Postridge Park	E	-	-	1
106	Potters Wheel Park	W	-	1	-
107	Q.E. Park	SW	-	1	-
108	Queen's Plate Parkette	W	-	-	1
109	Rebecca Gardens	SW	-	-	1
110	Reynolds Community Park	SE	-	-	1
111	Ridgeview Park	E	-	1	-
112	River Glen Park	E	-	-	1
113	Riverbank Park	E	-	-	1
114	Runnymede Park	W	-	1	-
115	Seabrook Park	SW	-	-	1
116	Shell Park	SW	-	-	1
117	Sheridan Valley Park North	E	-	-	1
118	Sixteen Hollow Park	W	-	-	1
119	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	-	-	1

	Playgrounds	Plan Area	Playground (Junior)	Playground (Senior)	Playground (Combined)
120	South Shell Waterfront Park	SW	-	-	1
121	Spring Garden Park	SW	-	1	-
122	Squire Parkette	NE	-	-	1
123	Stratus Parkette	W	-	-	1
124	Suffolk Park	SW	-	1	-
125	Sunningdale Park	E	-	-	1
126	Tecumseh Park	SW	-	1	-
127	Thornlea Park	SW	-	-	1
128	Trafalgar Park	SW	-	-	1
129	Travertine Park	NW	-	-	1
130	Valleybrook Park	E	-	-	1
131	Valleyridge Park	W	-	-	1
132	Veronica Tyrrell Park	NE	-	-	1
133	Waubanoka Parkette	W	-	-	1
134	Wedgewood Park	SE	-	-	1
135	West Oak Trails Community Park	W	-	-	1
136	Westbrook Park	SW	-	1	-
137	Wilder Park	SW	-	1	-
138	William Rose Park	NE	-	-	1
139	Wilmot Park	SW	-	-	1
140	Windrush Park	W	-	-	1
141	Woodgate Woods	W	-	-	1
142	Woodhaven Park	SW	-	-	1
143	Wynten Way Park	SE	-	1	-
	<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>94</b>

### Outdoor Fitness Locations

	Outdoor Fitness Locations	Plan Area	Number
1	Memorial Park	E	1
2	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	1
3	Reynolds Community Park	SE	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>3</b>

### Skateboard Parks

	Skateboard Parks	Plan Area	Number
1	Cornwall Road Sports Park	SE	1
2	George Savage Park	NW	1
3	Glen Abbey Park	W	1
4	Glenashton Park	E	1
5	Shell Park	SW	1
6	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	1 (plus pump track)

	Skateboard Parks	Plan Area	Number
7	William Rose Park	NE	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>

## Outdoor Skating Rinks

	Outdoor Skating Rinks	Plan Area	Refrigerated Rinks	Unrefrigerated Rinks
1	Bloomfield Park	W		1
2	Clearview Park	SE		1
3	Coronation Park	SW		1
4	George Savage Park	NW		1
5	Glenashton Park	E		1
6	Langtry Park	W		1
7	Millbank Park	E		1
8	Nautical Park	SW		1
9	Old Abbey Park	W		1
10	Sixteen Hollow Park	W		1
11	Trafalgar Park	SW	1	
12	Wallace Park	SE	1*	
13	William Rose Park	NE		1
14	Windrush Park	W		1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>

\* 2023 planned capital project to establish refrigerated rink in Wallace Park

## Leash-free Dog Parks

	Leash-free Dog Parks	Plan Area	Number
1	Glenashton Park	E	1
2	Kingsford Gardens	SE	1
3	Memorial Park	E	1
4	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	NW	1
5	Palermo Park	NW	1
6	Post Park	SE	1
7	Shell Park	SW	1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>

## Other Outdoor Facilities

	Bocce Courts	Plan Area	Number
1	Glenashton Park	E	2

# Appendix E: Library Facility Inventories, Profiles and Preliminary Observations

## Library Facility Inventories

Contained below is a listing of library facilities and service locations operated by the Oakville Public Library. Data is current as of January 1, 2023; capital projects that are underway in 2023 are not included.

	Public Libraries	Plan Area	Type
1	Bronte GO Station	SW	OPL Express
2	Central Branch	SE	Community
3	Clearview Branch	E	Neighbourhood
4	Glen Abbey Branch	W	Community
5	Iroquois Ridge Branch	E	Community
6	Queen Elizabeth Park Community Centre	SW	OPL Express
7	River Oaks Community Centre	E	OPL Express
8	Sixteen Mile Branch (temporary) – to be replaced with permanent branch (2025)	NW	Community
9	Sixteen Mile Sports Centre	E	OPL Express
10	St. Luke's	W	OPL Express
11	White Oaks Branch	E	Neighbourhood
12	Woodside Branch	SW	Neighbourhood
	<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>

# Library Facility Profiles and Preliminary Observations

The consulting team visited each OPL branch library to observe current conditions and design attributes. Commentary from municipal staff was helpful in framing the context for each location. Summarized below for consideration within next phases of Master Plan development is high-level information on each facility and preliminary challenges and opportunities identified by the consulting team. These are not to be interpreted as recommendations, but rather items for future consideration and analysis.

## **Central Branch**

### About the Facility

- Located in Downtown Oakville, the Central Branch Library is a three-storey building that is co-located with Oakville Galleries and adjacent to the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts and former Centennial Pool.
- The facility contains OPL administrative offices, as well as an auditorium space that is available for library and community use.

