



Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan

**Stage 3: Needs Assessment Report
(October 2024)**



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.

Town of Oakville Council (2022-26)

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

Ward 6 Councillors Tom Adams and Natalia Lishchyna

Ward 7 Councillors Nav Nanda and Scott Xie

Master Plan Project Committee

Paul Damaso, Commissioner, Community Services

Colleen Bell, Commissioner, Community Services (retired)

Tara Wong, Chief Executive Officer, Oakville Public Library

Chris Mark, Director, Parks and Open Space

Julie Mitchell, Director, Recreation and Culture

Jennifer McPetrie, Senior Manager – Planning and Development, Recreation and Culture

Darryl McWilliam, Manager – Support Services, Recreation and Culture

Project Consultants

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd.

MJMA Architecture & Design

Tucker-Reid & Associates

Ron Koudys Landscape Architects

Rose Vespa Consulting

Largo Facility Management

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library are developing a new Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan to ensure the town's facility portfolio is responsive to the current and future needs of the community. The plan will strategically guide the town for the next 10 years, with a planning horizon that considers major capital needs until the year 2051 in alignment with the latest provincial growth policies.

The master plan was last updated in 2012 (comprehensive) and 2017 (scoped). A new strategy is necessary to guide our future investment in new and existing facilities and services. While the focus of the plan is on physical parks, recreation, and library infrastructure, it also provides direction for related service delivery elements, while ensuring flexibility to respond to changing needs.

The plan is a comprehensive, evidence-based exercise grounded in:

- Public and stakeholder input – residents were engaged through open houses and surveys, while stakeholders participated in 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.

Master plans help communities to better understand the 'current state' of services and facilities and to identify potential gaps, opportunities, and strategies. The master plan leverages community input and leading research to establish future directions. In some cases, these directions will inform and guide the establishment of more detailed levels of service through future initiatives.

1.2 Planning Context

The initial stages of this master plan's development included extensive research into facilities and services (including how they are used and optimization opportunities), demographics and growth, trends in participation and facility design, and more. The plan also reflects upon community opinions and priorities, which were identified through a robust community engagement program that captured input from the public, community stakeholders, and related town initiatives.

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. Much of the town's growth will occur in North Oakville and in growth areas such as Bronte Village, Downtown Oakville, Kerr Village, Midtown Oakville, Palermo Village, and Uptown Core, as well as key nodes and corridors (e.g., Trafalgar North).

Growth means more young families in Oakville, which will create demand for additional parks, recreation, and library services. The population is also aging, creating new demands for activities that engage older adults and seniors. Much of Oakville’s future growth will be fueled by immigration; the Canadian Government has set a goal of welcoming 500,000 new permanent residents per year by 2025¹. Interests will become more diverse.

The last few years have also taught us about mobility, so Oakville is competing with communities across not only Ontario and Canada, but across the world. Parks, recreation, and library services are a critical aspect of the town’s quality of life and help to attract and retain residents.

This master plan takes a holistic view of physical, social, economic, environmental, technological, and political factors, focusing in on the areas that intersect with how parks, recreation and library services. Notably, the plan reflects on how town’s growth trajectory has changed, the many new demands that are emerging, and how the urban structure and funding sources are evolving. In doing so, the plan seeks new opportunities and strategies that will support these changes and position Oakville for success in the future.

And lastly, we recognize that – while parks, recreation, and libraries are managed by separate departments and boards each with their own objectives – they share common values and frequently work in partnership to deliver coordinated services that meet community needs. This is what makes Oakville uniquely responsive and committed to achieving its high standards for service delivery and community engagement.

1.3 Purpose of this Stage 3 Report

The **Stage 1 Report** describes the current state of parks, recreation, and library services and facilities in Oakville by examining the current policy and planning context, demographics and growth forecasts, facility inventories, and relevant trends.

The **Stage 2 Report** provides a summary of the public consultation undertaken to date so that it may be considered in the preparation of the master plan. This phase of consultation included a community-wide survey, open public input, and comments from stakeholders.

This **Stage 3 Report** builds upon the previous reports by applying these findings to a needs assessment methodology to determine facility and service priorities to the year 2051. Public and internal input was sought on the draft plan (see **Appendix**). Specifically, this report:

- a) Creates an updated strategic framework that will guide the development of the master plan and its recommendations;
- b) Updates the facility needs and gap assessment from previous master plans;
- c) Identifies facility provision, expansion, and revitalization strategies;
- d) Provides direction on key service delivery items, such as programming, pricing, and more; and

¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/11/an-immigration-plan-to-grow-the-economy.html>

- e) Develops an implementation plan with timelines to be considered as part of the master plan.

Together, all reports form the basis for the Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan.

1.4 Needs Assessment Methodology

Creating a sustainable and equitable network of parks, recreation, and library facilities for all residents is complex. Needs can be relative and may vary according to the type of facility and the communities they serve. In all cases, equity of access is the primary objective –ensuring that all residents have appropriate access to municipal parks, recreation, and library facilities based on their interests.

The master plan employs a standards-based gap and provision analysis that will help Oakville identify and plan for new parks and facilities as the town grows and needs evolve. Provision targets incorporating a multitude of variables have been established through an understanding of current service levels, usage, and demand indicators. They are measures of quantity, rather than quality – the latter is assessed through a separate process.

Table 1: Types of Provision Targets used in this Plan

Measures of Provision	Description	Examples
Total Population	Used to assess facilities that serve people of all ages, often across multiple communities.	1 community centre per “x” persons or “x” square feet of library space per resident
Target Population	Used to assess facilities that serve distinct age groups, often across multiple communities.	1 skate park per “x” persons aged 10-19 years
Registered Participants	Used to assess facilities that are mostly used through permitted rentals, often across multiple communities.	1 ice pad per “x” registered participants
Geographic Distribution	Used to assess facilities with localized service areas to which residents may reasonably expect to walk or bike.	1 playground located within “x” distance of residential areas

Once established, the provision targets are evaluated against the population’s current spatial distribution and growth forecasts to determine potential gaps and needs now and into the future. For facilities assessed using population-based or participation-based metrics, once town-wide needs are determined, a spatial scan is determined to assess areas of need across each of the designated plan areas.

To support this analysis, a comprehensive, integrated inventory of parks and facilities was developed (Stage 1). This dataset contains information on facility locations and conditions,

with the capability of being illustrated using GIS. It is vital that the town keep this inventory up-to-date to support future planning efforts and track progress.

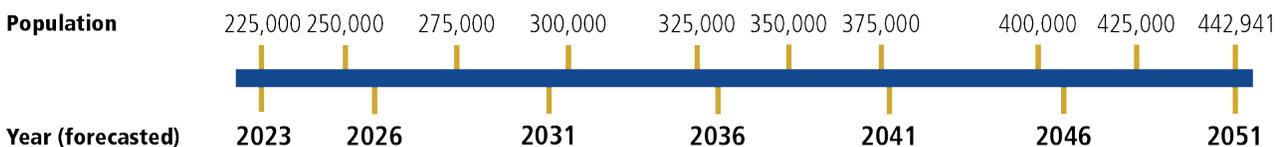
All targets are intended to be applied flexibly and may be modified over time to remain responsive to local needs. Different targets may be established for unique circumstances, such as stable and growing communities with different urban structures. They are not intended to be strictly adhered to at the local level as each community may have different needs based on its unique characteristics.

1.5 Implementation Timelines

The master plan recommends several new and enhanced recreation and library facilities and park amenities to the year 2051 (to serve a town of 442,941 persons as presently forecasted). Along with new projects, those facilities that are in various stages of planning and design have been integrated into the plan where applicable. Many of these are needed to address growth-related needs, while others respond to emerging demands and make it easier for residents to access the services they require.

For **growth-related capital actions**, the master plan references facility needs through the application of provision targets and gap analyses. A general population threshold is identified for all growth-related actions, which serves as a guideline for development (subject to funding and readiness). For each project, the town should decide on potential funding sources and degree to which projects are growth-related through its capital budget and financial forecasts. Regular monitoring of population forecasts and housing growth is required to calibrate the facility needs recommended in this plan to the timing of growth in Oakville.

Figure 1: Population Markers for Growth-related Capital Actions



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

Note: Timing of population growth is subject to change

Non-growth-related actions (capital or operational) are identified through the consideration of areas of focus, facility condition/functionality, and alignment with anticipated community needs. These projects are assigned a general timeline for implementation. Given the long-term planning horizon of this study, these time periods include:

- Short-term: 2024 to 2033 (10-yr forecast)
- Medium-term: 2034 to 2041
- Longer-term: 2042 to 2051
- Ongoing (best practice): 2024 and onward

Furthermore, non-growth-related actions have been assigned a level of priority based on the needs assessment. The town should generally seek to address the widest range of needs and achieve maximum community benefit through the efficient use of resources. Priorities for operational and service delivery actions are as follows:

- **High Priority:** Immediate attention is strongly suggested during the timeframe recommended.
- **Medium Priority:** Attention is required when high priority recommendations have been initiated or completed, or when suitable partners have been identified for funding.
- **Lower Priority:** Attention is required when high and medium priority recommendations have been initiated/completed.

These frameworks and timelines are not intended to be rigid. With the master plan's town-wide scope, it is recognized that further analysis may be required to more fully define facility components, timing, operating models, locations, and costs. Furthermore, regular vetting of capital projects and priorities is required to ensure that they remain appropriate. The timing and priority of most capital projects proposed in this study are linked to expected participation rates and population forecasts. New information, changing trends, public input, partnership alignment, and the availability of land and funding all have the potential to influence the implementation priorities. Projects in advanced stages of planning, such as those that have initiated their design process, will proceed as planned.

Additional tools for priority-setting for capital projects are contained in Section 8.

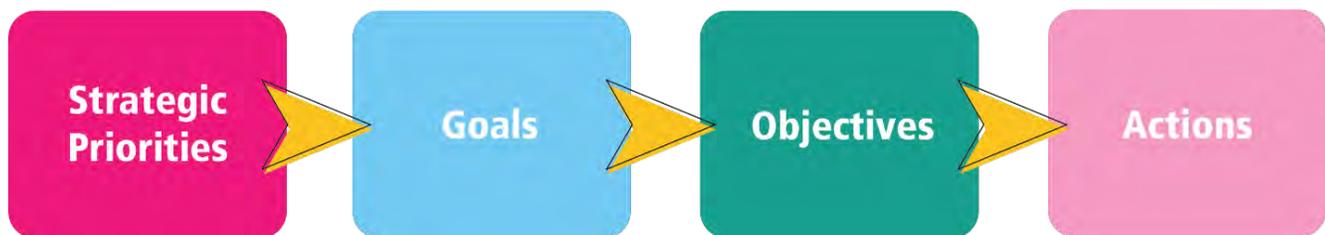
2. Strategic Framework

Oakville is a vibrant and livable community for all. A key part of this vision is recognizing the important contributions that parks, recreation, library, and related services make to the community's health, wellbeing, and overall quality of life. These services also benefit other community priorities and the public realm, such as active transportation, climate change mitigation, social equity, economic growth and tourism, environmental health, and more.

Parks, recreation and libraries are worthy of sustained investment and enhanced focus. To inform the recommendations of this Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan – as well as future decisions related to its implementation – a strategic framework has been developed. The strategic priorities have been aligned with Council's Strategic Plan 2023-2026 and goals have been developed to reflect the town's values and express fundamentally how Oakville will approach investment and set priorities related to parks, facilities, and services over the long-term. The goals are supported by consultation and relevant research, including Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library strategic plans.

The following strategic framework is intended to represent a conceptual foundation and overarching priorities that will influence key actions as to how, when, and where the town provides community facilities and services. The strategic priorities and goals are complementary and should be read and interpreted as a set.

Figure 2: Master Plan Strategic Framework



2.1 Strategic Priorities and Goals

1. Growth Management

We will:

- a) Design, develop, and maintain **vibrant public spaces** that encourage and support personal health and community wellbeing.
- b) Ensure that our parks and facilities are **safe, welcoming, and enjoyable**, helping people and families to discover, participate, belong, and thrive.
- c) Optimize parks and facilities through **adaptable and multi-use spaces** that enhance community cohesion and belonging.
- d) Prioritize **accessible spaces and services**, reducing barriers that keep people from participating in or accessing parks, facilities, and services.

2. Community Belonging

We will:

- a) **Increase participation and literacy** through introductory programs, inclusive community spaces, and tools and technologies that enhance access and learning.
- b) Offer and support initiatives and services that help residents to **connect to and be engaged** in their communities of interest.
- c) Assess park, facility, and service priorities through an **equity and social inclusion lens**, placing community-wide needs over individual demands and using evidence to support decision-making.
- d) Foster **community partnerships and volunteerism** to help achieve shared goals, build capacity, and contribute toward the full continuum of services.
- e) Regularly and effectively **engage with the public** on community initiatives, the benefits of participation and the need for respect and civility in public spaces.

3. Environmental Sustainability

We will:

- a) Use a variety of tools to meet our service level standards for **parks and greenspace**.
- b) Reduce our **environmental impact** by building healthy and sustainable parks, open spaces, and facilities.
- c) Act on **climate change and adaptation** through responsible management of parks, facilities, and natural areas.

4. Accountable Government

We will:

- a) Manage facilities and services in a **fiscally responsible manner** through the reasonable application of taxes and user fees.
- b) Pursue **creative funding and partnership approaches** that support our core services and community priorities.
- c) Evaluate our **levels of service** and apply leading **asset management practices** to enable planned resource allocations for the future.
- d) Be leaders by adopting **progressive approaches and technologies** in design, program concepts, service delivery, research, and learning.
- e) Provide **good governance** through high-quality customer service, coordinated service delivery, legislative compliance, and performance measurement.

2.2 Emerging Themes

The following themes have emerged from the research and consultation phases. They are relevant to all disciplines addressed in this plan, including parks, recreation, and library facilities and services.

- A. **Parks, Recreation, and Libraries are Fundamental Services:** Parks, recreation, and library services are essential to Oakville’s success and contribute to the town’s broader goals. As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for growth, it is vital that we chart a course that builds a strong and resilient future for parks, recreation, and library services in Oakville. A coordinated plan is needed to increase local participation and to maximize the collective impact that these services have on priority outcomes and livability within Oakville.
- B. **Preparing for Growth and Securing our Future:** As Oakville doubles in population by 2051, growth-related needs will be significant. Unfortunately, the town’s land resources are unlikely to keep pace with this growth due to changes in how municipalities acquire land for parks and community facilities. This is compounded by the downloading of additional costs to local municipalities, which requires that the town stretch its funding further. Provision targets will need to evolve, with consideration of new models of design and delivery. The focus will begin to shift from “quantity” to “quality”, allowing the town to enhance existing assets and fund its growth-related priorities based around a “campus of facilities” model (see below). We will also plan for increased urban densities by focusing on dynamic, multi-use, creative, high-quality parks, recreation, and library spaces.
- C. **Supporting Equity, Wellbeing, and Emerging Needs:** Oakville is an attractive destination for young, culturally-diverse families, but the population is also aging. We must plan for these significant demographic shifts. Active sports, youth, and family needs will be most notable in North Oakville, while a range of demands can be expected in higher density growth areas. Intergenerational opportunities should be encouraged across the town.
- D. **Optimizing our Assets and Providing Spaces to Thrive:** Oakville’s facilities and parks are multi-use destinations that are in great locations to serve our community now and into the future. With the rising cost of land and other funding challenges associated with new infrastructure, it is vital that we first look to optimize these assets – doing more with what we have (e.g., modernization, repurposing, etc.) – and seek strategic ways to add capacity to respond to emerging community needs.
- E. **Fostering Belonging, Accessibility, and Inclusion for All:** The town will expand its support to equity-seeking populations that face financial and other barriers to access and participation. A continued emphasis must be placed on retrofitting public spaces for use by persons with disabilities (with special attention to parks infrastructure) to support the province’s goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025.
- F. **Enhancing Outdoor Opportunities and Connectivity:** Community members in Oakville highly value the outdoor realm, including parks, trails, and the waterfront for the many forms of respite they provide. These spaces were a lifeline during the pandemic, particularly for our most vulnerable, and increased usage remains evident. Passive activities such as walking, hiking, picnics, special events in parks, and nature appreciation

ranked very highly through the Master Plan's consultations as they are enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities. A growing emphasis on public open spaces and four-season recreation is necessary to meet the highest priority needs of our community.

- G. **Reducing our Environmental Impact:** The town is committed to building resiliency to the changing climate and extreme weather patterns. We will continue to support sustainable approaches to help the town achieve its environmental goals through initiatives such as updated facility and park standards, energy-efficient retrofits, as well as a focus on the value of tree canopy, naturalization, horticulture, and more.
- H. **Leveraging Progressive Tools and Technologies:** Access to data and new technologies are vital to the future of public libraries, helping the Oakville Public Library to bridge the digital divide and advance equity initiatives. New and emerging technologies also help find efficiencies in the operation of public facilities in support of support the town's climate action strategies. And the application of technology in service delivery can also assist in enhancing client experiences and expanding participation. For example, data management tools help us to improve planning, performance measurement, and customer marketing so that our services are designed for maximum impact.
- I. **Working with Others and Building in Flexibility:** Master plans are long-range documents intended to ensure that the town is on the right course to address the highest priority needs of the community. The specifics of how the town will achieve these needs will be identified through the course of the plan's implementation, in keeping with the broad goals established in the plan. As such, the plan must provide clear direction, but also build in flexibility to allow the town to pursue opportunity-driven solutions. The town and public library work very well together – this shared vision must be extended to other partners, developers, service providers, agencies, levels of government, and funders to realize the vision.

"Campus of Facilities" Model

The town plans and strives to develop parks, recreation, and library facilities and services equitably across Oakville. Facilities can serve different needs and functions based on their scale and design and are tailored to specific markets ranging from neighbourhood-level to town-wide and sometimes beyond. The following figure illustrates the general hierarchy of facility and park provision in Oakville, recognizing that not all facility or park types are appropriate for all contexts, but that all residents will have access to the full range of services through a town-wide delivery system.

Figure 3: "Campus of Facilities" Model



3. Recreation Service Delivery

3.1 Overview

The overarching aim of municipal recreation service providers is to engage all residents in some form of passive or active leisure activity. The social, physical, emotional, and psychological benefits to all age groups and demographics are well known. Participation adds to the quality of life in individuals, families, and the community. Special efforts must continue to be taken to ensure that residents can navigate systems, feel welcomed, and participate fully.

The Recreation and Culture 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.).

It is important to clarify the responsibility of town in engaging residents in building and maintaining healthy lifestyles and clarify the work of town staff. Oakville has a strong commitment to the residents to provide and promote opportunities, provide support to not-for-profit groups, and coordinate a wide range of services through partnerships and third-party providers.

Specifically, the role of the town’s Recreation and Culture Department includes consideration of the following:

- All residents of all ages should be provided, either by the town or another provider, a range of choices in programs and services including active, sports, creative, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics), and general interest opportunities.
- Opportunities will be provided equitably for residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
- Intentional efforts to include underrepresented communities and/or individuals through policy and intentional actions are evident.
- Priority allocation and supports are provided to not-for-profit community groups (especially those serving children) that are powered through volunteerism. A broader range of opportunities can be offered through these community groups and the town collectively.
- Volunteerism is recognized as the backbone of the sport and recreation delivery system.
- Staff must be able to report participation numbers by age group and include the capacity, utilization, fill rates, and satisfaction levels by age group in all activities.

- Staff work to ensure quality assurance, safety, and legislative compliance in the delivery of service regardless of who is providing the program or service.
- Gaps in service are identified and staff work with community partners to address these gaps.
- Programs and services are offered locally where possible.
- A range of service price points include free, low-cost, and break-even program opportunities to ensure broad access for all.
- Measuring effectiveness in the delivery of recreation through setting performance targets to demonstrate increased participation, transparency, evidenced-based decision making, and quality assurance.

Council and residents believe that investments in recreation support a healthier and stronger community. To sustain the current level of service as the population increases and expectations for quality services are maintained, added emphasis must continue to be placed on revenue enhancements, co-location with other service providers, partnerships, alternative service delivery, community development, and further outreach.

3.2 Leaders in Service Excellence

The Oakville Recreation and Culture department continues to respond and develop best practices and award-winning approaches in the delivery of service. Many municipal departments continue to investigate and adapt these to service delivery within their own jurisdictions. Some examples are provided below.

Queen Elizabeth Park Community Cultural Centre

QEPCCC is an example of true innovation in municipal governance and service delivery. The need for the facility was confirmed through extensive study citing gaps in cultural space and services. This vision was for a multi-purpose cultural and recreational hub – a place for creativity, active living, sense of community, and access for all. The Town purchased the vacant school and several surrounding lots for \$6 million in 2006 and later sold the lots to generate funds that were put towards sports field development. The development of the spaces took into account the needs of community partners and organizations and resulted in providing many varied opportunities that are volunteer-driven and are not traditionally provided through municipalities. Under the Culture Core Membership program, participating groups are required to contribute volunteer hours to special events at QEPCCC by offering free programming and assisting with preparations.

HIGH FIVE – Principles of Child Development

Oakville was one of the initial communities in Ontario to implement the HIGH FIVE Principles to Healthy Child Development quality assurance program. In recent years HIGH FIVE has expanded to include Principles of Healthy Aging for seniors programming. Implementation of policies and training supports the physical and emotional wellbeing of both children and seniors in recreation programs.

Youth Friendly Communities

Oakville has been recognized as a Play Works' Gold Youth Friendly Community for its outstanding commitment to providing young people with opportunities to play, participate in, and contribute to their community. This is completed to ensure that a variety of meaningful recreation programs, volunteer opportunities, safe spaces, and recognition programs are available for youth in the Oakville community.

The Older Adult Delivery Model

Oakville's service delivery model for older adults combines both staff-driven services and partnerships with older adult centres that empower seniors through volunteerism. The model gives a strong voice to the older adults in Oakville in the types of services and the way that they are delivered. This approach has been replicated in other jurisdictions and is looked to as a high-performing model in the delivery of recreation and leisure services for older adults in Ontario.

Data Management and Analytics

The Recreation and Culture department embraces the philosophy that data collection and analytics can serve as a key driver in meeting changing community needs and identifying changes that require focus. Staff are provided with meaningful data that assist them in making evidenced-based decisions. Modifications to programs and services are well informed and often successful.

Maintaining Exemplary Satisfaction Levels

All of these practices and more have resulted in very high satisfaction levels within a discerning community. A 90% satisfaction level is one that many service providers strive to achieve while Oakville has consistently met this mark in its recreation, library, and park services year over year. This is not by luck – staff continually test satisfaction levels and are nimble in changing approaches to address identified gaps and by engaging users to provide their input in the development of new or revised programs and services.

3.3 Key Objectives

The service delivery section responds to two needs: (1) program and service expansion due to a growing population; and (2) strengthening departmental capacity to maintain service excellence. The development of this section takes into consideration relevant trends, sector research, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, participation and utilization data, and input from the public, staff, and Council, as well as Corporate and Departmental plans and initiatives.

Table 2: Topics Addressed in this Recreation Service Delivery Review

Programs and Service Reach	Strengthening Departmental Capacity
<p>Goals:</p> <p>Increase participation in directly offered programs to include a greater percentage of Oakville’s population over the next 10 years.</p> <p>To support Oakville residents in increasing the duration, intensity, and frequency of engagement in physical activity and sport and in being active for life.</p> <p>To work collectively with community partners to maximize engagement in recreation and sport.</p> <p>To ensure that a similar rate of participation in recreation and cultural services is achieved by underrepresented populations as generally compared to participation within the general population.</p>	<p>Goal:</p> <p>To continue to investigate and implement greater efficiencies in the delivery of service.</p>
<p>Topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical activity and sport - programming and casual use of facilities - pandemic recovery - community development and partnerships - inclusion, diversity, equity, and access 	<p>Topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of technology and data management in recreation - pricing and user fees - measuring performance and setting targets - levels of service

Additionally, the following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

A. **Refine our Program and Service Focus:** Continued program and service focus on health and wellness, community recreation and sport, physical literacy, and selected Long-term Athlete Development Program stages (awareness and first involvement, active start, FUNdamentals, Learn to Train, Active for Life).

B. **Partner with Libraries:** There is a strong level of collaboration between the Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library, from communication and programming to joint facility planning. Oakville’s busiest community centres are those that also contain library branches and this co-location model is recommended within future building projects.

C. **Partner with Others for Service Delivery:** Volunteer, non-profit, public sector, and private sector organizations all have a part to play in recreation service delivery, from program delivery to facility management to funding. A partnership framework should be formalized to help in evaluating future opportunities for collaboration. Existing lease agreements should also be reviewed and opportunities assessed to increase fair and equitable public access, including alternative management models.

D. **Partner with Schools for Access to Space:** The town has a positive relationship with area school boards and leverages these assets for community betterment. Continued access to schools and other community spaces will be needed to increase the reach and geographic distribution of recreation and cultural services.

E. **Engage Youth and Older Adults:** Continue to emphasize youth and older adult engagement (e.g., Youth Advisory Group, Youth Strategy, Age-Friendly Strategy, Older Adult Boards, etc.) and

enhance programming, leadership, physical activity, skill building, empowerment, and mentorship opportunities.

F. **Enhance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:** Tools are needed to enhance the department’s approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion, including increasing outreach and participation, breaking down barriers, and increasing exposure for all underserved populations.

G. **Expand Arts and Cultural Services:** Develop a strategy for the delivery of services and spaces focussed on artistic literacy (Cultural Plan refresh).

H. **Maintain Fair and Transparent User Fees:** Create better alignment between user fees and true costs to deliver services.

3.4 Physical Activity and Sport

Physical Activity Levels

Fitness levels within the Canadian population continue to be at a level that will not sustain healthy outcomes. Increases in chronic diseases are partly a result of sedentary lifestyles (screen time). For the last 60 years at a minimum, municipalities, other levels of government, and community partners have worked to educate, offer physical literacy training, provide a sport continuum and infrastructure. The results within the general population have been minimal; however, there are some gains in older adults who are remaining active longer within their lives.

Oakville has adopted a variety of approaches aimed at increasing physical activity, including creating connecting trails, activating public spaces, supporting sport organizations and Sport Oakville, providing active opportunities at special events, encouraging young parents to get an active start with their young children, and more.

Canada’s 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Canada’s 24-Hour Movement Guidelines have replaced the Physical Activity Guidelines. The new guidelines were introduced in 2020 and depict the amount of time various age groups should “Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit” in a 24-hour timeframe. For example, in each day children between 7 and 17 years should achieve the following guidelines.

Table 3: Canada’s 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

Activity	Time / Day
Sweat	60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity
Step	Several hours of moderate physical activity
Sleep	9-11 hours for 5 – 13-year-olds 8-10 hours for 14 – 17-year-olds
Sit	Limit sitting for extended periods No more than 2 hours of recreational screen time per day

These guidelines have been developed for all age cohorts and should be communicated and promoted to the public with facilities, online, and shared with community partners.

Sport for Life – Physical Literacy and Long-term Athlete Development

Sport for Life (CS4L) is a national collective of sport and physical activity experts and practitioners who continue to monitor physical activity levels, complete research, educate, and develop programs and initiatives for the public. Two of their key initiatives involve Physical Literacy and the Long-term Athlete Development Program (LTAD).

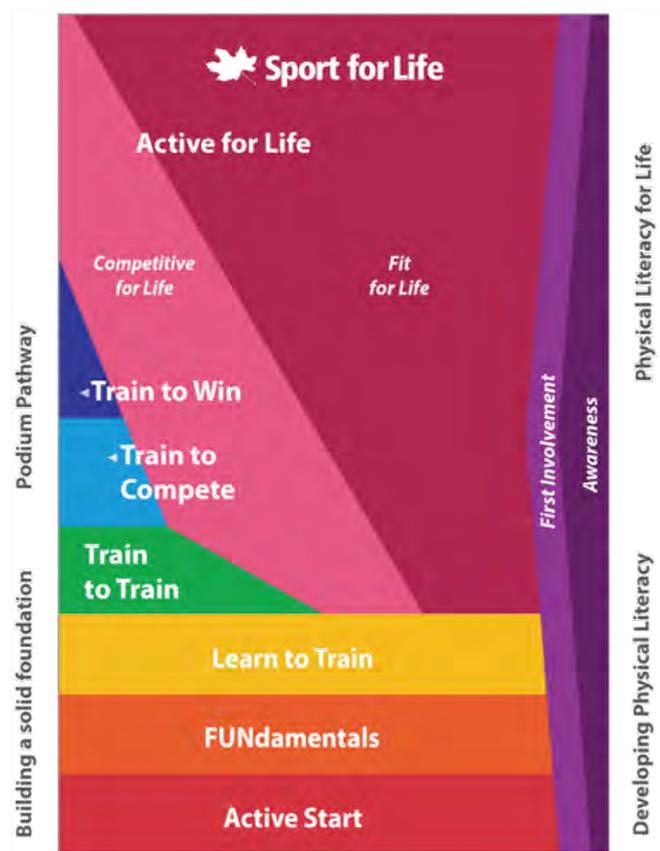
Physical literacy training has been developed by the CS4L movement and sets about to train Canadians in the basic mechanics of being active. The training is available for all ages with the thought that these abilities to throw, catch, run, etc. will provide the confidence to be active for life. Oakville introduces physical literacy in many programs and was an early adopter of this approach to keeping residents active.

Figure 4: The Eight Stages of the Long-term Athlete Development Program



Source: 2019 Sport for Life Society

Figure 5: Long-Term Development in Sport and Physical Activity



Source: 2019 Sport for Life Society

The eight stages of LTAD provide for the safe development of athletes from the Active Start stage to the more elite level of Training to Win. LTAD encourages Canadian to move to a level of engagement that they are comfortable with and the ultimate goal of LTAD is to be Active for Life. The town works to ensure that all LTAD levels are supported through partnerships with Skate Oakville, Oakville Gymnastics, etc.

Girls, Women and Gender Diverse Residents Participation in Sport and Recreation

Participation in sport and recreation by girls and women is on a downward trend in Canada. Canadian Women & Sport (CWS) in concert with the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities released a report in a national study in June 2020 regarding sport participation for girls aged six to eighteen. The findings noted that girls' participation in sport is much lower than boys the same age and, further, that girls experience a significant dropout rate by late adolescence – one in three girls leave sport as compared to one in 10 boys. Among the barriers cited, girls stated low levels of confidence, low body image, lack of skills, and feeling unwelcomed in a sport environment. In 1992 over half of females over 15 participated in sport. By 2019, 28% of females participate in sport while 62% do not. Recent studies also demonstrated that 1 in 4 girls were not committed to returning to sport after the pandemic.

This declining participation rate is alarming, especially as the Federal government has declared an objective to achieve gender equity in sport by 2035 in Canada. CWS supports and enables girls, women, and gender-diverse people in pursuing sport and active lifestyles and keeps women actively engaged in building community capacity. CWS' priority and focus is to develop and support sustainable models where women are trained to lead and promote active opportunities in concert with community partners such as municipalities, universities, and not-for-profit organizations. They have many resources that are readily available to audit policies and practices and build capacity within the organization.

While there are many options for female participation in community-driven sport and town recreation programming in Oakville (such as female swims/lessons and other sport activities such as women's hockey leagues), there is opportunity for further growth and development. This is a national priority and Oakville should utilize tools provided by CWS and prepare an audit detailing the interventions and inclusionary efforts that are required.

Sport Tourism Strategy

According to Sport Tourism Canada, the economic impact of sport tourism in 2019 equaled \$7.4 billion dollars in value. Hosting sporting events is one way of supporting sport development and participation at all levels within Oakville. Sport tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and has a distinct advantage of the economic spin off to the community in spending and overnight stays. Building partnerships within the sport community and tourism industry can serve to highlight Oakville's unique assets and strengthen its position as a sport destination.

Oakville is known for its strong supply of community recreation facilities and the support given to supporting sport tournaments and events. For example, Oakville hosted boxing at the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games in 2015; however, no formalized approach has been taken to assess the possibilities and better understand the full impacts of these events.

A planning exercise is needed to assess the capacity to host and support bid events in the future. A Sport Tourism Strategy should be prepared to assess existing facilities and assets, organizational/agency supports, capacity of the volunteer base, and tolerance levels for disruption to regular users. Further, determinations would include the various levels of sport

events (international, national, provincial, regional, and local) that exist and could exist (based on bid criteria), the ability to collaborate with adjacent municipalities or other partners, the upfront funding required, and the potential return on the investment. The strategy would identify sporting events with potential and the current accommodation profile, with consideration of the strengths and directions of other municipalities in the region.

The proposed Sport Tourism Strategy should be built by a collective of interests (Sport Oakville, Oakville Marketing and Tourism, business, economic development, regional municipalities, facility providers, etc.) to solidify the merits of a coordinated approach to bidding, build community capacity, promote lifelong engagement in sport, and reflect the diversity of sport in Oakville. Efforts should be made to ensure that sport hosting opportunities provide an appropriate return on investment considering revenue generation and community benefit for all participants from grassroots to elite athletes.

Actions – Sport Tourism Strategy		
<p>1. Encourage all residents to be physically active through promoting physical literacy opportunities and Canada’s 24-Hour Movement Guidelines.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>2. Utilize the Canadian Women & Sport tools and resources to audit female and gender-diverse persons’ participation in sport and work to address any inequities with a goal of achieving sport equity by 2035.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
<p>3. Prepare a Sport Tourism Strategy to advance the planning and management of major sports facilities using a regional lens, in partnership with sport tourism bodies (e.g., Visit Oakville, etc.) and in alignment with the economic development strategy.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	Consider creation of a sport working group to address the planning, design, permitting, and joint use of municipal and school facilities.

3.5 Programming and Casual Use of Facilities

Oakville provides a well-rounded range of choices for residents of all ages including opportunities in physical activities and sports, creative, STEAM, and general interest. Staff review the previous year’s participation statistics in developing the next session’s opportunities. Program modifications are made considering the level of satisfaction, pent up demands, and comments heard from participants and program leaders. Programs with continued lower registration levels are reduced/eliminated in their offerings to accommodate needs in newer trends or in programs where there are pent up demands. The department has a standard whereby each program or programs overall are filled to a minimum capacity of

70% to 80%. This fill rate standard maintains the fiscal viability of program offerings. Some allowances are made for newly introduced programs as registrants learn of their availability.

The following table compares registration levels from 2018 to 2023 and seeks to understand program volumes, participation rates, the number of unique clients, and the number of programs each participant registers for. This information helps in the analysis of participation trends, gaps in service, and planning for the future.

Table 4: Recreation Direct Program Participation, 2018 to 2023

Programs	2018	2019	2022	2023	Change 2019 to 2023	
Aquatics	18,355	18,876	16,923	23,738	4,862	26%
Pre-School	924	974	540	699	-275	-28%
Childrens'	5,150	5,400	5,396	7,319	1919	36%
School Break	1,851	1,024	501	733	-291	-28%
Camps	9,165	8,957	5,897	7,999	-958	-11%
Youth	1,578	2,011	1,062	1,883	-128	-6%
Adult	2,422	2,282	2,930	5,131	2,849	124%
Seniors	4,252	4,649	2,454	4,342	-307	-7%
Sport Leagues	904	1,036	1,337	1,541	505	49%
Total	44,601	45,209	37,040	53,385	8,176	18%
Unique Clients*	18,713	19,799	16,671	21,050	1,251	6%
Penetration**	8%	9%	7%	9%	0%	
Average # of programs registered / client	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.5	+0.1	

*A Unique Client is a registrant that has a personal identification number (PIN). The registration system can track how many programs a unique client registers in per year for planning purposes.

** Penetration calculates the number of residents registered in directly offered programs and is determined by the number of total unique clients as a percentage of the population. This is useful data in determining if registration levels are decreasing or increasing per age cohort.

Some observations from the table above:

- The total number of registrants in 2023 exceeds the registration levels for the pre-pandemic years of 2018 and 2019 as well as 2022 while programs were recovering from the pandemic. Registration has increased overall in 2023 by approximately 2,700 registrations overall. Of note are the number of program registrations that have decreased and increased. For example, registration levels remained relatively stable for youth and older adults, while registration increased in aquatics and adult programming. Due to temporary staffing shortages, camps are not at the pre-pandemic levels as of 2023 with over 3,200 fewer campers in the summer of 2023 as compared to 2019.
- 2023 registrations are 106% of the registrations in 2019 (the highest level in the previous 3 years). Programs registrations that have increased the most in 2023 are aquatics (4,862) and adult programming (1,813 registrants).

- On average approximately 9% of the population registered in directly offered programs in 2018 and 2019 as compared to 2023 whereby 10% of the population registered in sessional programs.
- On average, each unique client registered for 2.2 programs per year in 2018, 2019, and 2022. This increased to 2.5 programs annually in 2023. Not only are there more unique clients and overall registrations in 2023, each registrant is participating in slightly more programs. This new trend requires tracking for future planning purposes.
- The greatest interest in direct programming is shown by children’s participation in aquatics and sessional programs as well as adult programming. Tracking pent up demands for these programs will be important information to determine the numbers of residents who are not being served in direct programming.
- Aquatic programming accounted for 39% of the total annual registrants in 2018 and 2019. This increased to 46% in 2023. Aquatics programming is the costliest to provide given the indirect costs of operating aquatic facilities and therefore maximizing existing facility space requires regularized evaluation. A programming review in aquatics would be a prudent action in determining how all pool spaces are maximized for direct programming.
- Aquatics has experienced challenges in delivering the full aquatic continuum and meeting pent up demands due to the changing employment market and challenges securing sufficient staff (especially during the daytime). Training and aquatic leadership was put on hold and Oakville is unable to provide the hours of operation and volume of lessons previously provided.

Table 5: Recreation Unique Clients in Drop In Opportunities in 2023

Drop-in programs	2023	Unique Clients
Recreational Swimming and Waterfit	256,327	23,977
Recreational Skating and Shinny	57,419	14,243
Fitness Centre and Track	165,693	7,026
Personal Training	1,778	187
Group Exercise	57,051	3,493
Racquet Court	20,365	2,128
Culture Studios	4,114	202
Seniors Services	44,644	1,884
Sports	51,388	5,987
Rock Climbing	850	456
Oakville Museum	13,120	n/a
Summer playgrounds	2,725	267
Total	675,474	n/a
Unique Clients*	44,780	n/a
Penetration**	20%	n/a

Note: Approximately 52,000 drop-in visits in 2023 are not associated to a client record. This is due to staff using the walk-in feature of the Recreation Software. While it exists in all program areas, Oakville Museum is most prevalent.

Some observations from the table above:

- Drop-in opportunities show greater use than registered programs in Oakville, which is trend across Ontario.
- Recreational swimming accounts for 38% of the participation in drop-in activities in Oakville. Interestingly each unique client in drop-in swimming utilizes pools approximately 9 times annually on average.
- Fitness centres and use of the track are the second most popular drop-in activity in Oakville.
- Tracking of drop in programming participation is important in the allocation of program types and facility allocation of space. This also allows staff to keep on top of trends in participation and activity preferences.

Recommended Program Framework

The 2019 Service Delivery Review recommended the creation of a Program Framework to provide a consistent process for staff to:

- a) Develop and introduce new programs
- b) Evaluate existing programs
- c) Discontinue program offerings

It is noted that staff need to plan courses and camps for the following year at least six months in advance and therefore new program introductions and discontinuation of programs require significant lead up time to review program statistics, satisfaction levels, and budget implications. Program staff naturally undergo an evaluation to offer the most successful and meaningful program mix that will meet participation, satisfaction, fill-rate, and budgetary targets.

The following framework is offered as a starting point to bring greater rigour to the program development and evaluation process. Staff will need to review and pilot its applicability.

Table 6: Draft Oakville Program and Service Development Continuum Framework

Identifying/Implementing New Programs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is this program aligned with community and departmental priorities? 2. Does this program meet a gap in choices per age group in either active, general interest, creative, or STEAM opportunities? 3. Has an Equity Lens been applied to the development of this program? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Which underrepresented groups were consulted in the development of this program? b) How did these consultations make the program more accessible and barrier free? c) What changes were made to the program content to reflect the needs of our diverse community? d) How will diverse users be included in the evaluation process? 4. Who is best to deliver the program? 5. What is the best space in which to delivery this program? 6. Are there private providers that Oakville would be competing with in offering this program?

Identifying/Implementing New Programs

7. Are there pent-up demands in other programs that would be competing for this time and space?
8. Is there space at an appropriate time in an appropriate location?
9. Is this in alignment with cost recovery targets? Are net revenues anticipated?
10. Has a risk assessment been completed and what general and quality assurance training is required (HIGH FIVE, Active Aging, etc.)?

Existing Program Performance Evaluations

1. What were the current participation levels and fill rates?
2. Are participation rates increasing or decreasing?
3. Are there pent-up demands for this program?
4. What were the satisfaction levels and how will this input influence program modifications?
5. Were the financial targets unmet, met, or exceeded?
6. is there a risk to not longer offering this program?
7. is there a viable alternative service provider?

Consideration of the Discontinuation of Programs

1. Did not meet the participation or fill rate target for last three sessions.
2. Did not meet the satisfaction level target.

Casual and Drop-In Use of Facilities

Community centres and spaces are considered neighbourhood gathering places where residents can enjoy a variety of social, cultural, and recreational activities for all ages. Staff monitor visitations to recreation and cultural facilities to ensure that utilization levels are increasing and at the very least maintained.

Oakville has installed people counters to capture the number of residents who come to community centres and indoor facilities. This data captures the number of residents attending both registered and drop-in opportunities as well as the casual use recreation and culture facilities. With an estimated 4.2 million visits to Oakville's recreation facilities, the town has now recovered from and exceeded pre-COVID figures.

Participant Satisfaction Ratings

The Recreation and Culture department undertakes customer satisfaction surveys to understand if the programs and services, registration experience, instructors, and spaces utilized are meeting participant expectations. Each program type (adult, aquatic, camps, age cohorts, and sport leagues) can be isolated to determine if there are any gaps within that specific discipline. A good sampling of participants offered their input, and the results consistently meet and exceed targets.

Table 7: Satisfaction Ratings from Recreation Program Participant Surveys

Year	Instructor	Facilities	Program Experience	Registration Experience	Survey Count
2019	89%	88%	88%	92%	6,000
2021	90%	90%	88%	87%	1,148
2022	90%	90%	89%	89%	5,086
2023	90%	90%	89%	86%	5,823
Average	90%	90%	89%	89%	4,514

Source: Town of Oakville, 2023

This data and subsequent follow up comments speak volumes about the level of care the department puts into selection and training of staff, the development of age-appropriate course content, quality assurance mechanisms, as well as facility maintenance and cleanliness. Participants are generally very pleased with recreation and culture programming in Oakville. Staff are commended for maintaining such exemplary program delivery standards.

Determining the Recreation and Sport System Capacity

An analysis should be addressed every three years to determine the full capacity and fill-rates of both directly offered programs, drop-in opportunities, and those programs/services offered by community groups. The objective is to ensure that there are ample opportunities to accommodate a growing community, and that spaces and activities are allocated equitably ensuring the right space for the size of the group. Further, this analysis will ensure that the right-sized spaces are utilized to their greatest good and capacity. Other municipalities having undertaken this exercise have created efficiencies in the system to accommodate increased facility demands as a result of a growing population.

For aquatics, the following information is offered to demonstrate the potential of lesson capacities and can be utilized as a benchmark for programming 25-metre pools. A sector study² compared the programming capabilities of a traditional 6-lane pool to an 8-lane pool. This was to make the case that the net revenue potential was greater in an 8-lane pool than a traditional 6 lane pool at that time. Sample programming models were completed by a group of aquatic professionals.

The study based the capacity for a 6-lane pool on the following assumptions:

- Three swimming sessions each in the fall, winter, and spring
- Five lesson sessions in the summer months each two weeks in length
- Children’s lessons comprise 90% of all lesson registrations

The study found that the capacity of a 25-metre pool for lessons based on an “intensive” aquatic program model was approximately 8,000 lesson registrants per year. It must be noted that each pool configuration is different and as a result will have differing lesson capacities.

² Aquatic Sport Council of Ontario and Tucker-Reid & Associates. Making the Case for Sport Friendly Pools. 2011.

Further, the capacity of the change rooms, deck, and pool maintenance regimens must be taken into consideration. A safe and enjoyable lesson experience must provide adequate spaces before, during and after lessons as well as to keep the facility clean for patrons.

Continue to Support Youth in Oakville

Significant efforts are taken to keep youth engaged within the community including leadership training, volunteer opportunities, employment, and active recreation pursuits. Oakville is a community that encourages the voice of youth and in self-governing endeavours through the Oakville Youth Action Committee. Oakville celebrates Youth Week annually to celebrate and showcase learning, events, and activities. While the registered programs for youth (basketball, volleyball, tennis, badminton, squash, and creative pursuits) are capturing 6% of the youth population annually – greater participation in drop-in opportunities is evident (badminton, basketball, volleyball, lane swimming, as well as skating and shinny). Youth can also reserve a spot online and walk-in as space permits.

Youth engagement and empowerment requires continued attention to provide friendly and safe environments where youth can decide what leisure opportunities interest them. The department continues to remain nimble and responsive to the needs of this age cohort (e.g., offering free drop-in activities, etc.) and has noted a desire to prepare an update of the Youth Strategy.