### Challenges

- Facility is aging. Lack of recent reinvestment is evident; capital improvements have been lower priorities as the town moves forward with the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative.
- Multi-floor layout can be a challenge operationally; many spaces are not optimized (e.g., children's area).
- Many spaces are not barrier-free. The third floor lacks public washrooms.
- The library's location attracts a wide range of users, including vulnerable populations that are supported by an expanding range of services (food lockers, etc.).
- Paid parking is limited and can be a barrier for some.
- Spaces such as the children's area are not well used due to the changing demographics downtown, i.e., fewer young families.
- Security related concerns were raised by staff.
- Location of shipping/receiving a challenge.

### Opportunities

- Plans are moving forward for a new Central Library through the Downtown Cultural Hub (DCH) initiative. The key components of the DCH include a new library, gallery, and performing arts centre as well as major open space areas including a Navy Street Plaza and a new Riverfront Park. Capital planning to establish the staging, content, and location of the facilities in the DCH Master Plan is anticipated to begin in 2023.

- New library would offer a modern environment that is purpose-built for community needs.
- Maintaining an outdoor plaza space with a direct connection to the library will enable outdoor programming and strengthen the library's presence in the Downtown core.
- Rebalancing space allocations to increase public use footprint through a decrease in footprint for public desktops and for staff space.

## **Clearview Branch**

### About the Facility

- Facility shared with HDSB elementary school. Branch also serves as the school library; space contains shared collections and spaces. Branch has separate external entrance.
- Branch is the only municipal community facility in the area (eastern edge of Oakville, nearest Mississauga), offering opportunities for community programming and gathering.

### Challenges

- Library is not open during school hours. Facility offers fewest operating hours of any OPL branch.
- Unique service model not replicable at other locations in the OPL system.

### Opportunities

- New MOU with HDSB to strengthen collaboration.

## **Glen Abbey Branch**

### About the Facility

- This library branch is co-located with the Glen Abbey Community Centre and is OPL's busiest location.
- The branch was significantly renovated in 2019 and includes a creation space, collaboration room, children's area, quiet study area, quiet study room, outdoor reading garden, and more.
- The branch boasts the largest percentage of returns 40% in the entire OPL system.
- The branch is situated amongst three Secondary Schools.

### Challenges

- This recently renovated facility appears to be largely meeting needs – no significant challenges were noted.

- Some noise attenuation tactics may need to be employed in the children’s area. Acoustics are not good.

### Opportunities

- Best practices at Glen Abbey should be noted and considered for replication at future new locations and renovations.

## **Iroquois Ridge Branch**

### About the Facility

- Co-located with the Iroquois Ridge Community Centre.
- Renovated in 2017. Open concept with comfortable reading lounge, modern collaboration pods, extended quiet zone, and Creation Zone (a versatile space that inspires collaboration and learning).

### Challenges

- This recently renovated facility appears to be largely meeting needs – no significant challenges were noted.

### Opportunities

- The double height space beside the building entrance is highly visible and could be taken better advantage of as display and reading lounge area to draw visitors into the library branch.

## **Sixteen Mile Branch (temporary)**

### About the Facility

- Currently located adjacent to the Oakville North Operations Depot (approximately 800-metres north of the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex), this library branch is a temporary structure comprised of 7 relocatable portapak units. The library will be replaced within the Sixteen Mile Community Centre once it is built in 2025.

### Challenges

- As a new location, OPL is working hard to establish the branch in the community; however, the current location is removed from other community spaces and is not as centrally-located and walkable as the future community centre will be. Additional programming may assist in boosting usage in the short-term.
- OPL and the town have not yet decided on a future use for the temporary structure once the library moves to the community centre.
- Additional efforts and focus will need to be directed to the needs of this diverse community.

## Opportunities

- The potential of the library branch will be vastly expanded within the new Sixteen Mile Community Centre. Additional collections, resources and programming are anticipated.
- With an estimated 1.5 million visits projected in the expanded community centre, the library will be very well positioned for a higher profile as the OPL system's second largest location.
- Diversity of community presents an opportunity to serve newcomers to Canada. It has potential to be the Centre of Expertise for newcomer services at OPL.

## **White Oaks Library**

### About the Facility

- Split level branch co-located with White Oaks Secondary School (lease agreement with HDSB). Branch also serves as the school library and receives a high level of use during school hours; designated spaces remain available for customers during these hours. Space contains shared collections, children's area, reading area, two seminar rooms used by school, and small program room.
- Integrated services with school are effective and well coordinated; e.g., shared customer service desks; integrated student/library card system; school responsible for janitorial services.
- Space was renovated in 2019.
- Minor interior maintenance the responsibility of the town's Facility Services.

### Challenges

- Community usage during daytime is lower due to student use. Lack of parking during peak school hours can be a deterrent to some.
- Unique service model not replicable at other locations in the OPL system.

## Opportunities

- New MOU with HDSB to strengthen collaboration.

## **Woodside Branch**

### About the Facility

- Stand-alone library branch facility serving an established community.

### Challenges

- Usage profile is impacted by facility's location and design; i.e., not co-located with other recreation or park uses, not located near school.

- Public access to lower level is only available via elevator as stairwell is within staff/restricted access area.

### Opportunities

- Scheduled to be renovated in 2025. Project will consolidate the customer service and reference desks, in addition to other upgrades.
- Has lower level basement area that is under-utilized. Access is currently limited, but has the potential to be converted to offer additional program space.
- Entire lower level could be reorganized for more publicly accessible program space.
- The 2025 renovation may be an opportunity to speak to catchment area expansion i.e., Bronte.