Older Adults and Seniors Make up 29% of the Oakville Population

Older adults and seniors (those over 55 years) currently make up 29% of the population in Oakville. Efforts are taken to engage and empower older adults in program development and provision. There will be interest in additional recreation opportunities for this expanding age group. Oakville offered free virtual and phone programs targeted to older adults to address potential isolation experienced as a result of COVID-19 and a program to regularly contact isolated seniors. Free programs currently include mindfulness activities, chair yoga, travel and arts, community conversations, and healthy eating.

There is a trend for older adults to join adult programs and services and not be limited to seniors centre offerings. It will be important to assess opportunities for older adults within existing community centres and spaces as there are no recommendations to build new stand-alone seniors centres within the master plan horizon. The opportunity to extend hours and space at the Sir John Colborne Centre should be evaluated, as well as the need to expand seniors' programming at other centres.

Parks and Recreation Ontario has developed a quality assurance program in the offering of recreation programs and services for older adults and seniors (HIGH FIVE Principles of Healthy Aging). The course offers staff an insight into the unique requirements of service delivery and engagement with the older population. It builds on the Principles of Healthy Child Development for children and strengthens staff's ability to plan programs, respect what older adults face with ageism, physical literacy, social connectedness, and overall enhancements to the quality of life for older adults. This is a suggested requirement for any full or part-time staff working with older adults and seniors.

Actions – Programming and Casual Use of Facilities								
<p>4. Refine and pilot the draft Recreation Program and Service Development Framework to ensure that program provision is aligned with community priorities and meet standardized performance criteria.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes						
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a						
<p>5. Evaluate the capacity of the indoor aquatics system to respond to pent-up demands, the need for more instructional and drop-in opportunities, and evaluation of operating hours. Alternate programming strategies should also be evaluated for under-utilized sites.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
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High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a						
<p>6. Continue to expand programming through community centre sites, ensuring that services reflect the diverse needs of the communities each facility serves. Opportunities to expand services to newcomers as well as tech-based programs (e.g., STEAM, Esports, etc.) should be explored in association with aligned partners.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>Ongoing (best practice)</td> <td>Fill gaps by expanding older adult and seniors programming (including multi-generational opportunities) within existing community centres and spaces.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	High	Ongoing (best practice)	Fill gaps by expanding older adult and seniors programming (including multi-generational opportunities) within existing community centres and spaces.
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High	Ongoing (best practice)	Fill gaps by expanding older adult and seniors programming (including multi-generational opportunities) within existing community centres and spaces.						
<p>7. Update and refine the Youth and Older Adult Strategies with a goal to increasing engagement and participation in recreation, including unstructured play both indoors and outdoors.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes						
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a						

3.6 Pandemic Recovery

Oakville’s Pandemic Recovery Action Plan 2021-2022 identified recovery actions in areas of focus including community vibrancy, support to businesses, community safety, corporate resiliency, and preserving Oakville’s financial health.

Specific objectives to support the recovery plan through recreation and cultural services included:

- a) Continue with the hybrid model (direct and digital) programming;
- b) Support temporary community models of service delivery (fitness classes in parks etc.);
- c) Provide re-start up funding to community groups and sport organizations (Interim Community Investment Plan);
- d) Provide community recognition through a “Spirit Award”;

- e) Enhance partnerships to support recovery – revitalize neighborhoods through events – revisit the Special Events Policy with a diversity lens in 2022;
- f) Adapt program delivery models to respond to usage/demand patterns with a diversity lens; and
- g) Deliver modified winter recreation opportunities.

These initiatives were addressed and revised as government regulations were lifted and the public felt safe in coming back into public recreation facilities. The recovery for Oakville has been swift as registration data in 2023 surpassed pre-pandemic rates (an increase of 6% overall), especially for adult activities.

While this is promising, there are still program deficits and challenges. For example, consultation with user groups indicated that some organizations continue to be presented with new challenges in this post-pandemic period, such as rising costs and the loss of participants that did not return. There are also pent-up demands that cannot be met due to lack of staff availability, especially in aquatics and camps. For example, summer camps are at 70% of pre-pandemic levels and very important to parents in offering their children quality opportunities throughout the summer months. The town has also had to reduce some hours of operation and availability of aquatic programs (mostly daytime) as a result, although registration levels in aquatics continue to increase. Regular monitoring of registration levels is essential.

Program registration and facility visits have fully recovered from pre-pandemic rates, although certain participation targets may not be being met due to the availability of trained staff. Overall participation is recovering well and gaps in staffing will likely be overcome as new leaders are trained and recruited.

3.7 Community Development and Partnerships

Community Development

The Recreation and Culture department works collectively with community partners to provide a well-rounded menu of recreation and sport services for all residents. The Community Development unit – which was created in 2017 with a mandate to enhance community capacity and increase access for residents – captures and updates the listing of community partners and related organizations. Various supports are provided to individuals and organizations focused on access and capacity building. Direct programming efforts provide free or low-cost access. This unit seeks external funding opportunities. Provide opportunity for social service organizations to increase community access.

By enhancing community capacity, the Recreation and Culture department and its partners will aim to provide effective programming and services for all populations while taking into consideration the barriers that may restrict access through collaborative community development work. The town's efforts in recreation and culture serviced delivery are supplemented by Halton Region's responsibilities relating to social services. The community development model requires an understanding of what exists in terms of community-led organizations, an identification of gaps, assistance in forming and administering new groups, as well as funding for new and important initiatives.

Table 8: Target Outcomes for Community Development in Oakville

Target Outcomes in Increasing Access through Community Groups	Target Outcomes in Enhancing Community Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Oakville residents can get involved in community programs; • Everyone knows how to get involved and participate; • Affordability is not a barrier to participation; • Increased percentage of low-income households are participating; • Increased percentage of new immigrants and new residents are participating; • All community assets are effectively utilized by CORE groups; • Community groups can access appropriate facilities for their needs; • Programming is available for the whole family; and, • No physical restrictions to participation are present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community groups are sustainable and more self-sufficient; • New working groups are established and supported based on community need (to support strategic initiatives, such as women in sport); • Groups are enabled to deliver accessible quality programming in an accountable manner; • Increased collaborative partnerships among community groups and the town’s Recreation and Culture department; • Increased awareness of recreation and culture community groups; and, • Improved understanding of community needs and roles played by different groups.

Source: Our Oakville – Community Development Report (2019 Update)

Community Groups in Recreation and Education (CORE)

Community Groups in Recreation and Education (CORE) is a town of Oakville membership-based program that offers recreational and cultural non-profit, volunteer community groups, and organizations support in delivering services to the community. CORE members are offered access to Oakville-based school board facilities and receive priority status for accessing town of Oakville facilities as outlined in the Facility Allocation Policy.

Community Use of Schools

The community use of schools for recreation and culture activities through the Halton District School Board and the Halton Catholic District School Board is an integral part of the delivery system. The most recent data finds that approximately 50 community groups (including the town of Oakville) utilize around 18,000 hours within gymnasiums, classrooms, and sports fields in over 50 schools each year. At an estimated average of 15 users per hour, approximately 270,000 visits are accommodated through the community use of schools annually. This is an excellent use of existing community spaces and any opportunity to garner more time in schools is recommended.

Community Grants

The town has a new Community Activation Grant program that assists groups in meeting community needs and increasing capacity within community organizations through small-scale events, activities, and programs.

Partnerships

Partnerships enable opportunities beyond the capacity of the town's resource base. Partnered delivery is also a big part of the Oakville's service delivery system – many organizations offer introductory recreational and cultural programming (using town spaces) allowing the town to support and increase participation in other ways.

Partnerships are becoming more critical in sustaining a fulsome level of service within municipalities to reduce duplication, increase participation, share resources, and reduce costs. Efforts are made to increase partnerships and broaden recreation and sport experiences to Oakville residents. The question to be addressed is what and when services should be delivered directly and what and when services can be delivered through partnerships.

Oakville is progressive with its use of partnerships and alternatives to direct delivery. There are several dozen partners that the town collaborates with, including program providers, community organizations, lease holders, funders, and more.

Some partnership examples include:

- Oakville Soccer Club (one of Canada's largest organized soccer clubs) is a leaseholder, in that they organize and manage all the soccer programs and manage and lease the Pine Glen Soccer Centre while the town provides and maintains the physical facilities (indoor building systems and outdoor fields).
- Skate Oakville is a partner that provides the learn to skate programs and summer camps.
- The town collaborates with the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton through summer camp programs, black history month programs, etc.
- The Lifesaving Society is a funder. An agreement is in place for offering Swim to Survive lessons to school students (grades 3, 4, and 7). This represents approximately \$40,000 of funding annually.
- Artworks of Oakville is a partner that works the town on art exhibitions.
- All food service within town recreation facilities is operated by third-party providers.
- The Halton Environmental Network works with the town to offer care centres in extreme weather events, food banks, and more.

While the Recreation and Culture department has been progressive in its use of partnerships, it does not have a consistent department-wide framework for guiding staff on identifying when to engage partners and assessing the type of partnerships that would be most beneficial for the town and residents.

Partnership vs. Direct Delivery Framework

Recreation departments in Ontario have a focused goal to provide meaningful programs and services to all residents within their jurisdiction efficiently. These services enhance resident's experiences and create a sense of accomplishment through skill development. There are often opportunities to work with other service providers to broaden choices and the range of

services. Discussions are ongoing as to whether to provide services directly or to turn to a partner or a third-party provider.

A general rule embraced by municipalities in Ontario is to provide core services internally and specialized services through third party provision – where often expertise and alternate equipment is provided. One key consideration is to whether the financial gain in either cost avoidance or revenue enhancement can be realized without affecting quality assurance, high levels of customer satisfaction, and legislative compliance.

Municipalities believe that investing in recreation is a sound investment in building strong individuals, family, and community. Seeking out partners serves to share resources, reduce duplication, and address costs to the taxbase.

Table 9: Considerations for Third-party Program and Service Providers in Recreation

1. Conditions whereby the town may continue to provide programs and services directly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The program or service is considered core to the community such as learn to swim lessons in preventing water incidents or in older adult services where trust and a strong relationship is critical to the success of the program and service. b) The program meets a sustainable resourcing need such as youth leadership development to enable future skilled staffing in program and service delivery. c) The program development and delivery meet strong priorities and requires town-centric coordination such as in better serving marginalized populations.
2. Conditions whereby the town may seek a third-party provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The program is specific to a diverse and underrepresented population which would be most appropriately provided by a community partner where the expertise lies. b) The program or service requires specialized knowledge and equipment that is not considered part of the town’s introductory and developmental approach to program provision. c) The program or service meets a required need of the residents and cost-sharing of space, and instructions provides cost efficiency to both parties. d) The program has a focus on instruction, learn to, fit for life principles, and maximizing facility utilization. e) Adherence to quality assurance measures and compliance with legislation requirements and industry standards is readily met as a condition of the partnership.

3. Conditions in seeking out and implementing strong partnerships

- a) There is an identified need for the service.
- b) The terms and conditions are very clear as to what service needs to be provided and when and how the service provider will intersect with town staff.
- c) There are labour conditions that allow open procurement of the service.
- d) A comparison is developed as to which provider will deliver the service most effectively – the town or the other provider(s).
- e) A thorough investigation of past performance in partnership with other municipalities is undertaken.
- f) The merits outweigh the current service delivery model – public engagement is sought where appropriate.
- g) A contract is developed with the successful third-party provider complete with detailed performance expectations, legislative compliance, quality assurance, levels of service, targets, and performance.
- h) A regularly scheduled evaluation of the third-party arrangement, complete with satisfaction levels of the patrons and participants and other performance metrics.

Actions – Community Development and Partnerships

8. Identify opportunities to work stronger together toward common goals in recreation and culture through use of **Collective Impact Models**.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

9. Continue to **strengthen coordination** between Town and OPL and other aligned partners such as school boards.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

10. Refine the draft **Partnership Framework** by gaining input from current partners in the delivery of service. Determine service gaps and apply the draft Partnership Framework to identify potential partnership opportunities.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

11. Assess how **quality assurance, legislative compliance, and adherence to industry standards** are achieved within the current partnership arrangements and identify any gaps. Identify what **costs have been avoided and alternate revenues gained** through the use of partnerships in recreation and culture service delivery.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

3.8 Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access

In response to an increasingly diverse community, the town of Oakville has been proactive in reaching out and having conversations with underrepresented populations with respect to service delivery and barriers to participation. For example, the Staff Inclusion Advisory Team conducted focus groups with over 60 community groups representing the diverse needs. The Advisory Team also conducted extensive consultations with residents where they conduct daily activities such as the GO station. General findings were that there was recognition of Oakville’s efforts to study, educate, and communicate and there was need for continued dialogue. Oakville has also worked with external consultants to audit policies, practices, and staff members.

Table 10: A Profile of Potentially Under-represented Populations in Oakville

Population	% of the Population	Approximate Number of Oakville Residents
Persons Experiencing Low Income	8.6%	18,383
Visible Minorities/Racialized Populations	42%	90,130
Persons with Disabilities	23%	49,165
Indigenous Peoples	0.7%	1,415
2SLGBTQ+ Population	4-13%*	8,550 to 27,789

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data (2021).

*Statistics Canada indicates that through self-reporting, 4% of the population indicated that they identify as part of the 2SLGBTQ+ population. A subsequent study completed by the Jasmin Roy Foundation completed in 2019 entitled “LGBT Realities” found that 14% of the Canadian population identify as part of this community.

A sampling of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives undertaken by the town include:

- The town is in the process of developing an inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) multi-year plan. Oakville completed a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan in 2022 which outlined eight key deliverables to complete to develop the IDEA multi-year plan.
- The town has endorsed the Halton Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Charter, committing them to understanding diversity through the lens of allyship, recognition of intersectionality as a critical component of equity, and embracing inclusion through acceptance of all residents in Halton.
- The town gathers workplace demographics and captures all levels of diversity and inclusion in the town’s workforce.
- The town’s 2022 Diversity and Inclusion Current State Inclusivity Report contains a list of 2021/22 diversity and inclusion initiatives by department.

Supporting Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessible Programs and Initiatives in Recreation and Culture

Recreation and culture services are closely tied to community partners and deliver services at the neighborhood level. Very seldom do programs get initiated without consulting potential participants or without the direct involvement of the community or representative organizations.

During the master plan's engagement process, residents and community stakeholders identified feelings of inclusiveness when participating in services provided by the town. Additionally, many recognized the social relationships that occurred while attending programs, which developed their social capital and sense of belonging.

Some residents responded during the community consultation that they do not feel welcome in community centres when staff don't typically represent the community.

Principles for Increasing Participation within Diverse Communities

Recreation and Culture staff embrace these key approaches to service delivery and in developing partnerships within a diverse community.

1) Start with a Policy Platform

The town's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility is quite clear as highlighted in strategic priority, policy, and planning documents. The direction to staff is also clear and indicates how the town will support these initiatives and further staff are required to be accountable for results.

2) Multi-interventions at Multi-levels will Create Results over Time

Municipalities in Ontario have been dedicated to the principles of equity and inclusion for many decades; this is not new work. There is not one formula or a linear approach to representing the recreational needs of the municipality. Identifying who may be underrepresented, understanding the current state, and working collectively with community partners to introduce various initiatives with respect to inclusion will see results overtime. Interventions must be well informed and delivered with intention.

3) Create a Sense of Belonging

With Oakville's increasingly diverse population, staff have clear target markets to engage and jointly create a greater sense of belonging. Initial discussions should centre on what is in place to support recreation and culture needs. What are the barriers to participation and how the parties can work together to increase participation? There are options to discuss with diverse groups as to whether:

- a) they need assistance accessing and feeling welcomed into the current program and service mix;
- b) they need access to space to offer preferred activities;
- c) they would like to learn some skills to participate; and
- d) the fulsome service mix should include some more diverse program offerings.

4) Nothing About Us Without Us

The principle about engaging those who are affected by policy and program decision is a standard practice in municipal governance and administration. Council often requires information on what consultative efforts have been undertaken while underrepresented groups make it clear that only they can determine what barriers exist and what measures can be taken to create welcoming environments for them. Staff cannot make any assumptions about service delivery and engagement of diverse populations.

5) Regular and Meaningful Conversations

The approach to being more inclusive was traditionally organic; meaning that staff responded as barriers were identified. Municipal staff have been more successful in the last 20 years including persons experiencing low income and those residents with disabilities taking this approach. Municipalities play a strong role in facilitating community discussions and identifying and prioritizing approaches to meet the mandate of increasing participation. Many successful conversations and resulting initiatives have been generated through annual community forums (at a minimum) with representatives from varying underrepresented populations.

Understanding Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a more recent concept being applied to diversity initiatives to ensure that there is an understanding as to how residents define themselves and how that might affect how welcomed residents feel in public spaces. Residents do not typically define themselves as a singular identity and staff and volunteers must understand that to provide welcoming environments overall. One might define themselves as Indigenous, Two-Spirited and with a physical disability, or one might define themselves as Non-Binary and experiencing low income. Needs will not often be met in a linear fashion and, therefore, all programs and services must be welcoming and consider varying potential barriers to participation.

Persons Experiencing Low Income

Statistics Canada indicates that there are approximately 18,400 residents experiencing low income in Oakville, accounting for 8.6% of the population. Various interventions to reduce barriers in recreation and culture include:

[Free and Low-Cost Programs and Leisure Pursuits](#)

Oakville provides a wide range of free and low-cost opportunities in recreation and culture that are universal opportunities. These provide access without financial barriers for all residents and are highly utilized. Examples include access to parks and playgrounds and trails, special events, community play nights, youth drop-in, summer playground program, public swims and public skating programs, etc.

[The Affordable Access Guide](#)

The town has developed an Affordable Access Guide to inform residents experiencing low income how they can access free, low cost, and subsidized programs and services within Oakville. The guide also describes how to access the Recreation Connection Subsidy,

through meeting eligibility requirements and a confidential and seamless approval process. Volunteer and part-time employment opportunities are also described in the guide. This is a resource that can be used by other service providers to increase access to recreation and culture services.

Recreation Connection

The Recreation Connection subsidy program extends the benefits of municipal recreation and culture programs to an increased number of individuals who live in low-income conditions and are, therefore, less likely to afford current user fees. Residents are provided with \$300 subsidy credit that is available for them to utilize in program registration and memberships. In 2019, 2,176 residents enrolled into the program. This accounted for a 34% increase from the previous year. Of the \$304,000 that was utilized, \$172,000 was used for programs and \$132,000 was applied to memberships.

The following table shows how the Recreation Connection funds are allocated based on program registrations.

Table 11: Recreation Connection Funding – Program Allocation (2019)

Program	Percentage
Aquatics	50%
Children	19%
Camps	10%
Adult	10%
Youth	5%
Pre-school	4%
Seniors	2%
Total	100%

The two most popular community centres where residents used their subsidy were Iroquois Ridge (\$79,000) and Glen Abbey (\$67,000). Collectively, they account for 48% of all Recreation Connection funds utilized.

The town also facilitates access to funding through Halton Region Childcare, Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support, and Jumpstart Charities.

Community Development staff worked diligently in 2019 to engage residents experiencing low income to get them approved and engaged in recreation and culture services. Shortly after the pandemic interrupted this proactive outreach, participation declined; however, the funding commitment from the town has increased.

Currently (2023), approximately 5% of low-income residents are accessing funds through the Recreation Connection program. This is compared to 10% of the population engaged in directly offered programs in Oakville.

Table 12: Recreation Connection Participation, 2019 to 2023

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Participation in Recreation Connection	2,176	268 (COVID)	583	812	1,000 projected
% of Residents receiving a subsidy as compared to the number of residents living at the Lower Income measure – After Tax (LIM- AT)*	12%	1.5%	3%	4%	5%

* The percentage is based on 18,383 residents living at LIM-AT and was applied to all years.

Continued outreach and promotion of the Recreation Connection subsidy program is required to reach a similar participation rate in direct programming and memberships as the general population. Possibly seeking a partnership with the Region of Halton to promote the subsidy program to the Ontario Works clients and provide seamless approval of participants may see an increase in participation.

It is noted that as fees for programs and services increase each year, the number of programs that a Recreation Connection participant can use for their annual allotment decreases. A review of the \$300 funding allocation should be undertaken as program and service fees increase.

Other Initiatives for Low-Income Residents

Some additional initiatives led by Oakville include (not a complete list):

- Work with Halton Region to deliver a childcare subsidy for eligible programming such as camps.
- Developed information package of regional services to provide at rec centres (for vulnerable residents).
- Collaborated with Food for Life during COVID-19 pandemic to provide over 200 children living in low-income households with recreational items such as skipping ropes, bicycles bells, and more.
- Collaborated with Halton Environmental Network for a Planter Partnership where summer students build 20 garden planters for the older adult’s luncheon program.
- Participate on the Halton Poverty Roundtable supporting organizations and initiatives to raise awareness for low income and marginalized residents.
- Provide supervised summer playgrounds program which offers residents the opportunity to participate in low-cost half-day summer camps at several outdoor park sites.
- Offer free community play nights (monthly programming at community centres) and movies in the park.
- Offer free community sports league for youth such as the Oakville Girls Community Soccer League and Oakville Community Basketball League which provide free recreational access to over 180 participants and employ over 15 staff through intentional employment initiative since 2019.

- Piloted the facilitation of the Oakville community cricket and fitness program which provide free recreational physical literacy program to youth with varying abilities.
- Continue to subsidize 100% of the training and certification programs as part of the Aquatic Leadership Assistance program to become a lifeguard for low-income youth. This program is facilitated with the support of Life Saving Society and in partnership with community organizations who provide participant referrals.

Visible Minorities – Racialized Populations

There are approximately 90,000 residents who are identified as visible minorities by Statistics Canada living in Oakville. Staff have responded to some needs by supporting special events, providing training to staff, and the supply of specific sport fields such as cricket. Staff are eager to understand if there are barriers to participation or if existing groups are supported in their endeavours.

Recreation and Culture has implemented many initiatives and service interventions to better include residents who are facing barriers to participation. Some examples include:

- Trained staff on unconscious bias.
- Hosted Oakville’s Black Heritage Bike and Walking tours, three time slots for each Bronte bike tour and Kerr walking tour (partnership with Oakville Museum, OPL, and Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton – CCAH).
- Hosted Emancipation Day Celebration, 200 free drive-thru BBQ meals from CCAH at QEPCCC.
- Developed a free program that incorporates anti-racism and anti-oppression training in recreation and culture activities. The program leverages physical activities as a tool to increase awareness of the systemic barriers Black, Indigenous Peoples, and People of Colour experience as ways to increase civic engagement and to remove barriers for social participation.
- Implemented an anti-racism training for all frontline camp and aquatics staff to ensure we are creating a safe, supportive environment for campers and co-workers.
- Celebrations of diverse cultures through public art and gallery space, as well as museum and performing arts centre programs.

During the staff consultations to support the development of this plan, staff asked to know what the exact goal is in terms of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility as it would be deemed helpful to them in their work. Further staff felt that a tool kit of resources, contacts, and best practice processes would be helpful in reaching diverse communities at the local level to discuss barriers and program development would be helpful to them.

Persons with Exceptionalities

There are approximately 49,000 residents with exceptionalities/disabilities in Oakville. Many may participate in recreation and sport with few to no barriers, while others require assistance to access and participate in programs and services.

Oakville offers integrated programming for those with exceptionalities and provides support to registrants with intellectual, physical, behavioural challenges, hearing and visual impairments

and other medical conditions. Participants fill out a form indicating the required supports to ensure that the registrant enjoys learning and the recreational experience.

Other initiatives in Oakville for persons with exceptionalities include (but are not limited to):

- Piloted the facilitation of the Oakville community cricket and fitness program, which provides free recreational physical literacy program to youth with varying abilities.
- Hired two youth staff with developmental diagnosis through collaborating with Project Autism.
- Trained full-time and part-time camp staff in behavioral management to ensure we can approach behaviour management in a positive manner and support children of all abilities in programs.
- Member of regional inclusion group with recreation representatives from Halton, Peel, and Guelph. This group is advocating for inclusion services on a provincial platform (through Parks and Recreation Ontario) and collaborating to increase training and learning opportunities within the region.
- Provided one-on-one support to approximately 20 children on a weekly basis for summer camp programs. Also provided one-on-one support for school break programs.
- Received a Gold rating for accessibility under the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification program for the Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre – the facility is only one of two community centres in Ontario to achieve this rating.
- Offered Aquadapt, a flexible one-on-one swimming lesson program for swimmers with exceptionalities.
- Offered many therapeutic and aqua therapeutic program, such as:
 - Parkinson's program focusing on improving strength, flexibility, posture, and balance.
 - Gentle Osteo for participants with physical limitations due to varying degrees of arthritis and osteoporosis.
 - Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (COPD) program focusing on strengthening cardiovascular and muscular systems.
 - TIME program for stroke survivors with balance and mobility challenges caused by chronic conditions such as stroke, brain injury or multiple sclerosis.
 - Minds in Motion program in collaboration with Alzheimer's Society of Ontario. Program incorporates physical activity with mental stimulation for people with early to mid-stage signs of Alzheimer's disease or other dementias and their care partners.
 - Healing Waters swims for participants with mobility challenges or those looking for a quiet time to work on aquatic therapy exercises.
- Partnered with Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre, who received a grant from the Oakville Community Foundation, to pay for participants to participate in a program.
- Partnered with Community Living for their Teen Adventure program, providing program space in exchange for experienced staff to help run town summer camp program. This is an excellent practice in that partners with specific expertise can provide programs to meet specific needs.

Indigenous Peoples

There are approximately 1,500 residents who identify as Indigenous in Oakville. A recent initiative for this community in Oakville is the Planting Our Seed program, which includes virtual and in-person sessions encouraging critical discussions about historical and contemporary issues facing Indigenous people.

Many other initiatives have been built by including the thoughts of Indigenous People in Oakville, such as:

- The development of the First Nations History Wall to promote a cultural and historical site as well as the ancestral presence of First Nations, and Indigenous Peoples in Oakville;
- Celebrating September 30th as the National Truth and Reconciliation Day in Oakville;
- Encouraging Orange Shirt Society donations to commemorate Indigenous school experiences and in fostering reconciliation;
- Indigenous performance at the Oakville Centre of the Arts;
- Oakville introduced its first orange sidewalk at Thomas and Church Streets; and
- The introduction of the Moccasin Trail on Bronte Creek Heritage Trail and Sixteen Mile Creek.

Some additional supports for recreation and sport services with respect to listening to and working collectively with Indigenous Peoples in developing rounded recreational and sport opportunities are identified below.

[The Aboriginal Sport Circle](#)

The Aboriginal Sport Circle is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1995. It is designated as Canada's governing body and voice for Aboriginal sport throughout the country. Each Province and Territory is represented, and this is an excellent resource for recreation providers. It advocates for the Aboriginal community to engage in healthy and active lifestyles. The Regional Coordinators in Ontario work to better engage the community and offer grants to fund programs and activities through the Power to Play Program.

[IndigenACTION](#)

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national organization representing First Nations peoples in Canada. The AFN has developed an IndigenACTION Strategy which serves to develop partnerships with community level sport and recreation leaders to ensure that First Nations youth can live healthier lifestyles and overall wellbeing through recreation and sport.

[Indigenous Cultural Competency Training](#)

The Indigenous Cultural Competency program is provided by Indigenous organizations and businesses. The program provides organizations that work with Indigenous peoples and groups to obtain the skills, knowledge, and respect for the history, terminology, values, and

behaviours of Indigenous peoples. It is invaluable as communities begin to develop strong relationships built on respect.

The 2SLGBTQ+ Community

The town of Oakville supports the 2SLGBTQ+ community through recognizing days of significance (e.g., Pride Week). Recreation staff also utilized Oakville’s Inclusion Lens in designing their recreation software and, as a result, removed gender as a mandatory field within the online registration form.

As noted earlier, the 2SLGBTQ+ community often feel unwelcome in community centres and feel isolated as a result. Proactive measures have been undertaken to develop safe spaces (e.g., universal change rooms at OTCC, etc.) and develop programs that are centric to their recreation and sport needs.

Safe Spaces

The introduction of “Safe Spaces’ is one way of welcoming the 2SLGBTQ+ community to public places. Safe Spaces was developed by Safe Spaces Canada whereby signage on the front entrance of a community space indicates that staff have been trained in reducing homophobic and transphobic gestures and slurs and in creating welcoming environments.

Greater discussions with representatives of this community are required to discuss barriers to participation, utilization of space, program design, and the designation of community centres as safe spaces at a minimum.

Actions – Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access		
<p>12. Regularly review Recreation Connection (financial assistance) fee allowances and work with aligned agencies to promote the program and enhance access to recreation for all residents.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Updates may be required to address inflationary factors.
<p>13. Work with OPL and other departments to offer orientation sessions for newcomers (e.g., registering in programs, services offered, how to, etc.).</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>14. Engage with representatives of diverse groups and organizations to discuss inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessible (IDEA) goals and objectives, supports available, gaps, and collective impact opportunities.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

Actions – Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access

15. Engage representatives of **under-served groups** – such as the 2SLGBTQ+ community and Indigenous Peoples – to identify barriers to participation and specific program needs. Develop a **tool kit** of resources for all Recreation and Culture staff that supports inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in Oakville.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	Ensure that community centre, facility, and program staff receive training in Safe Spaces and other opportunities to support participation in recreation and sport opportunities for all. Ensure that staff regularly observe public spaces and places to better perceive who is using public spaces and, more importantly, who is not.

16. Where possible, quantify the participation of **persons with exceptionalities/ disabilities** in town and partnered programs (as well as one to one supported patrons) and strive to remove barriers to ensure an appropriate level of participation.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

3.9 Use of Technology and Data Management in Recreation

Oakville is proactive in the use of technology in creating efficiencies and has implemented strategies and plans to this end. Technology continues to rapidly evolve, and the town has adopted a pilot-based approach to improvements that can be tested and modified based on user feedback. The Digital Oakville Plan articulates improvements and achievements under the following pillars:

- Online Enhancements
- Partnerships and Data
- Digital Infrastructure
- Continuous Improvement

Both the Recreation and Culture Department and the Oakville Public Library are leaders in the collection and analysis of data within the corporation.

The Service Delivery Review for Recreation and Culture completed in 2019 had the following comments on the use of technology and the recommendation for a digital strategy.

- A digital strategy should challenge organizations to consider how to make digital the preferred choice by making it easier, simpler, and more convenient for residents and more efficient internally. With the move to digital comes an exponential increase in data and the ability to usefully analyze it. This provides insights that inform better decision making.
- Digital enablement will only happen when organizations bring technology to the forefront of their priorities. If organizations do not have a plan to adopt new technology,

then it will be done to them instead of with them, as vendors will advance, and residents will want more. This will likely result in a fragmented technology architecture: ineffective, costly, and difficult to use.

- In a study by McKinsey, digital strategies need to look at the complete process end to end (outside in). Failure to do so can increase customer frustration or create operational bottlenecks internally. For example, implementing online registration for programs improves the resident experience, but not integrating it with the systems staff use might mean printing out the registration and rekeying into another system for processing.

The use of technology has influenced both the way that residents recreate and created efficiencies in the backdrop of operations. The disadvantages of technology have affected the delivery of services as it has increased resident’s screen time and decreased activity levels in all age groups. Increasing residents’ physical activity levels is a continual challenge for recreation practitioners. Residents are also showing increasing interest in virtual reality and e-games, again in sedentary activities.

From an operational perspective, technology has assisted in creating efficiencies through reducing staff time and costs which has allowed staff to focus greater energies on community development and program delivery.

Table 13: Some Potential Advantages in the use of Technology in Recreation Service Delivery

Advantage	Considerations for Recreation Service Delivery
Efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of staff time to register participants and arrange for rental agreements • Mass mailings to like groups and participants • Reduction of costs to produce and mail out the recreation and culture guide • Online training for staff • Facility efficiencies • Interpretation of public spaces and outdoor activities • Energy management in security and reduction of energy consumption
Promotion of Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual opportunities (especially during the pandemic) • Online Recreation Guide • Online registration and rental of facilities • Increased communications and information flow
Assists in Creating a Sense of Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of pictures of diverse populations participating in activities may influence participation and increase a sense of belonging through social media channels • Technology serves to reduces social isolation
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared files on collaborative efforts • Reduced travel time through virtual meetings

Advantage	Considerations for Recreation Service Delivery
Data Management and Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market segmentation analytics assist staff in developing programs and services to appeal to a local population • Data assists in evidenced-based decision-making • Data also assists in preparing for future service delivery requirements

One challenge is that major digital system transformation is costly and the return on investment must be demonstrated to justify development and implementation costs. This may leave smaller operating departments to wait longer in creating efficiencies and better systems for their users. Operational requirements are continually changing (e.g., maintenance management system legislative requirements) and changes to technology must be forward-thinking.

The Recreation and Culture department embraces technology and is seeking ways to expand that further within the context of the Digital Plan. Currently, the department has a platform for data and analytics (Qlik Sense). The department also has moved to a new software provider which has greater online functionality and self-serve options. Newer developments included last minute ice bookings and the ability to make picnic bookings online.

Digital Challenges in Recreation and Culture

Data management goals in the Recreation and Culture department include ways and means of increasing participation (both registered and spontaneous users), maximizing utilization of public spaces and non-booked spaces, and utilization of data to this end. During the master plan consultation process, some specific digital and data management gaps were highlighted:

- scheduling software for part-time staff which is a repeatable task and is done manually at this point;
- understanding the full process in the delivery of each service to map the process and use technology to create efficiencies around repeatable tasks;
- tracking community requests/complaints and closure of cases;
- tracking meeting/exceeding performance targets;
- tracking meeting/exceeding articulated levels of service;
- addressing the current lack of demographic and participation data with CORE groups, which would serve to provide a fuller picture of participation in recreation and culture within town facilities and public spaces.

Data Integration

The Recreation and Culture department collects meaningful data to enable staff to understand participation, satisfaction levels and the utilization of facilities and leisure opportunities. These metrics allow staff to make timely and evidenced-based decisions in serving the community. This data also allows staff to set targets and hold staff accountable for their work in terms of participation and utilization levels. Staff discussions centred around better understanding the value of their work within the community – could specific outcomes be attributed to the services they provide. Recreation and culture services are provided by many organizations, institutions and not-for-profit groups in Oakville and therefore it would not be feasible to attribute perceptions about outcomes to any one organization. Other

elements contribute to the notion of access for all including abilities, education levels and income. There is a significant body of work that identifies the benefits of participation in recreation and leisure. Decreased levels of healthcare spending, higher levels of education, better incomes etc., are prime outcomes and benefits.

Understanding the perceived value of participating in recreation and culture in concert with other providers is a worthwhile exercise in such an advanced delivery system as Oakville and may point to gaps in perceived values and point to future educational efforts – especially in an increasingly diverse community. This undertaking could be completed with all service providers (both private and public) to survey the public and follow up with focus groups.

Artificial Intelligence

With the rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) in today's world, this technology should not be overlooked in how it can be used in today's world of Parks and Recreation. This technology will no doubt have an impact on how recreation and leisure activities will be delivered to enhance the overall operations of this industry.

The following benefits may come from the use of AI.

- Enhancing the individual user or patron experience through AI technologies can be used to tailor the users' experience through interactive elements such as Virtual or Augmented Reality.
- Analyzing customer data and preferences through AI-powered algorithms that can predict user behavior.
- Utilize AI to collect, store, and analyze data sets within the asset management profile.
- Streamline operations and maintenance through algorithms that monitor facility systems and allow for predictive maintenance.

Technology and Modernization of Facility Operations

Below is a summary of basic and recurring themes for technology and modernization opportunities that can be considered when capital improvements are planned and executed or as part of intensive maintenance improvements at many or all facilities. All improvements should be guided and designed with a resiliency and sustainability lens, both from a financial and environmental perspective.

1. A review of new and emerging software surrounding work order and asset management should continue to be explored. There is added value in having a 'service ticket' or 'work order' solution integrated with a comprehensive asset management system to assist in this regard.
2. Consider exploring 'visitor management technology' with the implementation of smart lighting in areas that allow for reduced lighting and HVAC systems that can be adjusted based on occupancy. All systems should have remote access through internet accessible devices or the Internet of Things (IOT) allowing for a more efficient use and scheduling of various facility components such as lighting, heating, cooling, refrigeration, pool filtration and security to name a few.

3. Continue implementing LED lighting retrofits for all interior and exterior lighting including arenas, sports fields, pools, and gymnasiums as budgets allow. The utilization of the 'Save on Energy' program will allow for rebates to offset the costs of these installs.
4. On-site energy production using solar and geothermal energy and battery storage systems to promote renewable energy along with rainwater collection and filtration for use in the facilities (grey water).
5. Implement energy management software such as 'Intellimeter' that will allow facility managers to manage hydro use and collect data that is useful for monitoring and reporting.
6. Consider the use of drones for improved efficiency in facility management. Especially in the realm of safety and automation. For example, roof inspections due to weather damage.
7. Standardize all coming events electronic display screens in all facilities with a central data input for updating. Incorporate dressing room assignment software system as part of the digital screens upgrades.

With arena refrigeration plants having a high energy demand, updating refrigeration controls and systems has never been more important and needs to be top of mind for facility managers. Examples that can be incorporated include:

- Floating head pressure controls to reduce compressor run hours and improve efficiency of the plant.
- Implementation of 'Sub-Zero' ice management software to reduce staff hours and improve ice monitoring.
- With technology improving through lithium-ion batteries, explore 'greening' of the ice resurfer and ice edgers with electric options.
- 'Level Ice' and 'Fast Ice' technology added to all ice resurfaces as units are replaced.
- Infrared cameras added to control all ice surface controllers.
- There is a great opportunity for heat recovery in refrigeration systems through heat recovery systems such as 'Thermastore' tanks or 'Doucette' desuperheaters. This heat recovery can be used to heat domestic water, pool water, and ice resurfer snow pits etc. Advancement in the past few years has the waste heat from rinks being used to heat multi home developments.

Actions – Use of Technology and Data Management in Recreation		
<p>17. Implement Oakville's Digital Plan and continue to address gaps in data and technology to improve internal processes and performance.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	Potential areas of focus include scheduling software for part-time staff, process mapping, tracking community requests and complaints, level of service and performance target tracking, participation data for CORE groups, etc.

Actions – Use of Technology and Data Management in Recreation

18. Expand **digital infrastructure and investments** that leverage data-driven decision-making and the efficient use of technology in facility design and operations.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	Continue to improve data collection and the development of digital tools that improve community access to information and services, enhance user experiences, and advance facility design and operations.

3.10 Pricing and User Fees

Oakville has followed industry best practices in determining fees for programs and services by first determining the cost to provide the service. This approach is called the User Fee Policy and includes a user fee procedure and includes a cost-recovery strategy. These corporate policies and procedures provide consistent guidance to all departments as they develop user fees for programs and services. This is completed by allocating a portion of support costs (e.g., promotion, registration etc.) as well as the direct costs of staffing, supplies, and training. The costing methodology follows a standard formula which ensures a level of fairness across all disciplines.

In setting the fee structure, staff determine the value of the service by determining of the program or service contributes to the community good or individual good. Programs and services contributing to the community good accommodate more people in the experience such as special events, public skate, public swim, use of parks, trails, and park amenities. These services add to the health and wellness of the general population and tend to be free or are set at a low fee.

Programs and services that are introductory in nature and encourage lifelong engagement in recreation pursuits have lower rates of cost recovery pending on the age of the participant. Older adults, children, and youth tend to have lower cost recovery rates than adults. The ability to pay by age grouping also comes into consideration.

Programs and services that are geared to a higher level of skill and/or geared toward an individual's skill level (private lessons) are considered as contributing to the individual good and require fuller cost recovery.

A comparison to the market including local and adjacent service providers is undertaken as part of the process to set fees.

The challenge becomes in maintaining adequate participation levels and recovering costs in an environment of high inflation, where the average household may have to be making choices about non-essential spending. Pricing and allocation policies for arenas and pools prioritize access for youth and the town provides a greater subsidy so as to maximize participation and reduce cost barriers. The department should consider extending this approach to other facility types that youth use such as room and gymnasium rentals. It is

suggested that the department refine its pricing methodology based on current costs and utilization/participation levels. The refined pricing methodology must also consider the overall fiscal impacts that each refinement brings – any increases/decreases may have to be phased-in over multiple years .

Actions – Pricing and User Fees		
<p>19. Refine Recreation and Culture’s pricing policy to reflect appropriate cost recovery levels, age and ability to pay, and the overall goal of increasing participation while achieving revenue targets.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Undertake a review of user fees to reflect inflationary and cost of living increases, wage adjustments, and indirect costs and compare these draft rates to the market. Examine allocation approaches for facility types without specific policies.

3.11 Measuring Performance and Setting Targets

A 2023 study “The Price of Inactivity: Measuring the Powerful Impact of Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (SPAR) in Canada” undertaken and released in partnership by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Canadian and Fitness Lifestyle Research Institute. This data and the respective impacts on Canadian society are compelling and can assist all levels of government and related organizations make evidenced-based decisions on investments in recreation and culture.

The following table is presented utilizing four pillars in the report and highlights some key findings.

Table 14: Summary of the Impact of Sport, Physical Activity, and Recreation in Canada

Social	Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPAR contributes \$13.6 billion in volunteerism • 27% of Canadian adults actively volunteer in SPAR related activities • 76% of Canadians feel welcomed and included through SPAR activities • Programs, especially engaging older adults have the potential to reduce isolation and loneliness and improve social cohesion • 69% of Canadians agreed that SPAR contributes to reduction in harmful behaviours such as suicide ideation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Inactivity accounts for \$3.9 billion of annual healthcare expenditures • Certain conditions like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, anxiety, and depression disproportionately affect equity-seeking populations, such as women, older adults, Indigenous persons, those with disabilities and individuals from the LGBTQ2S+ community • Physical inactivity is a risk factor for mental illness; the cost associated with treating depression in Canada is approximately \$409 million annually. A 10% decrease in physical inactivity can reduce this cost by 17.3% • SPAR has the potential to enhance cognitive function and overall mental health, crucial for quality of life and community prosperity
Economy	Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPAR contributes \$37.2 billion to Canada’s economy • Retail sales of SPAR products reached \$23.3 billion in 2022, a 7% increase from the previous year, contributing \$21.5 billion to GDP • The amusement, recreation, and sport sector added 42,728 jobs in 2022 compared to 2021 (not including the public sector) • Canadian governments invested \$2 billion in SPAR infrastructure in 2022, with \$1.5 billion coming from municipalities. Some municipal investment could be from federal or provincial/territorial funding (e.g., through grants and contributions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The replacement value of replacing SPAR infrastructure is estimated at \$42.5 billion annually • If 1% of Canadians switched from car use to active transportation, \$564 million could be saved in greenhouse gas emissions • A 2% increase in bicycle infrastructure investment can prevent up to 18 premature deaths and reduce carbon emissions by up to 142,000 tonnes over 10 years

Understanding the local impacts may be even more beneficial and meaningful to Oakville. The Canadian Index of Wellbeing (developed by the University of Waterloo) has assisted regional and local governments to assess their standing in 8 distinct domains including:

1. Community Vitality
2. Democratic Engagement
3. Education
4. Environment
5. Healthy Populations
6. Leisure and Culture
7. Living Standards
8. Time Use

Within each domain there are specific metrics that can assist municipalities assess their strengths and gaps and collaborate with community partners to address identified priorities.

The recreation and culture domain includes measures surrounding participation, such as:

- a) Percentage of the population engaged to moderate to active physical activity
- b) Average percentage of time spent on previous day in social leisure activities
- c) Average percentage of time spent on previous day in arts and culture activities
- d) Average number of hours spent in the last year volunteering for culture and recreation organizations

Perceptions and experiences are also measures within the domain that can be custom developed to the municipality in terms of satisfaction, the quality of experiences, and resident perceptions about impacts.

Understanding this quantified data will assist Oakville in focusing and measuring changes from year to year. Understanding the value of participating in recreation and culture undertaken in concert with other providers is a worthwhile exercise in such an advanced delivery system as Oakville. This exercise will point to gaps in perceived value and to future educational and programmatic efforts – especially in an increasingly diverse community. This undertaking could be completed with both private and public service providers to survey the community and collectively follow up to address perceived gaps and priorities.

Actions – Measuring Performance and Setting Targets		
<p>20. Expand existing performance measures by working with other service providers to identify the impact of recreation and culture in Oakville, ensuring that diverse voices are included.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

3.12 Levels of Service

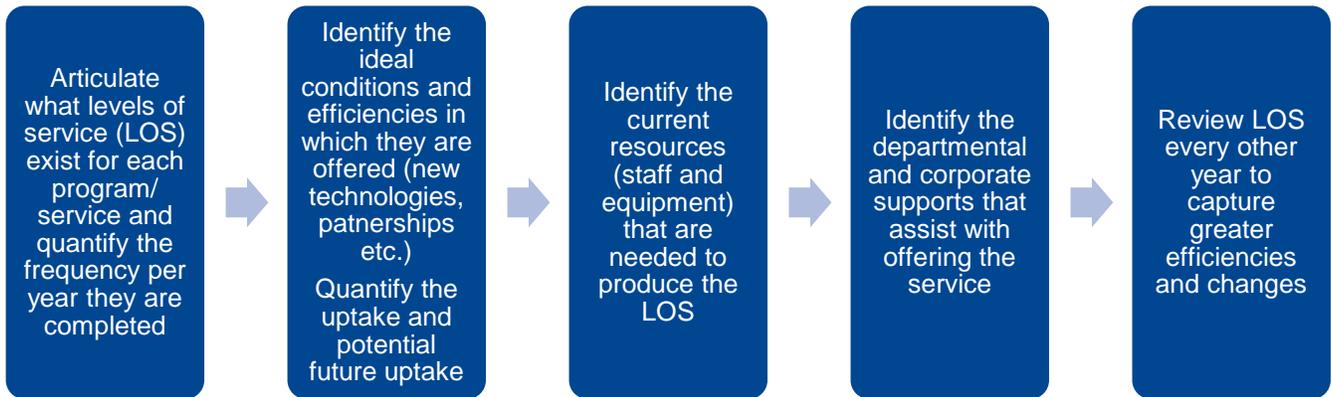
Considering the current and future population growth in Oakville, it is important not only to determine facility and service requirements from a planning perspective, but also to know the operational requirements (e.g., staffing, equipment, etc.) as well.

The initial step in this process includes determining the current level of service in each discipline and projecting that standard to a greater population base. Many factors will come into consideration including volunteer capacity and determining the core services that the town should deliver directly. For example, aquatics may offer seven lesson sets per year and require the capacity to deliver enough lessons to accommodate 20% of the population each year. This allows staff to project aquatic lesson sets for the future based on these assumptions.

The next step is to quantify the costs to deliver this level of service including but not, limited to the number of staff, training and supervisory hours, volunteer recruitment training and

supervision, as well as developing and promoting lessons, registration, etc. Identifying and costing the process prompts staff to look for greater efficiencies. The point of the exercise is to encourage the administration to plan and identify operational costs of providing the same level of service to a greater population as efficiently as possible. Further, this approach allows Council to approve the levels of service and understand the costs associated with opening new facilities as a result of the increasing population.

Figure 6: Identifying Levels of Service



Actions – Levels of Service		
<p>21. Review and articulate levels of service in each recreation discipline and complete a process mapping exercise to look for greater efficiencies to plan for a growing population and the use of additional facility spaces.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

4. Recreation Facilities

This section contains an examination of recreation facility needs based on the approach identified in Section 1.4. Supporting inventory, condition and usage data, recommendations from related studies (and their current status), and public and stakeholder input can be found in the Stage 1 and 2 Reports.

4.1 Overview

From community centres to indoor pools, arenas to fitness centres, and seniors centres to arts-focused spaces, Oakville's recreation facilities are critical community spaces that inspire people to get active, connect, and create a shared sense of belonging. They are places where Oakville comes together to participate, develop skills, create friendships, and build the kind of community in which we all want to live. Our community centres are the foundation for an array of activities, programs, and spaces that have become vital to supporting our diverse needs and offering affordable, accessible, and high-quality recreation opportunities that are vital to Oakville's health and prosperity.

The following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

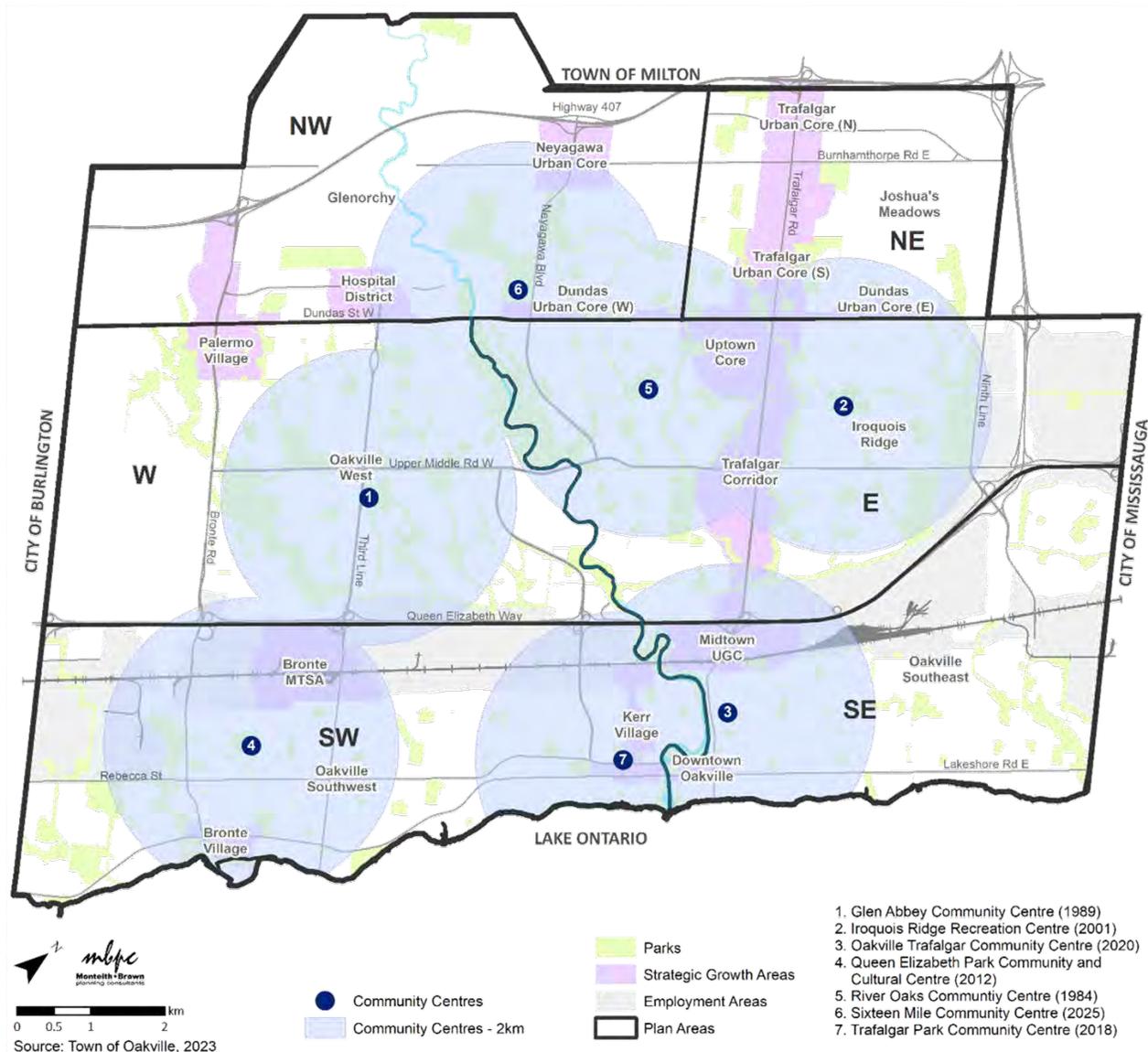
- A. **Prioritize Facility Expansion and Revitalization:** Updating and expanding existing community centres is needed to better optimize space considering growing and emerging needs. Key sites include Glen Abbey Recreation Centre and River Oaks Community Centre. Opportunities to extend hours and space at the Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre should also be evaluated, as well as expanding seniors' programming at other centres.
- B. **Consider New Models for Community Space:** Additional community centres and facilities will be needed in strategic growth areas to support new residents. Many of these will be on partnered sites and may involve condominium arrangements. They will be smaller and more intensely programmed than many existing facilities, with different focuses based on location. Creative financial arrangements will be required, such as the sale of air rights above town facilities. The indoor aquatics system will also be evaluated to respond to pent-up demands, the need for more instructional and drop-in opportunities, and staffing shortages.
- C. **Re-imagine Single Pad Arenas:** Evaluate opportunities to repurpose selected single-pad arena facilities and sites to in-demand uses. These facilities could be re-imagined as year-round community activity hubs (e.g., gymnasiums, turf fields, etc.), sport-specific hubs (e.g., racquet sports, etc.), or parks with needed neighbourhood amenities.
- D. **Modernize Outdoor Pools:** Rationalize the continued provision of outdoor pools. Consider opportunities to rebuild an existing site as a modern destination for outdoor community aquatics, while removing selected sites from operation (replacing with other in-demand infrastructure).
- E. **Support Sport Tourism and Sport-Friendly Facilities:** Plan major sports facilities through a regional lens, in partnership with sport tourism bodies and in alignment with economic development strategies. Create a regional sport working group to address the planning, design, permitting, and joint use of municipal and school facilities. Develop a Sport Tourism Strategy to address sport-specific priorities, hosting requirements, and non-core aspects of the Long-term Development continuum.

4.2 Community Centres

Overview

The town is a trusted provider of recreation services and community centres are hubs that offer a wide range of drop-in and registered programming and rental spaces for the community. Oakville currently operates six (6) community centres³, including Glen Abbey (GACC), Iroquois Ridge (IRCC), Oakville Trafalgar (OTCC), River Oaks (ROCC), Queen Elizabeth Park (QEPCCC), and Trafalgar Park (TPCC). A seventh (7th) facility – Sixteen Mile Community Centre (SMCC) is currently under construction in North Oakville.

Figure 7: Town of Oakville Community Centres and Other Recreation Facilities, including General Catchment Areas



³ Facilities that are designed or function primarily for a single type of recreational activity (e.g., ice sports, aquatics, seniors' programming) are not defined as community centres and are assessed separately within this plan.

Community centres are for everyone. They are safe and welcoming places that support personal wellness, social connections, and community activities. Infrastructure equity and spatial distribution of community centres is a strength in Oakville – all of Oakville’s community centres have been designed to serve numerous uses and support multiple neighbourhoods. The centres are all multi-use, inclusive, and high-quality spaces – OTCC recently received a Parks and Recreation Ontario Aquatics Award for Excellence in Facility Design. Each of these facilities offer fitness centres, program rooms, and access to parks and outdoor amenities, while most also contain gymnasiums, pools, arenas, seniors spaces, and libraries.

Facility Needs

Community centres are planned based on geographic accessibility and population. A town-wide provision target of one multi-use community centre per 45,000 population was established in the 2012 Master Plan, with catchment areas of up to 2.5 km. With one-half of the town’s community centres opening since this time (QEPCCC, TPCC, and OTCC), Oakville has been on an accelerated building schedule and is currently providing one facility per 37,500 residents.

Looking ahead, the master planning target of **one community centre per 45,000 residents** remains appropriate based on current service levels both locally and in comparator municipalities, coupled with strategies to enhance and improve existing facilities. With a forecast of nearly 443,000 persons by 2051, application of this target supports a long-range town-wide provision level of 10 locations – **three more than are currently provided** (not including SMCC which is counted in the inventory as it is under construction).

Note: As not all community centres are similarly designed, these targets are not intended to indicate overall capacity and demand for programming or facility components, but rather to serve as long-term indicators for provision; the needs assessments for specific facility components provided in subsequent sections of this report provide additional detail in this regard.

Table 15: Projection of Community Centre Needs based on Recommended Provision Target

Forecasted Population	Community Centre Needs (1:45,000 pop.)	Deviation from Current Supply (7 centres)*
225,000 (current)	5.0	-2.0 (surplus)
250,000 (2026)	5.6	-1.4 (surplus)
300,000 (2032)	6.7	-0.3 (deficit)
350,000 (2038)	7.8	0.8 (deficit)
400,000 (2045)	8.9	1.9 (deficit)
442,941 (2051)	9.8	2.8 (deficit)

* includes the Sixteen Mile Community Centre which is currently under construction

While the ongoing SMCC project (the town’s seventh community centre) is intended to serve new communities in the north, it will not be enough to address all growth-related needs north of Dundas Street – North Oakville should be the focus of future community centre

development. The town's most recent community centre projects have all been in South Oakville and were brought about by facility-renewal opportunities and broader community revitalization projects. Each of these facilities (QEPCCC, TPCC, and OTCC) have capacity to accommodate some localized demand from future growth (e.g., Midtown Oakville, Bronte, etc.).

Community Centre Models

While some future community centres may look a lot like the facilities recently built by the town, a new model for community centre provision is needed to reflect the evolving urban structure in strategic growth areas, which will offer fewer opportunities for traditional facility development.

Higher growth rates within strategic growth areas will have a number of impacts on community centre planning, design and delivery, necessitating renewal, expansion, and new forms of facility provision.

For example, growth in strategic growth areas will:

- result in smaller housing units, placing greater demand on the public realm and public amenities;
- create a greater need to invest in the expansion and revitalization of facilities within proximity to strategic growth areas;
- require adjustments to programming and hours to accommodate growing demand at existing community centres; wait lists may increase and access may need to be reallocated to priority groups;
- impact the complexity and cost of facility provision and development (due partially to higher land values);
- necessitate a greater focus on innovative facility provision strategies within high density areas, such as those involving partnerships and leased space within integrated multi-partner developments;
- allow for improved pedestrian, cycling, and transit access;
- lead to expanded options for private amenity space (e.g., condo pools, fitness centres, etc.); municipal programming within these spaces will likely be restricted, therefore their ability to serve a broader population may be quite limited.

Community centres located in areas of higher density will be an important part of Oakville's facility provision strategy moving forward. Residents living in higher density areas rely on public facilities to offer safe and inclusive spaces for respite, interaction, and wellness. However, the provision of community centres within denser areas faces unique challenges and opportunities. Most notably, land costs will be greater, resulting in a smaller footprint and likelihood of a multi-storey community centre within a mixed-use building. To help keep costs down and to leverage synergies, partnerships with schools, libraries, non-profit providers, residential complexes, and others are more likely to be pursued – these projects can be much more complex and may take longer to realize.

With nearly three-quarters (73%) of Oakville’s future growth allocated to strategic growth areas such as Trafalgar Urban Core, Midtown Oakville, and Palermo Village, large land-intensive community centres may not be feasible. Further, mobility in these areas will be different, with an emphasis on active transportation (walking, cycling, etc.) and public transit.

Based on these considerations, a two-tiered community centre provision model is recommended (see below):

- **“Multi-use community centres”** refer to the town’s traditional approach to building design, whereby the centre is a stand-alone building (or possibly co-located with another public use), but on a larger plot of land that is in public ownership.
- **“Local community centres”** are smaller, possibly multi-storey centres that are within shared building models with other government services or incorporated within the podium of mixed-use or high-rise residential buildings; they will be more common in strategic growth areas where land is at a premium and may be part of a condominium or leased ownership structure.

Table 16: Planning Guidelines for New Community Centres

Description	Multi-use Community Centres	Local Community Centres
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be provided anywhere, though less likely in strategic growth areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher density strategic growth areas
Building Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • larger – generally 50,000+ sf • more horizontal – commonly co-located with a community park and outdoor space • more likely to be a stand-alone building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smaller – generally 20,000 to 40,000 sf (excluding library space) • more vertical (or stacked) – may be part of a multi-storey mixed-use building (in the podium, with ground level access) or shared space with other service providers (e.g., transit, housing, social services, etc.) • lease arrangements may be considered
Catchment and Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally serving a population of 45,000+ residents • up to 2.5 km • users are more likely to travel by private vehicle (but transit access is required) • substantial off-street parking is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally serving a population of 25,000+ residents • 1.25 km (15-minute walk) • users are more likely to travel by foot, bike, or public transit • minimal off-street parking is required
Partnership Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • likely to be delivered, funded, and operated by the town • not typically co-located with schools (unless local community centre model) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • likely to be operated by the town, but may be delivered and/or partially funded by developer • may be co-located with schools or other civic uses • model is conducive to a broader variety of non-recreational service partners

Description	Multi-use Community Centres	Local Community Centres
Core Program Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> core components generally include indoor pool, gymnasium, library branch, multi-use program space, common areas other potential components include arenas, youth and/or seniors' space, etc. centres will provide a "one-stop shop" experience for residents of all ages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> core components include gymnasium, library branch, multi-use program space, common areas other potential components include youth and/or seniors' space, etc. programs will be locally-driven and may vary considerably from other nearby centres
Potential Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sixteen Mile Community Centre Trafalgar Urban Core South 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palermo Village Trafalgar Urban Core North
Existing Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Abbey Community Centre Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> none in Oakville One Yonge Community Recreation Centre (City of Toronto) David Braley Vaughan Metropolitan Centre of Community (City of Vaughan)

Proposed Capital Program

A series of capital projects are recommended to address these needs, with consideration being given to the location and timing of population growth, existing locations, and geographic equity. Recommended projects aimed at revitalizing existing community centres (discussed further in the next section) and addressing gap areas and growing communities are listed in the following table. Sites will need to be secured for many of these projects and should be made a priority in the short-term. As is the case with any major building project, feasibility studies will be prepared to define and confirm design, sizing, and financial implications of new or revitalized/expanded facilities.

Table 17: Recommended Community Centre Development Program (listed in proposed order)

Recommended Actions	Recommended Timing
<p>1. Sixteen Mile Community Centre (under construction): Open the Sixteen Mile Community Centre, consisting of an indoor aquatic centre, fitness centre, gymnasium, library branch, etc.</p>	2025
<p>2. Glen Abbey Community Centre (expansion/revitalization): Potential changes include: replace existing pool with 6+ lane 25M tank and smaller warm-water tank; new change rooms and sauna facilities; enlarge gymnasium by swapping with fitness centre and expanding the building; add 2 squash courts; and renovate lobby, front desk, fitness centre, studio spaces, etc.</p>	initiate detailed planning ~2027
<p>3. Palermo Village (new): Develop a local community centre as part of the transit hub proposed for north of Dundas Street. The site may be co-located with other civic uses (e.g., library, etc.) or be part of a condominium development. Potential components include: gymnasium, meeting and activity rooms, library branch, etc.</p>	~325,000 population

Recommended Actions	Recommended Timing
<p>4. River Oaks Community Centre (expansion/revitalization): Potential changes include: gymnasium expansion; new fitness centre and studio spaces through removal of squash and racquetball courts; renovation of change rooms; and create opportunity for library branch at front of building (in place of existing multi-purpose rooms).</p>	<p>Medium-term (2034-2041)</p>
<p>5. Trafalgar Urban Core South (new): Develop a multi-use community centre to serve residents in Trafalgar Urban Core South and the Dundas Urban Core Areas. Other potential components include: indoor pool (6-10 lanes, 25M), gymnasium, fitness centre, auditorium, meeting and activity rooms, etc.</p>	<p>~375,000 population</p>
<p>6. Trafalgar Urban Core North (new): Develop a local community centre to serve residents in Trafalgar Urban Core North. The site may be co-located with other civic uses (e.g., library) or be part of a condominium development. Potential components include: gymnasium, meeting and activity rooms, library branch, etc.</p>	<p>~425,000 population</p>
<p>7. Other Community Centre Expansion/Revitalization Projects: Locations and timing to be determined through further study.</p>	<p>As required</p>

Areas not identified herein (e.g., Clearview, Joshua Meadows, etc.) do not meet the population thresholds to support the development of a new multi-use or local community centre and/or are within the catchment area of another existing or planned centre. In localized areas with higher needs, efforts should be made to leverage existing locations (e.g., parks, schools, partnered sites, etc.) to offer appropriate programming and activities inline with community needs.

It is important to recognize that planning and execution can take several years as many building projects are complex undertakings that involve multiple partners, funding sources, approvals, and site-specific considerations. Projects should only proceed when funding has been confirmed and should involve additional public consultation, followed by design and engineering, tendering and procurement, and construction. Funding approvals may be required at each stage.

Facility Expansion and Revitalization

Although most facilities are in good physical condition, many are becoming increasingly dated and outmoded due to their design, era of construction, functional barriers, and changing standards and expectations. Residents expressed a growing desire for large-scale facility revitalization initiatives that go beyond state of good repair by enhancing access to needed spaces and services. Where possible, the preferred approach would be to undertake one comprehensive renovation instead of multiple smaller-scale projects over a few years as this has potential for greater positive impacts and economies of scale.

Community centres have a typical lifespan in the range of 40 to 50 years, at which point significant reinvestment and/or rationalization is typically required. A focus must be placed on

expanding and revitalizing older centres to ensure they provide contemporary spaces that meet current and future needs, recognizing that quality can have a significant influence on facility use – people are known to travel past their closest community centre if another one has the programs, times, and overall experience that they are seeking. Reinvesting in existing community centres makes good economic sense, is supported by the public, and will be a priority for Oakville. Some of the best opportunities for meeting future needs are on lands controlled by the town.

Expansion and reinvestment can be transformative and high-quality spaces and services are critical. Projects should consider new amenities (supported by demonstrated needs) and comfort amenities that respond to a broad range of needs, such as flexible community and program spaces, natural light, barrier-free spaces, and more. Large-scale capital projects may also present opportunities to install more energy-efficient building systems.

The table above also includes the revitalization of two existing centres in the short- to medium-term – Glen Abbey Community Centre (detailed planning to begin in 2027) and River Oaks Community Centre (between 2034 and 2041). Each of these community centres are in areas that are growing and are in proximity to strategic growth areas. They both offer great locations to accommodate some of this growth, especially if construction of new facilities is delayed.

Input from residents, stakeholders, and municipal officials, coupled with condition and usage reports and the consulting team’s observations, have led to the identification of potential opportunities that may be considered as part of a larger-scale expansion and revitalization of Glen Abbey Community Centre (1st priority, short-term) and River Oaks Community Centre (2nd priority, medium-term).

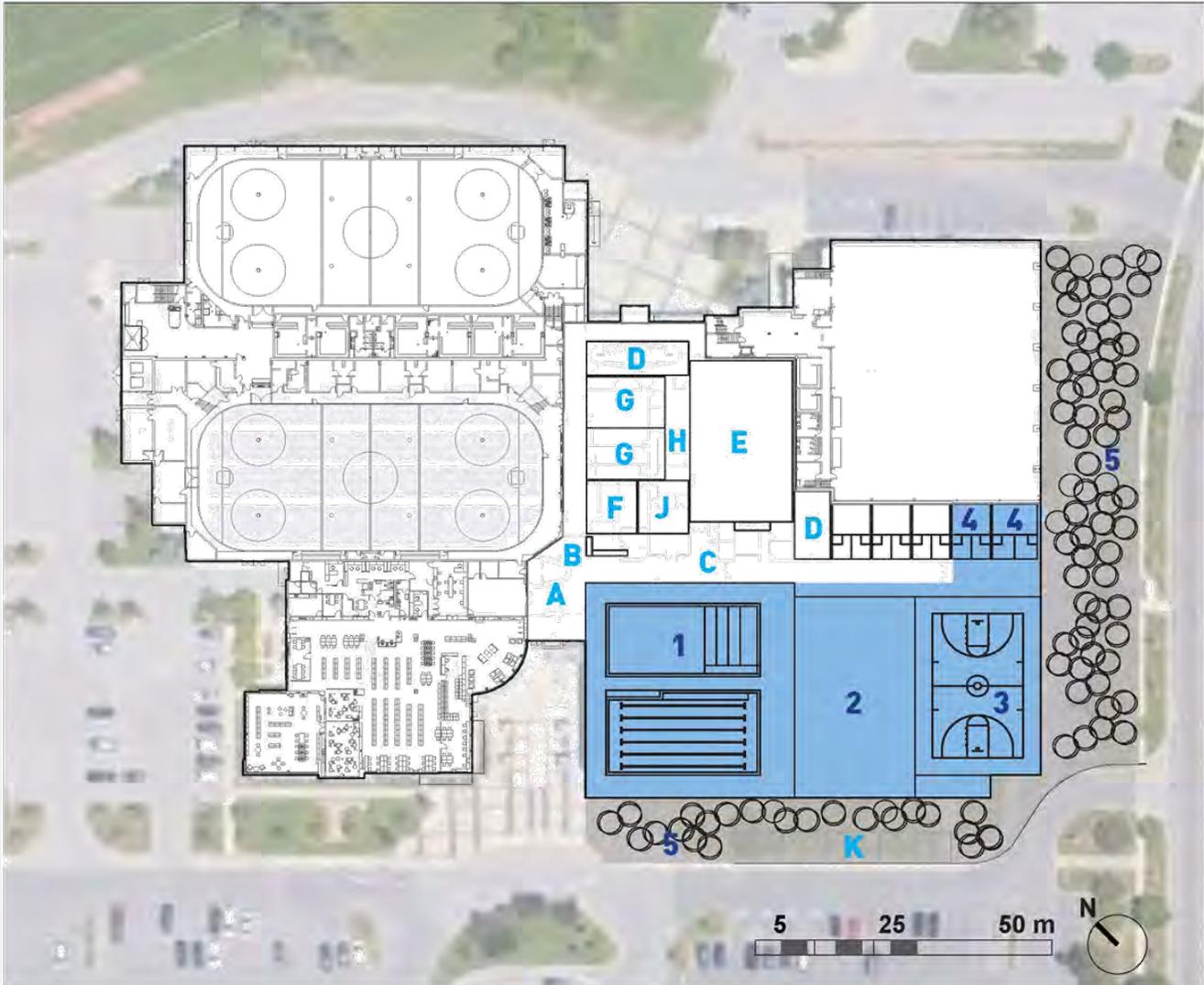
These ideas – which are documented in the following tables and conceptual plans – go beyond lifecycle renewal by recommending the repurposing of spaces and/or facility expansions that will help to elevate existing community centres to current Oakville standards (e.g., full size gymnasiums, multi-tank aquatic centres, etc.). These suggestions may be used to inform the development of feasibility studies for each facility that would involve more detailed investigations, costing, and public engagement. Additional analysis is required to determine potential funding sources for these projects (e.g., reserves, DC funds, etc.), which may impact overall project timing.

Table 18: Preliminary Expansion and Revitalization Considerations for Glen Abbey Community Centre (subject to feasibility analysis)

Glen Abbey Community Centre	
Addition Area	32,000 sf (approximate)
Renovation Area	21,000 sf (approximate)
Notes	<p>Demolishing the existing aquatic hall and fitness wing of the community centre will provide the necessary flexibility and make space for a 6-lane lap pool, a separate leisure pool, a gymnasium and larger change rooms to accommodate adequate family change rooms.</p> <p>The addition will also update the facility with a new entrance and front building face.</p> <p>Moving the reception desk to the NE corner of the lobby allows better staff control to membership program areas.</p> <p>Viewing areas to the pool, the gymnasium and the squash courts can be created by widening the corridor to make space for seating.</p> <p>Moving the fitness space into the existing gymnasium space allows program expansion from 3,300 sf to 5,300 sf. Natural light to improve the quality of the space could be brought in from the roof.</p> <p>The organization of the auxiliary spaces between the existing arena and gymnasium do not optimize the available space and complicate controlled access requirements. Reconfiguring the layout will make room for administration spaces, a spin class and multi-purpose rooms.</p> <p>Extending the building footprint may eliminate the driveway to the east.</p> <p>There is room to add a World Squash Federation singles and doubles Court.</p> <p>The net parking spaces on the site should remain the same if some spaces are relocated south of the proposed addition.</p>

Notes: All comments and concepts are based on high level reviews and will require confirmation based on engineered, detailed assessments of existing conditions. Renovations of existing facilities should always consider interim use during construction and seek minimal disruption by isolating areas of work to the greatest extent possible.

Figure 8: Preliminary Concept Plan for Glen Abbey Community Centre (subject to feasibility analysis)



ADDITION

- 1 AQUATIC HALL
- 2 CHANGE ROOMS with SAUNAS
- 3 GYMNASIUM
- 4 SQUASH COURT
- 5 LANDSCAPE AREA

RENOVATION

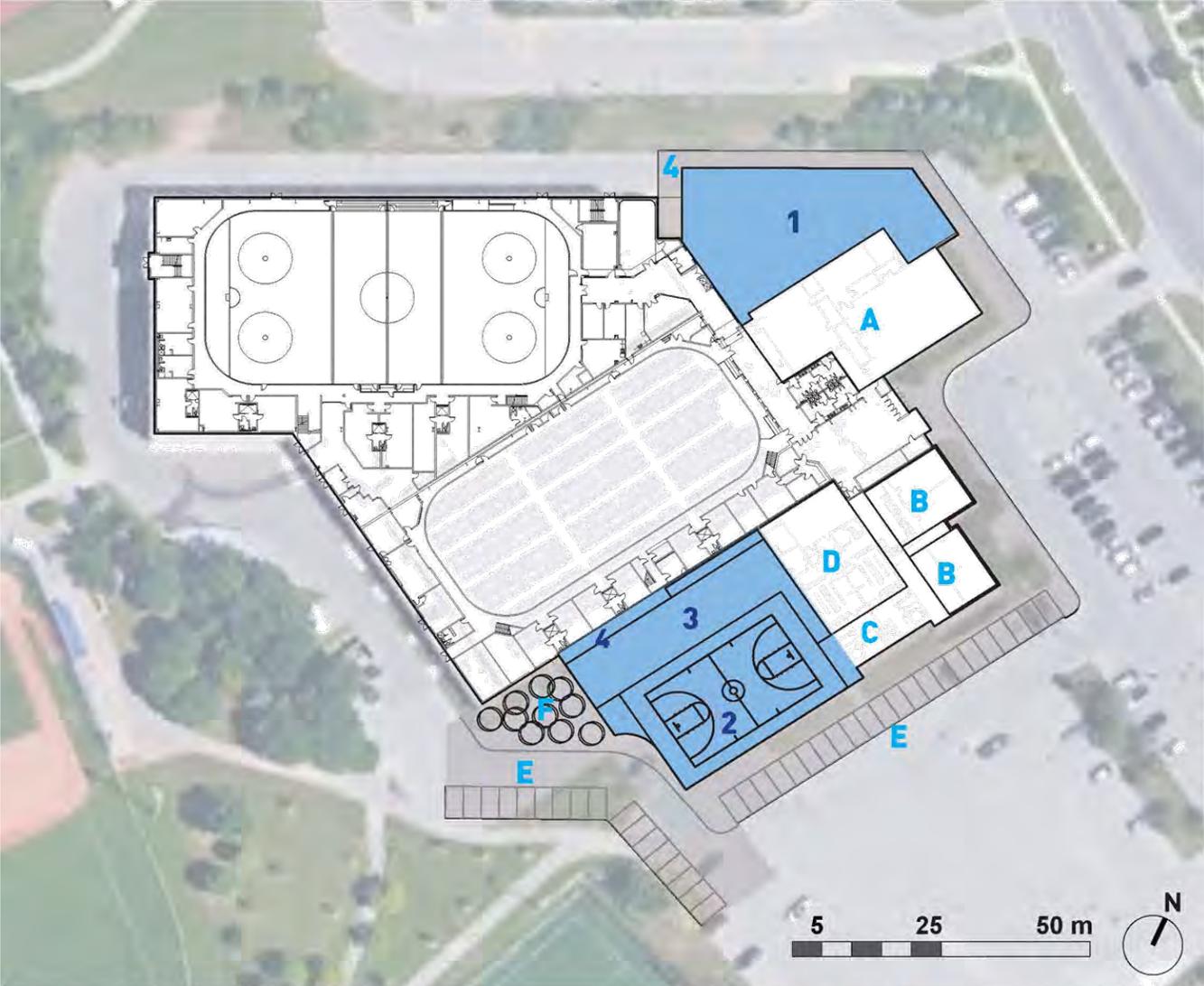
- A LOBBY
- B FRONT DESK
- C VIEWING AREA
- D WASHROOMS
- E FITNESS CENTRE
- F ADMINISTRATION
- G MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
- H STORAGE
- J SPIN STUDIO
- K NEW PARKING

Table 19: Preliminary Expansion and Revitalization Considerations for River Oaks Community Centre (subject to feasibility analysis)

River Oaks Community Centre	
Addition Area	Fitness – 11,200 sf (approximate) Library – 7,000 sf (approximate)
Renovation Area	Fitness – 9,700 sf (approximate) Library – 8,840 sf (approximate)
Notes	<p>The proposed concept wraps around the front of the building and has great potential to bring a renewed identity to the entire facility.</p> <p>The existing lobby and reception desk area can be maintained.</p> <p>The current squash courts and viewing areas require a lowered floor to achieve the necessary ceiling clearances. This configuration creates accessibility issues. Moving the squash program to another facility and raising the finished floor to the lobby level eliminates this issue, amounting to more flexible fitness studio space.</p> <p>The existing fitness space is limited by the clearances of its structural system. Demolishing this area clears space for a new gymnasium and a relocated fitness space.</p> <p>The site does limit the potential fitness space. The new program area is slightly reduced from 5,000 sf to 4,385 sf. However, the new space has a width of 9m which can accommodate efficient fitness equipment layout.</p> <p>Emergency exit doors along the south side of the arena must be maintained as part of the addition.</p> <p>There is room for the library to have an independent entrance.</p> <p>The existing structural system of the facility will limit the potential organization of the library spaces and the available space for the required program. The demolition scope will need to be balanced with the effectiveness of adapting the existing building to new uses.</p> <p>The addition for the library will encroach on the existing driveway that currently surrounds the building.</p> <p>There is a potential loss of 5 parking spaces.</p>

Notes: All comments and concepts are based on high level reviews and will require confirmation based on engineered, detailed assessments of existing conditions. Renovations of existing facilities should always consider interim use during construction and seek minimal disruption by isolating areas of work to the greatest extent possible.

Figure 9: Preliminary Concept Plan for River Oaks Community Centre (subject to feasibility analysis)



ADDITION

- 1 LIBRARY BRANCH
- 2 GYMNASIUM
- 3 FITNESS CENTRE
- 4 PROTECT EMERGENCY EXIT

RENOVATION

- A LIBRARY SPACES
- B FITNESS STUDIOS
- C LOUNGE SPACE
- D CHANGE ROOMS
- E RECONFIGURED PARKING
- F NEW LANDSCAPING

Longer-term revitalization priorities to be considered through future master plans include Iroquois Ridge Community Centre and Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre. Both of these facilities which will reach an age during the timeframe of this plan where strategic renewal and upgrades are likely to be required. This master plan recommends a capital renovation and replacement strategy for recreation and cultural facilities to assess the cost/benefit of renovating, upgrading, or repurposing and and/or underperforming assets (see section 8.1).

Design and Programming (see also Section 3.4)

Community centre design and operation must recognize that different areas of Oakville have different needs influenced by their demographic, lifestyle, and behavioural traits. For example, recent growth in North Oakville has included a higher proportion of middle-aged families with younger children, as well as people who identify as a visible minority and recent immigrants. Conversely, more stable communities are likely to witness an aging of the population.

Design of spaces and services must be sensitive to these characteristics and reflective of the needs of emerging cultures. Recreation can play a unique role in the integration of new immigrants into their chosen community, breaking down social barriers and building connections within diverse communities. Trends suggest that newcomers to Canada tend to be attracted to activities that are classified as “active leisure”, such as walking/running, swimming, and fitness, but are less likely to play organized sports.

Additionally, technology-based programs represent a growing area of focus for recreation departments across North America. STEAM programming, robotics, content creation, Esports, and more are a great way to attract youth and build skills that will be needed in the future. More resources will be required to support these and other emerging areas, perhaps in collaboration with OPL and other partners. Offering more tech-based programming could represent an opportunity for the QEPCCC (alignment with current mandate) or a future local community centre in the north (proximity to younger families and newcomers). Some case studies of technology-oriented community centres are presented on the next page.

Oakville will continue to strive to design safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces that invite people to participate, learn new things, and connect with one another. With community centres serving as hubs for both activities and community life, this means creating opportunities for underserved populations as well as finding space and resources for emerging activities. Oakville is encouraged to develop a program model that offers a suite of core services across all community centres (space permitting), supplemented by other opportunities that are respond to the unique needs of the community. Additional resources for research, outreach, and partnerships will be required to ensure that programs are effectively designed to address localized needs.

CASE STUDIES – TECHNOLOGY AND STEM-FOCUSED COMMUNITY CENTRES

[Becker Technology Centre and Recreation Park \(Las Vegas\)](#)

The Becker Technology Centre and Recreation Park was developed in 2023 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The 5,800 square foot community centre is located in a park and focuses on providing technology and STEM recreation opportunities over the traditional sports and recreation activities. The building contains a STEM lab, flex classroom, E-sports room and theatre, and a multimedia room. These spaces allow for innovative programming such as smart phone classes for seniors, coding workshops, DJ music lessons, 3D printing, drone soccer, and more.



Becker Technology Centre⁴



Becker Technology Centre⁵



Becker Technology Centre⁶



Becker Technology Centre⁷

⁴ Source: <https://registration.lasvegasnevada.gov>

⁵ Source: <https://www.reviewjournal.com/local/local-las-vegas/drone-soccer-aims-to-teach-kids-more-than-a-fun-esport-2804834/>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

[Brampton Collaborative Learning and Technology Centre](#)

The Brampton Collaborative Learning and Technology Centre opened in 2023 within a 7,000 square foot satellite building of the Central Peel Secondary School. This location features five classrooms (including a computer lab), and two collaboration spaces focused on innovative technology. Programs and spaces are designed to be used for STEM-related programming for students and youth from across Brampton. There are plans to expand offerings to include STEM-related adult learning and family programming. The development and use of this centre is provided through a collaboration between the City and Peel District School Board.



Brampton Technology Centre, Photo⁸

[City of Coquitlam Community Centre in Town Centre Park](#)

The Coquitlam Community Centre is located in Town Centre Park in the City of Coquitlam, British Columbia. The existing innovation hub was transformed into a new community centre to increase public access. The 11,250 sq. ft. community centre includes a living room, concession area, multi-purpose rooms, studio/maker's space, lounge, meeting rooms, and exterior plaza. Programming focuses on STEM programming and lifelong learning opportunities such as talks, lectures, language classes, and demonstrations. Large open space that will function as a community living room. Construction of the project is scheduled for completion in 2024.



Coquitlam Community Centre, Photo⁹

⁸ Source: <https://www.brampton.ca/EN/residents/Recreation/Community-Centres/Pages/The-Collaborative-Learning-and-Technology-Centre.aspx>

⁹ Source: <https://www.tricitynews.com/local-news/upgrades-set-to-turn-coquitlam-innovation-hub-into-new-community-centre-6528466>

Actions – Community Centres

- 22.** Take immediate and sustained steps to implement the recommended **community centre development and expansion/revitalization program**. This includes (in general order of priority):
- development of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre (ongoing)
 - expansion/revitalization of Glen Abbey Community Centre
 - development of local community centre in Palermo (with OPL)
 - expansion/revitalization of River Oaks Community Centre
 - development of a multi-use community centre in Trafalgar Urban Core South
 - development of local community centre in Trafalgar Urban Core North (with OPL)

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related (new builds)	a) under construction (2025)	Planning target is one community centre per 45,000 residents. Some centres may be part of multi-stakeholder sites or condominium buildings. Sites and/or partnership agreements will need to be secured for many of these proposed projects to proceed and should be made a priority many years ahead of construction.
High (expansion/revitalization projects)	b) detailed planning to begin in ~2027	
	c) 325,000 population	
	d) medium-term (2034-41)	
	e) 375,000 population	
	f) 425,000 population	

4.3 Indoor Pools

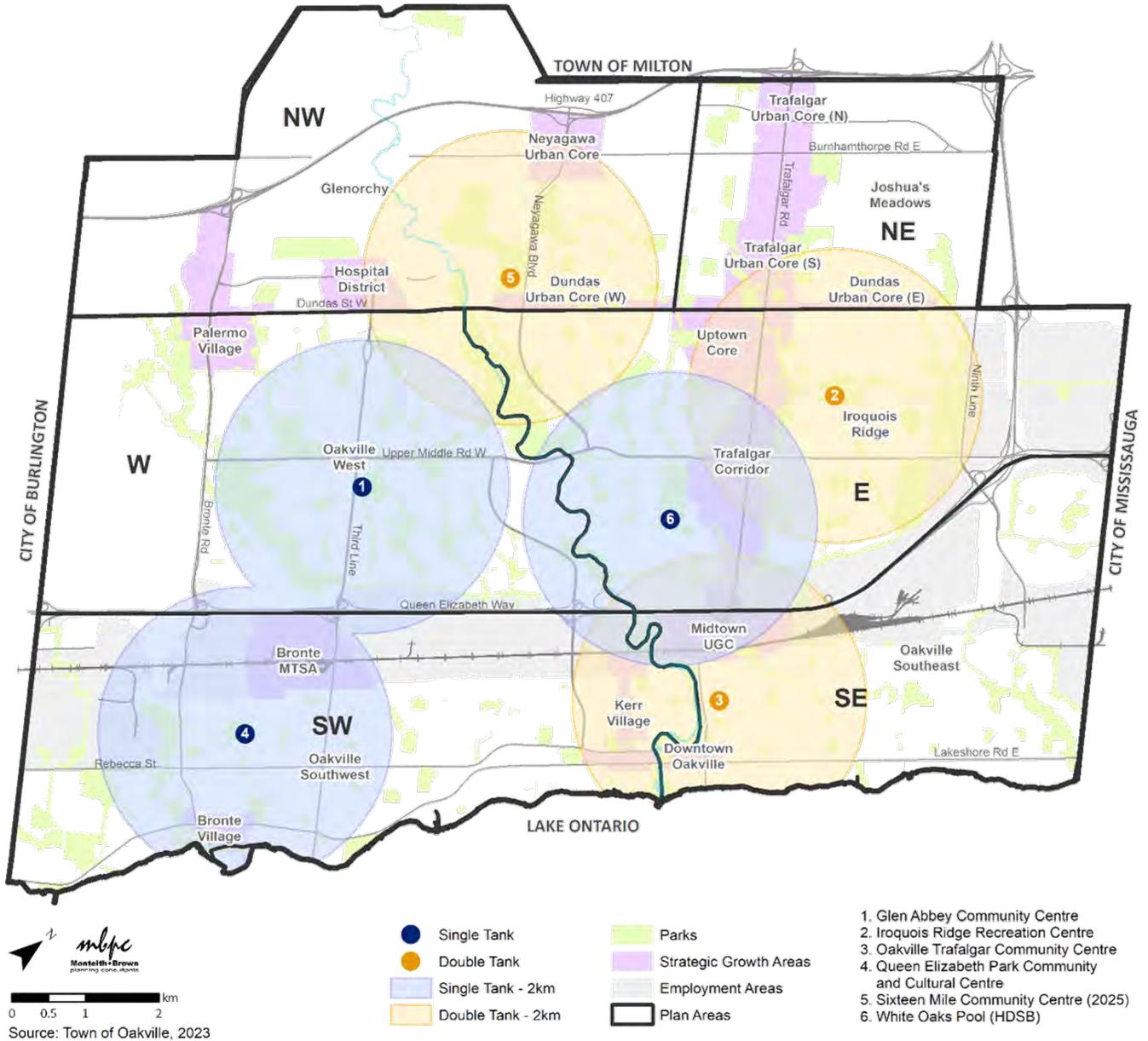
The town currently provides indoor pools at five (5) locations (GACC, IRCC, OTCC, QEPCCC, and White Oaks Pool); the aquatic centres at IRCC and OTCC contain two pools with different water temperatures. A sixth (6th) indoor pool location is currently under construction at SMCC; this facility will include a traditional 25-metre lap pool as well a smaller warm water pool. The YMCA of Oakville and Appleby College also operate indoor pools, but these facilities are excluded from the supply calculation as they do not offer the same level of affordable public access and programs as municipal pools.

Table 20: Town of Oakville Indoor Pools and Features

Indoor Pool	Year Opened	Size (m ²)	Key Features
Glen Abbey (GACC)	1990	292	25m, 4 lane leisure pool, water slide, ramp access, sauna
Iroquois Ridge (IRCC)	2001	511	25m, 8 lanes, water slide, ramp access, separate leisure pool
Oakville Trafalgar (OTCC)	2020	470	25m, 6 lanes, separate warm water leisure pool, ramp access
Queen Elizabeth (QEPCCC)	1975	362	25m, 6 lanes, stair access

Indoor Pool	Year Opened	Size (m ²)	Key Features
White Oaks Pool (owned by HDSB)	1972	292	25m, 6 lanes, 1m diving board, stair access

Figure 10: Town of Oakville Indoor Pools (plus outdoor pools and splash pads), including General Catchment Areas



Swimming is excellent exercise and is one of the most popular recreation activities for all age groups nationwide. Lessons are an important source of revenue for municipal pools and are often a function of the number of children in a community. Many municipalities have seen a rise in demand for private lessons as children (and adults) are seeking greater one-on-one instruction as we emerge from the pandemic. Oakville residents expressed strong interest in

more swimming opportunities with 69% to 74% of survey respondents indicating support for additional indoor pools.

Swimming is also a very important life skill. Newcomers to Canada are many times less likely to be able to swim than people born in Canada, so it is important the town continue to expand instructional swimming opportunities within its growing communities. Additionally, while gender gaps remain significant in some sports, swimming is one of the top choices for female participants. Privacy swims (female-only swim times with privacy curtains) are necessary for some newcomer populations. Aquatic programming is continually evolving to capture growing segments in the population.

Oakville's most utilized aquatic facilities offer both lane and leisure pools and are co-located with other activity spaces within multi-use community centres. Pool design and water temperature have a significant impact on the type of activities that can be offered. The most successful indoor aquatic centres include a variety of features that are designed to accommodate all ages and abilities with increasing emphasis on warmer-water pools that address the needs of both young children and an aging population.

The analysis in this section has been updated from past approaches by using water surface area to examine pool supply and forecast future needs. As noted, the town has been working to ensure that new builds include larger, multi-tank venues that allow for multi-level learn to swim, family swim, fitness programming, and rentals. As pools come in different shapes and sizes, pool area (water surface) analysis provides a more granular look at how the town is keeping pace with community growth. It should be noted that this method does not provide insight into capacity or demand, but rather focuses on supply.

The following table shows past and current pool area figures (square metres). Going back to the 2012 Master Plan, the town was providing an average of one square metre of water area for every 101 residents at that time. Currently, this level of service is at one square metre per 114 persons, but will soon improve to one square metre per 99 residents when the new Sixteen Mile Sports Centre pools are open in 2025.

Given that pool demand is strongly linked to population growth as swimming is enjoyed by most ages and cultures, past and sustained service levels are a good indicator of future demand. **On this basis, one square metre of pool area (water surface) per 100 to 115 residents has been used to calculate indoor pool needs moving forward. Using this formula, approximately 1,350 to 1,930 square metres of additional pool area would be required to meet growth-related needs by 2051.**

Comparing this to the size of the SMCC aquatic centre (529 square metres), this would equate to a need for 2.6 to 3.6 additional pool locations by 2051. However, this figure could be higher or lower depending on factors such as:

- adjustments to existing pool inventories;
- sizing of future facilities;
- programming and allocation decisions;
- the role and capacity of outdoor pools; and
- changes in participation trends.

Table 21: Current and Future Needs based on Pool Area (Water Surface)

Year	Existing Pool Area (m ²)	Population	Persons per m ²	Additional m ² required to achieve guideline range (1 m ² per 100 to 115 persons)
2012	1,827	184,060	101	n/a
Current	1,971*	225,000	114	0 to 279
2025	2,500**	247,522	99	n/a
2034	2,500	318,278	127	268 to 683
2043	2,500	389,735	156	889 to 1,398
2051	2,500	442,914	177	1,352 to 1,930

* Centennial Pool closed and OTCC Pool opened in 2020 (+144 m² net)

** SMCC Pool opening in 2025 (+529 m²)

There are many ways that the town can achieve this level of provision, including expansion to existing pools and development of new facilities. The table below shows illustrates the primary strategies advanced through this master plan – which is sufficient to meet a target of one square metre per 115 persons – including projects that are aligned with community centre building or redevelopment projects and others that are longer-term and will require further study. This table is not intended to show precise sizing or timing – new or expanded facilities may be brought online prior to reaching a deficit state for reasons such as improved geographic equity, rising programmatic needs, capital project coordination, etc.

Table 22: Potential Future Capital Indoor Pool Projects

Potential Projects	Preliminary Estimated Timing	Preliminary Estimated Pool Area (m ²)	Notes
Glen Abbey CC Pool Expansion	TBD (Short- to medium-term)	180 m ² (net)	Assumes expansion to ~470 m ² . Timing is to be determined through detailed planning recommended to begin in ~2027.
Trafalgar Urban Core South CC	375,000 population (2040/41)	690 m ²	Assumes 10-lane 25-m pool and separate teaching pool. Timing to align with CC construction.
Future Pool – location TBD	TBD	530 m ²	Assumes 8-lane 25-m pool and teaching pool (similar to SMCC). Location and timing to be determined.
Total		1,400 m²	

Note: timing and size of new and expanded pools to be confirmed through future study and design

Prior to deciding where on the range of provision the town wishes to be in the long-term (one square metre per 100 or 115 population), it is necessary to evaluate the capacity of the indoor aquatics system as recommended in Section 3.5 of this plan. If the town determines that a long-term provision target of one square metre of pool/water area per 100 persons is

appropriate, then it may be necessary to consider one additional pool location than is shown in the table above.

One new multi-tank indoor aquatic facility is recommended within the multi-use community centre proposed for the **Trafalgar Urban Core South** area (when the town reaches a population of +/- 375,000 residents). Consideration should be given to designing the aquatic complex at the Trafalgar Urban Core South community centre as a sport-friendly 8- to 10-lane 25-metre pool with a smaller warm-water pool (the survey found higher demand for indoor warm-water pools in Northeast Oakville), which would be equivalent to at least 1.5 pools. A 10-lane 25-metre pool offers a similar capacity to a 50-metre pool for community recreation programming (e.g., swim lessons, aqua fitness, recreational swimming) without the added space and cost, while also accommodating growing demand for training and competition from swim clubs that are renting pools outside of Oakville. With fewer new indoor pool sites being recommended in the future, this added capacity will help the town achieve its provision target.

Demand for additional indoor pool locations should be reassessed when Oakville approaches a population of 400,000 people, or earlier if necessary. By this time, it is possible that one or more existing pools (e.g., White Oaks, QEPCCC, etc.) will reach the end of its functional life, which would necessitate the preparation of a more detailed rationalization exercise. In the interim, the town should maximize usage and performance of these facilities through alternate programming strategies, such as optimizing stand-alone pool sites like **White Oaks Pool** for athletic training and rentals. Section 3.4 includes a recommendation to evaluate the capacity of the indoor aquatics system to respond to pent-up demands, the need for more instructional and drop-in opportunities, staffing shortages, and hours of operation.

Older pools do not provide the range of amenities offered by new facilities and many are not able to accommodate the full mix of recreational swims, lessons, aquatic exercise, and therapeutic programming. Multi-tank pools with universal change areas and enhanced accessibility features have become Oakville's standard and should be considered through future capital planning.

For example, the redevelopment of the pool at **Glen Abbey Community Centre** is recommended, which will increase swim capacity in the short-term (0.5 pools if a smaller tank is added). The current GACC pool is undersized (4 lanes) and is unable to fully accommodate the needs of the surrounding community. Options for revitalizing this facility were identified in the previous section, including the possibility of redeveloping the facility as a 6+ lane pool with warm-water tank. Furthermore, as the town's only community centre with a **sauna**, it will be important to maintain this service at the GACC through an updated sauna facility that meets current public health guidelines, Ontario Building Code, Oakville Universal Design Standards, etc. A renovated sauna at GACC will be sufficient for addressing community-wide needs and no additional sauna locations are recommended at this time.

For several years, the Oakville Aquatic Club (OAK) has expressed interest in the development of a **50-metre long-course training and competition pool** in Oakville. There are approximately nineteen 50-metre indoor pools in Ontario, about half of which are owned by municipalities and half that are owned by universities. Of this, three 50-metre pools have been built since 2000, all with the help of senior government funding to support international

games bids. The town has studied this proposal in the past and has not supported the provision of a 50-metre tank, but rather has sought to expand the availability of 25-metre pools and warmer-water pool tanks through new community centre development. This model continues to be the preferred approach for addressing community recreation needs. Municipal participation in a larger-scale project (e.g., 50-metre pool) may be considered further through the preparation of the proposed Sport Tourism Strategy which would involve regional partners and outside funding.

Actions – Indoor Pools

23. Indoor aquatic centres will be part of new multi-use community centre development, including the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and the proposed centre in Trafalgar Urban Core South. These models will include 25-metre lap pools (6- to 10-lanes, depending on location), warm water pools, and universal accessibility features. Opportunities to enhance existing indoor pools should be considered through future capital planning, including the expansion/revitalization of the Glen Abbey Community Centre. Additional indoor pool development may be required to meet long-term provision targets, informed by the recommended pool capacity review and availability of outdoor pools to support core services.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related (new builds) High (expansion/revitalization projects)	Generally linked to community centre development and expansion/revitalization projects.	Planning target of one square metre of pool area (water surface) per 100 to 115 residents. Demand for future indoor pool locations should be reassessed following the completion of a capacity review (see recommendation 5, short-term).

24. A 50-metre indoor pool cannot be supported by community-level needs alone and would require significant non-municipal funding and a business plan acceptable to the town and/or partners. Opportunities to accommodate long-course training and competition activities may be considered further through the recommended Sport Tourism Strategy.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Low	Short-term (2024-2033)	To be considered through Sport Tourism Strategy or external initiative.

25. Undertake a study to confirm the function, capacity, and long-term viability of the White Oaks Pool in meeting community aquatic needs.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-2033)	This study should be initiated following a minimum of two years of Sixteen Mile Community Centre pools being in continuous operation.

4.4 Outdoor Pools

The town provides five (5) outdoor pools, including four (4) that are south of the QEW. All of the pools are in established communities and over time are becoming less relevant to today's design and participation trends. Oakville's outdoor pools offer a variety of programs and recreational swims across a 10-week season. A large beach-entry pool is also available at Bronte Creek Provincial Park (park admission rates apply).

Figure 11: Town of Oakville Outdoor Pools (plus outdoor pools and splash pads), including General Catchment Areas

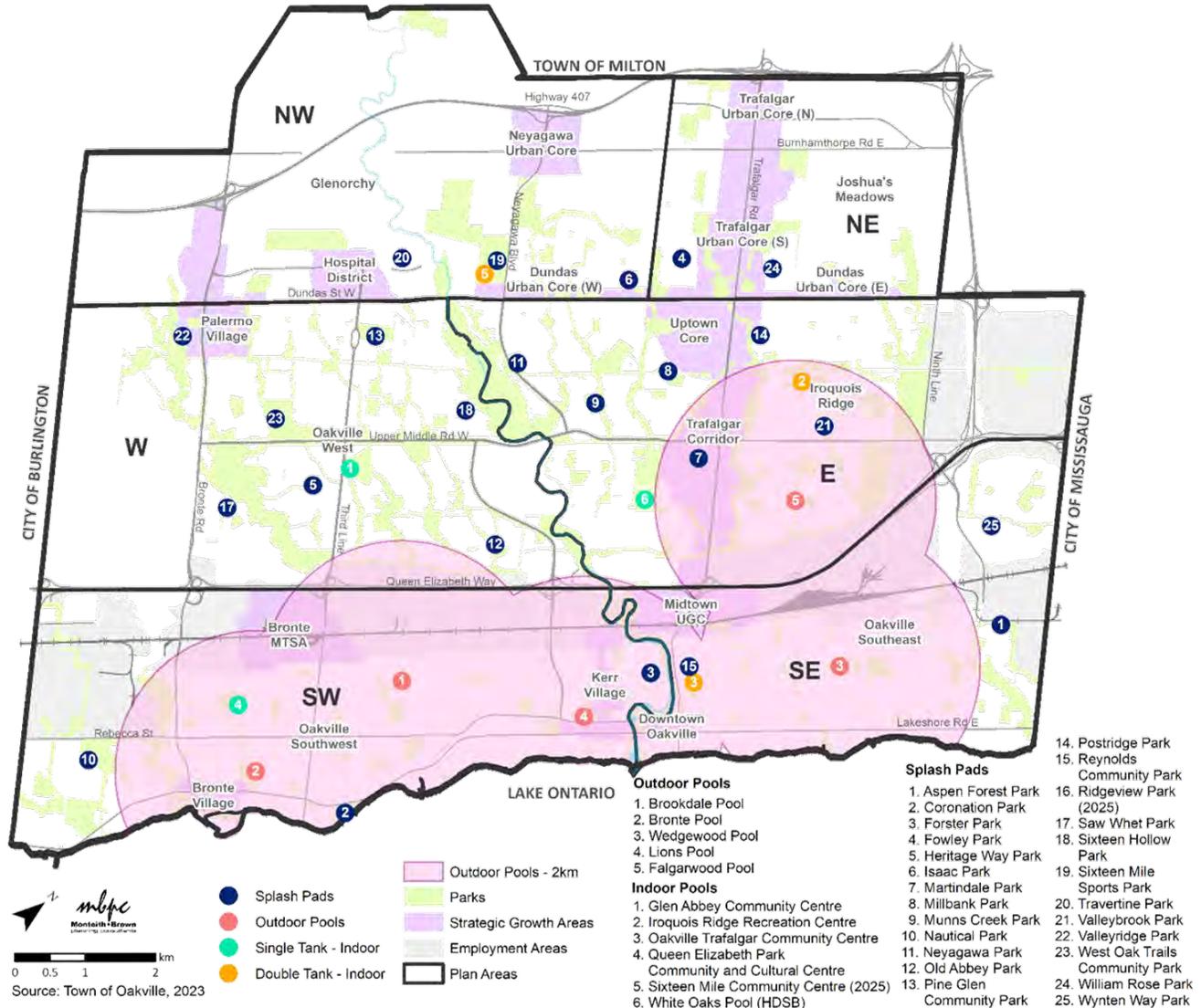


Table 23: Town of Oakville Outdoor Pools

Outdoor Pool	Year Opened	Features
Bronte	1973	25m, 6 lanes, dry slide, stair access
Brookdale	1971	25m, 6 lanes, dry slide, stair access accessibility improvements made in 2023
Falgarwood	1972	25m, 6 lanes, dry slide, stair access
Lions	1959	30m, 6 lanes, dry slide, stair access large changerooms, classroom space
Wedgewood	1970	25m, 6 lanes, dry slide, stair access accessibility and mechanical improvements made in 2023

Oakville’s existing outdoor pools were designed to meet the swimming and leisure needs of the past and are now attracting fewer attendees on a per capita basis, are costing more to maintain, and do not meet current accessibility standards. The pools are considered “walk-to” facilities with limited changeroom space and parking. Furthermore, most are located in mature communities in Southeast and Southwest Oakville which are home to an older demographic and larger lots with a higher density of private backyard pools.

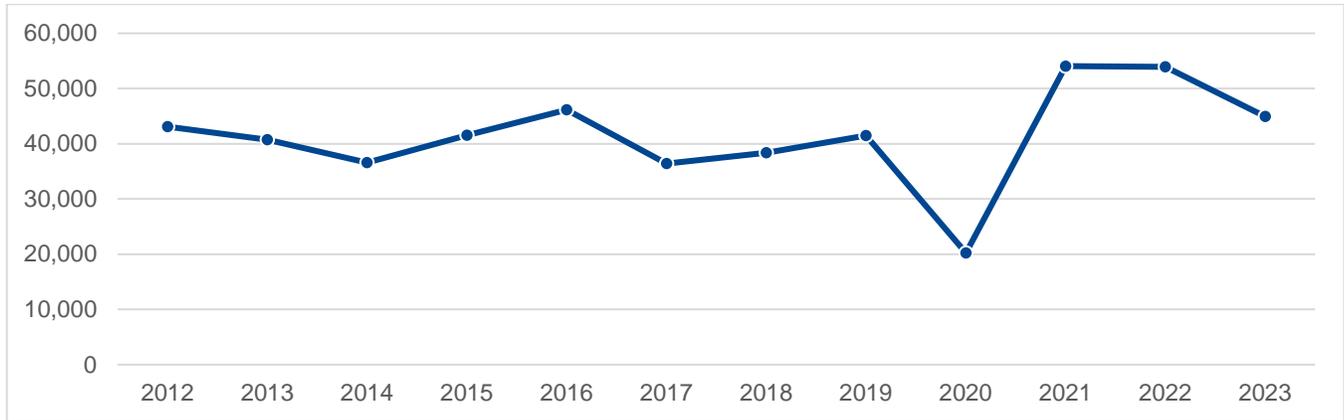
With the average age of the town’s outdoor pools at 54 years, it is prudent to review current trends, service levels, asset condition, and utilization.

Participation and Trends

The town’s outdoor public pools were each built in 1973 or earlier and initially served as the primary locations for learn-to-swim opportunities as there were few indoor pool facilities at that time. Over the years, usage has been shifting and gradually declining in relation to population growth, indicating waning demand for the aquatic opportunities afforded at these locations. The rise in backyard pool options has also influenced demand. The town has previously estimated that there were 18,000 private residential pools in Oakville and this figure has likely increased in recent years with the pandemic and proliferation of cost-effective above-ground pool options.

There were approximately 44,916 swims recorded at the town’s five pools in 2023. This marks a 13% increase over rates experienced prior to the pandemic, but also represents a 17% decline from 2022 when usage spiked, partially due to greater use by organized swim clubs in response to restricted access to indoor pools. Assuming an operating season of approximately 75 days per year, the average daily attendance in 2023 was 120 people per location. There remains capacity for greater use of existing pools.

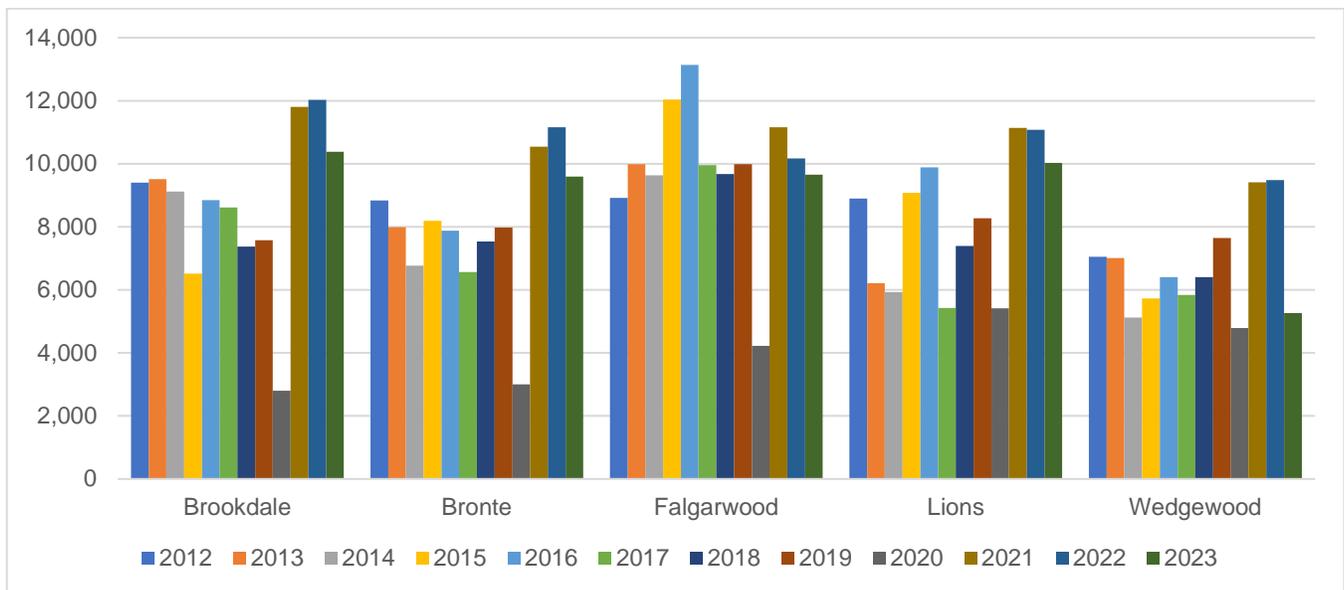
Figure 12: Total Swims at Town Oakville Outdoor Pools, 2012-2022 (all pools)



Note: Access was limited in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between 2012-2023, the town’s busiest pool has been Falgarwood (accounting for 24% of all outdoor swims) and the least used pool has been Wedgewood (accounting for 16% of all outdoor swims). Profiles for the pools suggest that significant usage comes from residents living nearby.

Figure 13: Total Swims at Town Oakville Outdoor Pools, 2012-2022 (by location)



Note: Access was limited in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The large majority (approximately 85%) of outdoor pool usage is through drop-in programming (e.g., recreational swimming). Outdoor pools account for less than 5% of overall swim lesson registrations, with indoor pools by far being the preferred facilities for year-round swimming instruction, training, and competition. The town’s indoor pools have sufficient capacity to accommodate outdoor pool users during the summer months.

Pool Design and Condition

Oakville's outdoor pools are requiring increased levels of capital reinvestment due to their age. Although the pools remain operational, they have all far exceeded their anticipated lifespan – the average expected useful life of public outdoor pools in Canada is 34 years¹⁰.

Many municipalities are experiencing similar challenges with older outdoor pools, with most reducing or maintaining their level of service over time due to increasing capital costs, short operating season and annual volatility of use, high operating costs, and the availability of indoor pools. Some are choosing to replace aging pools through attrition with other amenities (e.g., splash pads) and some are deciding to replace them with more modern pool designs. Contemporary design trends include a greater emphasis on accessibility (e.g., ramps and zero depth entries, universal change rooms, etc.), fun play features (e.g., waterslides, spray features, etc.), warmer water, and more efficient mechanical systems.

All of the town's pools are traditional 25+ metre rectangular tanks, supported by limited parking. Compared to newer pools, these designs are dated and limited in their ability to accommodate all ages, abilities, and programs, resulting in lower appeal. Specifically, they are lacking features such as beach-entry (which improves accessibility and is also popular with toddlers, young children, and older adults), barrier-free washrooms, universal change rooms, extended deck space and grassed areas, sprayers and splash features, etc. These features are commonly found in newer outdoor pools and appeal to entire families, making the pools more of a "destination" where people extend their stay beyond just a short visit. Newer pools with more shallow water areas are also able to accommodate more bathers at one time, thereby enhancing their capacity and financial performance. Furthermore, somewhat extended seasons are possible with modern heated pools, as are new programming opportunities (such as outdoor aquafit) that promote active choices for all residents.

Although there is some public interest in retaining outdoor pools, the master plan survey found that support for more outdoor pools ranked well below support for indoor pools and splash pads. These findings suggest that a reduction to the number of outdoor pools could be considered, combined with strategic investment (or complete redevelopment) in selected pools to modernize and extend their appeal.

Facility Needs

There is a strong belief that everyone should have an opportunity to swim. This important life skill is particularly magnified in waterfront communities where the danger of drowning is increased. Oakville's outdoor pools have provided affordable swimming opportunities for decades; however, overall outdoor pool attendance is not forecasted to grow with the current stock of facilities. A case can be made for fewer (but improved and enhanced) outdoor pool locations.

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. Table 34-10-0182-01. Average expected useful life of new publicly owned culture, recreation and sport facilities, Infrastructure Canada.
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3410018201>

Given the age and functionality of the town’s five outdoor pools, a strategy is needed for the rationalization and renewal. This includes a combination of tactics to balance community interests and financial sustainability, such as maintaining selected pools, undertaking strategic enhancements, closing or re-purposing pools to other uses, or replacing pools with modern facilities.

The following objectives have been established to provide direction on future outdoor pool provision and investment. They were developed with consideration of current usage patterns, trends, demographics, and public input. They are largely complementary and should be read and interpreted as a set.

- a) **Prioritize service to high needs areas.** Invest in pool locations that enhance access to children, youth, and neighbourhoods with lower-incomes and fewer backyard swimming opportunities.
- b) **Enhance the aquatic “experience”.** Improve the experience for all pool users through designs that are accessible, inclusive, robust, modern, variable, and safe. The town has a responsibility to make its outdoor aquatic facilities accessible to people of all ages and abilities, to the greatest degree possible.
- c) **Maintain affordable recreational swimming opportunities.** Continue to place a focus on low-cost opportunities for recreational swimming at outdoor and indoor pool locations. As a waterfront community, it is of particular importance that residents are provided an opportunity to learn to swim.
- d) **Consider fiscal and environmental sustainability.** Examine opportunities to retain existing infrastructure, employ resilient materials, and respond to changing climatic conditions.

The current rate of provision is one outdoor pool per 45,000 Oakville residents. The average from the comparator group is one outdoor pool per 130,000 persons, which reflects the lack of pool development in communities that have experienced high levels of population growth in recent years. There are very few municipalities across the GTA and Ontario that are building new outdoor pools, thus this ratio will decline further over time. It is recommended that Oakville bring its level of service more in line with that of other communities in Halton Region (e.g., the City of Burlington has two outdoor pools) and Ontario.

As a starting point, a long-term target of **one outdoor pool per 150,000 residents** is recommended for Oakville. Based on a 2051 population forecast of 442,941, there is a long-term need for three (3) municipal outdoor pool locations, ideally distributed equitably across Oakville. It is recognized that it may take many years for the town to align its inventory with this figure as pool rationalization will be linked to capital requirements and modernization initiatives.

Proposed Capital Program

The following table illustrates key considerations for the town in implementing this recommended direction (Option A) as compared to the status quo (Option B) – these options should be considered further through an **Outdoor Pool Modernization Strategy** involving public input.

Table 24: Key Considerations Regarding Long-term Outdoor Pool Provision Model

Options/ Considerations	Option A (Recommended): Provide 3 New Larger Pools to Replace 5 Existing Pools Over Time	Option B (Status Quo): Maintain and/or Replace All 5 Existing Pools
Description	Under this option, the town's 5 existing pools will eventually be retired and replaced with 3 new outdoor pool complexes.	Under this option, the town's 5 existing pools will be maintained as long as possible and replaced through attrition.
Outdoor Pool Characteristics	Attributes of contemporary pool designs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern design with lane/leisure tank and zero-depth entry • Waterplay features (e.g., sprayers, bucket dumps) • Shade areas • Large deck space and picnic/grassy area separate from pool • Good condition • Fully accessible • Improved capacity for programming • Gender-inclusive changerooms with updated fittings and fixtures • Newer and more efficient technologies 	Attributes of older pool designs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single, rectangular tank, often deep with ladder entry • No waterplay features • Limited deck space, grassy areas, and/or shade • Poor facility condition • Poor accessibility • Limited capacity for programming • Poorly vented, gender-specific changerooms
Potential Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates new and modern pool complexes that will serve as destinations and attract more users per site • Extends service to other areas of town with growing youth populations • Fully barrier-free facilities • Greater capacity for programming • More operationally efficient model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing level of service • More locations, with enhanced access to neighbourhoods in South Oakville
Potential Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer service locations, requiring more people to drive or take public transit • Potential public concern over removal of selected pools (perceived elimination of service, community attachment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not extend service to other areas of town with growing youth populations • Some sites are not fully barrier-free • More limited program capacity
Estimated Capital Costs	\$22.5 million (\$6 to \$9 million per pool and building), plus demolition and conversion to other uses at selected sites. Existing town-owned lands should be considered where possible, otherwise additional land acquisition costs may apply.	10-year forecast includes \$1.2 million in capital replacement projects. Full replacement of pools can be anticipated over time, representing a long-term cost of \$37.5 million (\$6 to \$9 million per pool and building), depending on design.
Estimated Annual Operational Costs	Anticipated cost to be \$300,000 per year (\$100,000 per pool).	Current net cost to operate and program 5 pools is approximately \$500,000 per year (\$100,000 per pool).

Figure 14: Selected Images of Contemporary Outdoor Pool Complexes



Halifax Common Aquatics Facility, Halifax Regional Municipality



Fair Grounds Aquatic Park, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc



Halifax Common Aquatics Facility, Halifax Regional Municipality



Alex Duff Memorial Pool, City of Toronto

Strategic decisions and capital investment are required to enable the town to deliver high-quality outdoor aquatic services and facilities to Oakville residents. The following strategies are recommended to allow the town to meet the recommended provision model (Option A) and to better serve the community as a whole for the long-term:

- 1) **Support a long-term provision level of three (3) outdoor pool sites, to be achieved through attrition and new capital initiatives.** New pools should be larger and offer multi-functional designs, with consideration of features such as beach entry, waterplay features, accessible changerooms, more deck space, shade, heated water, modern mechanical systems, off-street parking, etc. The community should be consulted further regarding future outdoor pool locations, designs, and programming.

Consideration should be given to geographic equity, including maintaining access to residents in South Oakville and enhancing access for residents across the town, including North Oakville. Affordable opportunities for public swimming will be increasingly important to a growing community, especially in higher density residential areas in the north where there will be dramatically fewer backyard pools and many young families. Locations within community parks that have access to shared parking and other supporting amenities are preferred.

- 2) **Most existing outdoor pools should eventually be removed from service at such time that they require significant capital repairs and/or when a new pool is built and subsequently replaced with other park amenities. One or two locations may be candidates for redevelopment.** Timing will be dependent on regular assessments of condition and use and related capital initiatives. Outdoor pools should be repurposed to other park-based uses when applicable, informed by community input.

Existing outdoor pool locations have been assessed using the following criteria (weighted to account for varying levels of importance). Candidates for **conversion to other park amenities** include those outdoor pools that:

- a. are underutilized;
- b. require considerable reinvestment;
- c. are not associated with park amenities or uses;
- d. have overlapping service areas;
- e. are in areas with smaller youth populations;
- f. are in stable to low growth communities; and/or
- g. are proximate to indoor pools and alternatives such as splash pads.

Based on this analysis, only Falgarwood Pool is identified as a potential candidate for retention. Once it reaches its expected service life and begins to show widespread signs of advanced deterioration, it should be reviewed with the possibility of replacing it with a modestly-sized neighbourhood-serving outdoor pool. The four remaining pools are all candidates for conversion to other park amenities and should be evaluated further. On the basis of its location in a prominent community park (Trafalgar Park) and its proximity to growth areas, Lions Pool is recommended to be retained as long as operationally possible. Brookdale, Bronte, and Wedgewood Pools should be removed from service when a new modern outdoor pool is built in South Oakville (location tbd) and be replaced with other needed park amenities that are supported by the community (e.g., splash pad, etc.).

Table 25: Evaluation of Removal/Conversion Potential of Existing Outdoor Pools

Evaluation Criteria	Bronte	Brookdale	Falgarwood	Lions	Wedgewood
a. Pool Utilization	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Low
b. Capital Needs	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate to High	Moderate to High
c. Associated Amenities	Moderate	Low	Moderate	High	Low
d. Service Area Overlap	Moderate	High	Low	High	Low
e. Youth Population	Moderate	Low	High	Low	Low
f. Growth Potential	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Moderate
g. Proximity to Alternatives	Moderate	Low	High	High	Moderate
Weighted Score (100% retain, 0% remove)	43%	36%	64%	39%	43%

Evaluation Criteria	Bronte	Brookdale	Falgarwood	Lions	Wedgewood
Recommended Direction	Replace with alternative park amenity and shift usage to proposed South Oakville pool	Replace with alternative park amenity and shift usage to proposed South Oakville pool	Retain and replace when required	Retain as long as feasible	Replace with alternative park amenity and shift usage to proposed South Oakville pool

Notes:

- a. considers 2012-2023 usage data
- b. based on 2023-32 capital forecast
- c. amenities considered: Bronte (playground, open space, sports fields, lacks parking), Brookdale (schoolyard, limited parking), Falgarwood (playground, sports field, schoolyard, limited parking), Lions (community centre, sports fields, playground, sufficient parking), and Wedgewood (playground, open space, sports field, lacks parking)
- d. considers proximity to other municipal outdoor pools
- e. based on 2021 population (ages 0 to 14 years) within 2km catchment area
- f. growth areas considered: Bronte (Bronte Village, part of Bronte MTSA), Brookdale (part of Bronte MTSA), Falgarwood (Trafalgar Corridor), Lions (Kerr Village, Downtown Oakville, part of Midtown Oakville), and Wedgewood (part of Midtown Oakville)
- g. considers proximity to municipal indoor pools and splash pads

Table 26: Recommended Outdoor Pool Capital Program (listed in proposed order) – to be confirmed through Outdoor Pool Modernization Strategy

Preliminary Actions	Timing
<p>1. Develop a new, modern outdoor pool complex that serves as a destination in South Oakville: The facility should consist of an outdoor 25-metre lane pool with accessible leisure tank and interactive play elements (e.g., diving boards, climbing walls, spray features, etc.), large deck with shade/seating, and a new accessible bathhouse. Consider the redevelopment of the Kinoak Arena site for this development or identify and/or secure an alternate site in South Oakville. Construction of this pool should be contingent on the removal of Bronte, Brookdale, and Wedgewood Pools (replace these pools with other needed park amenities, such as splash pads, sport courts, etc. based on community input).</p>	~300,000 population
<p>2. Provide a new, modern outdoor pool complex that serves as a destination in North Oakville: Undertake an evaluation to identify a preferred location, ideally within a community park north of Dundas Street.</p>	~350,000 population
<p>3. Keep Lions and Falgarwood Pools operational as long as possible: Review Falgarwood Pool once it reaches its expected service life and begins to show widespread signs of advanced deterioration and consider redeveloping it with a modestly-sized neighbourhood-serving outdoor pool. Undertake community consultation to consider replacement of Lions Pool with other needed park amenities.</p>	Timing tbd

Actions – Outdoor Pools

26. Undertake an **Outdoor Pool Modernization Strategy** to modernize the town’s outdoor pools and right-size the supply. This includes the following preliminary directions, to be confirmed through further study and public input (in general order of priority):

- a) Develop a new, modern outdoor pool complex that serves as a destination in **South Oakville**. Once the pool is built, **Bronte, Brookdale, and Wedgewood Pools** should be replaced with other needed park amenities as informed by community input.
- b) Provide a second new, modern outdoor pool complex that serves as a destination in **North Oakville**.
- c) Keep **Lions and Falgarwood Pools** operational as long as possible. Review Falgarwood Pool once it reaches its expected service life and begins to show widespread signs of advanced deterioration and consider redeveloping it with a modestly-sized neighbourhood-serving outdoor pool. Undertake community consultation to consider replacement of Lions Pool with other needed park amenities.

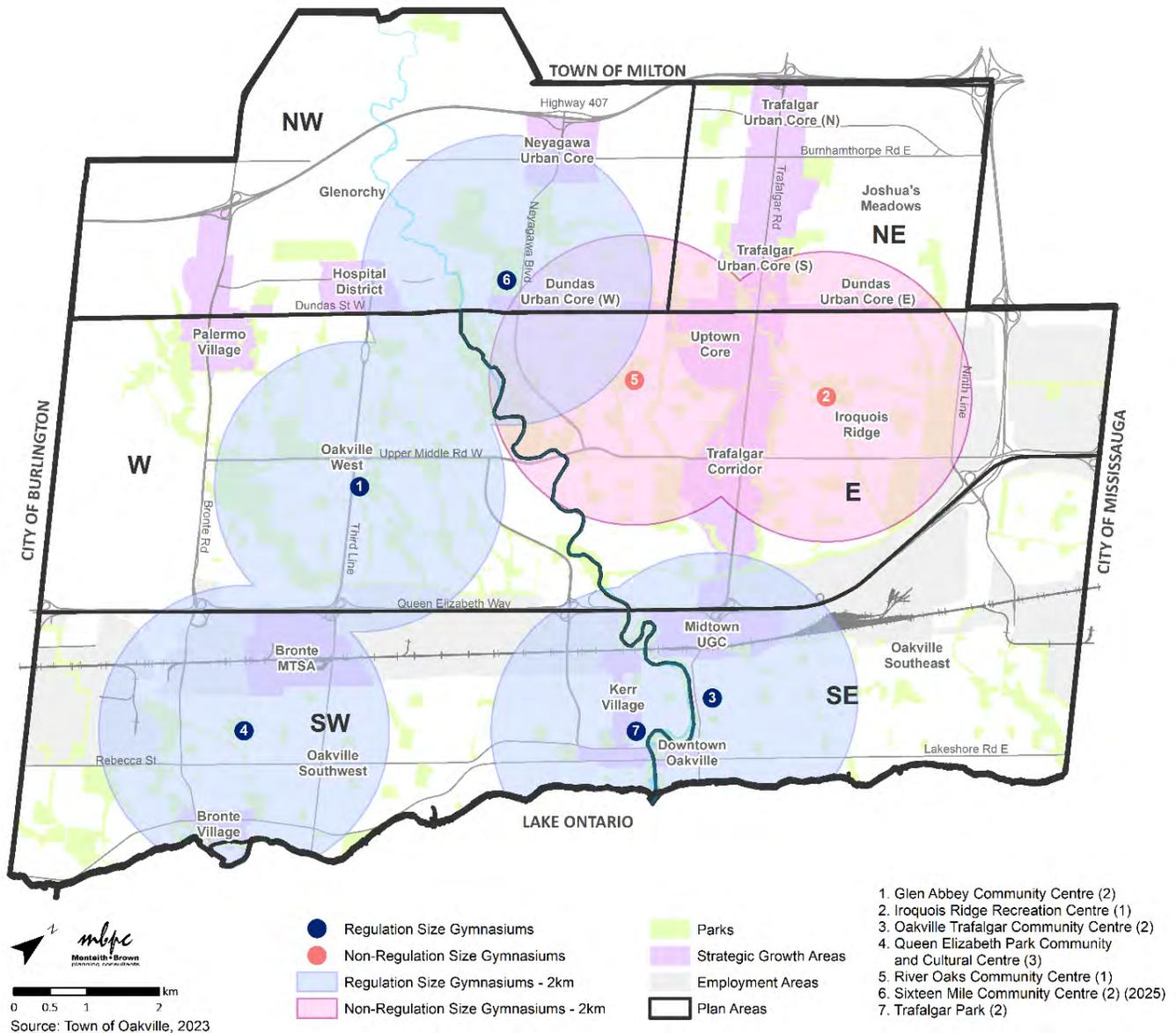
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related (excluding replacements, which are medium priorities)	a) 300,000 population b) 350,000 population c) TBD – based on lifecycle	A provision target of one outdoor pool per 150,000 residents is recommended. Site evaluations are necessary to confirm the preferred locations for new and replacement pools.

4.5 Gymnasiums

Within five of its community centres, the town maintains 10 gymnasiums (GACC – 1, OTCC – 2, QEPCCC – 3, SMCC – 2 under construction, TPCC – 2) and two smaller spaces that are sometimes used for court-based activities (ROCC and IRCC). In addition, the town permits more than 50 HDSB/HCDSB gymnasiums, which increases the public supply of spaces for Oakville-led recreation drop-in and registered programs, leagues, and community rentals. Gymnasiums are also commonly provided by other non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, Appleby College, and some churches.

The town also administers the Community use of Schools agreement on behalf of area school boards. While this does not generate revenue for the town, it does vastly expand the activity spaces available to the community on weeknights and weekends and allows the town to offer an expanded suite of programs beyond its community centres. Around 18,000 hours were permitted by the town in 2023, the equivalent to approximately 15 municipal gymnasiums.

Figure 15: Town of Oakville Gymnasiums (municipal only), including General Catchment Areas



Gymnasiums are valued spaces due to their flexibility in accommodating a wide range of activities (e.g., seniors’ programming in the daytime, community programs in the evening, events and rentals weekends, camps in the summer, etc.). Oakville’s gymnasiums exhibit strong usage levels and demand is increasing as sports such as pickleball and basketball continue to grow. 73% of survey respondents indicating support for additional gymnasiums.

Gymnasiums should be part of every new community centre developed in Oakville (e.g., double gyms within multi-use community centres and single gyms within local community centres). Further, the potential to add gyms to existing centres and convert one or more single pad arenas (i.e., Kinoak and Maplegrove Arenas) to dryland court spaces for activities such as basketball, pickleball, volleyball, etc. should be explored. There is currently strong demand for daytime access to gymnasiums for older adults for activities such as pickleball (in 2022 there were over 1,500 pickleball registrants and approximately 19,000 visits to town programs); school gymnasiums are not accessible to the community during these times.

Community interest is also significant for sports such as basketball, badminton, volleyball, table tennis, and more – all of which could benefit from greater access to accessible spaces.

Actions – Gymnasiums		
<p>27. Include gymnasiums within all new community centres (including multi-use and local community centres) and explore opportunities to add them to existing centres where needed (e.g., River Oaks Community Centre, Sir John Colborne Centre for Seniors). Further, evaluate the potential of converting under-utilized spaces (e.g., selected single pad arenas) to gymnasium-like spaces that can accommodate growing demand for indoor basketball, pickleball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, etc.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related (new builds)	Tied to community centre development and expansion/revitalization projects.	n/a
Medium (expansion/revitalization projects)		

4.6 Fitness Centres

Each of the town’s seven (7) multi-use community centres (including SMCC, which is under construction) contains a fitness centre consisting of free weights, workout equipment, and fitness studios for group classes and programs. Many also offer access to indoor walking/running tracks. Members may use any locations within the town’s network.

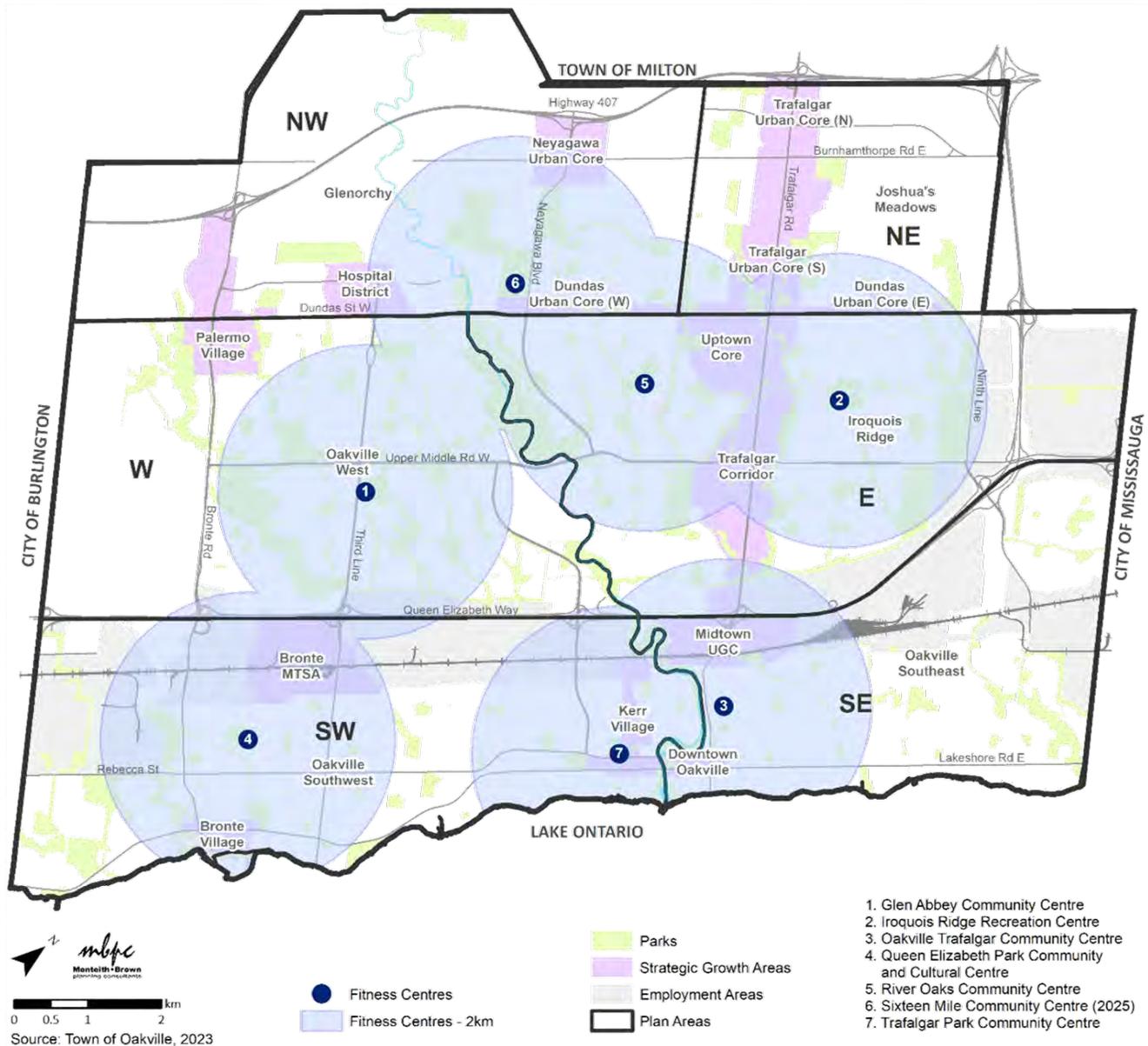
As of 2023, the town had approximately 3,542 active members at its fitness centres, but was still recovering from losses due to the pandemic. The town also offers a wide range of registered fitness programs (e.g., weight training, pilates, yoga, tai chi, 50+ fitness, etc.) that are not membership-based and are open to all.

Table 27: Fitness Membership by Types, 2023

Membership Type*	Members
Fitness	3,085
Premium	344
Personal Training	113
Total	3,542

*Includes 1-year, 90-day, and 10-visit memberships

Figure 16: Town of Oakville Fitness Centres (municipal only), including General Catchment Areas



A 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. Group fitness programming has become one of the fastest growing segments of the fitness sector.

Trends and usage suggest that the town should continue to support fitness and wellness programming and drop-in opportunities – two-third (66%) of survey respondents indicating support for additional fitness centres. Similar to aquatic centres, fitness centres are a core component of multi-use community centres and should be considered within new builds, such as the centre proposed for the **Trafalgar Urban Core South** area (when the town reaches a population of +/- 375,000 residents).

Some of the town’s fitness centres are older designs and there is a growing gap in level of service compared to newer centres. Updates and possible expansion of fitness spaces at GACC and ROCC should be considered through the proposed **expansion/revitalization projects**. Furthermore, the fitness centre at TPCC experiences low utilization and is within relatively close proximity to the new OTCC, which is a full multi-use community centre with pool. Fitness centre usage should be tracked, and a review of service locations undertaken with a focus on the future viability of the fitness centre at TPCC.

Actions – Fitness Centres								
<p>28. Fitness centres (equipment-based and studio space) and walking tracks will be part of new multi-use community centre development, including the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and the proposed multi-use community centre in Trafalgar Urban Core South. Additionally, improve the fitness programming areas at Glen Abbey Community Centre and River Oaks Community Centres through the proposed expansion/revitalization projects.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Growth-related (new builds) Medium (expansion/revitalization projects)</td> <td>Tied to community centre development and expansion/revitalization projects.</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	Growth-related (new builds) Medium (expansion/revitalization projects)	Tied to community centre development and expansion/revitalization projects.	n/a
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes						
Growth-related (new builds) Medium (expansion/revitalization projects)	Tied to community centre development and expansion/revitalization projects.	n/a						
<p>29. Undertake a study to confirm the function, capacity, and long-term viability of the fitness centre at Trafalgar Park Community Centre.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>Should the study find insufficient demand for continued fitness services, consider options for converting this space to other uses.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	Should the study find insufficient demand for continued fitness services, consider options for converting this space to other uses.
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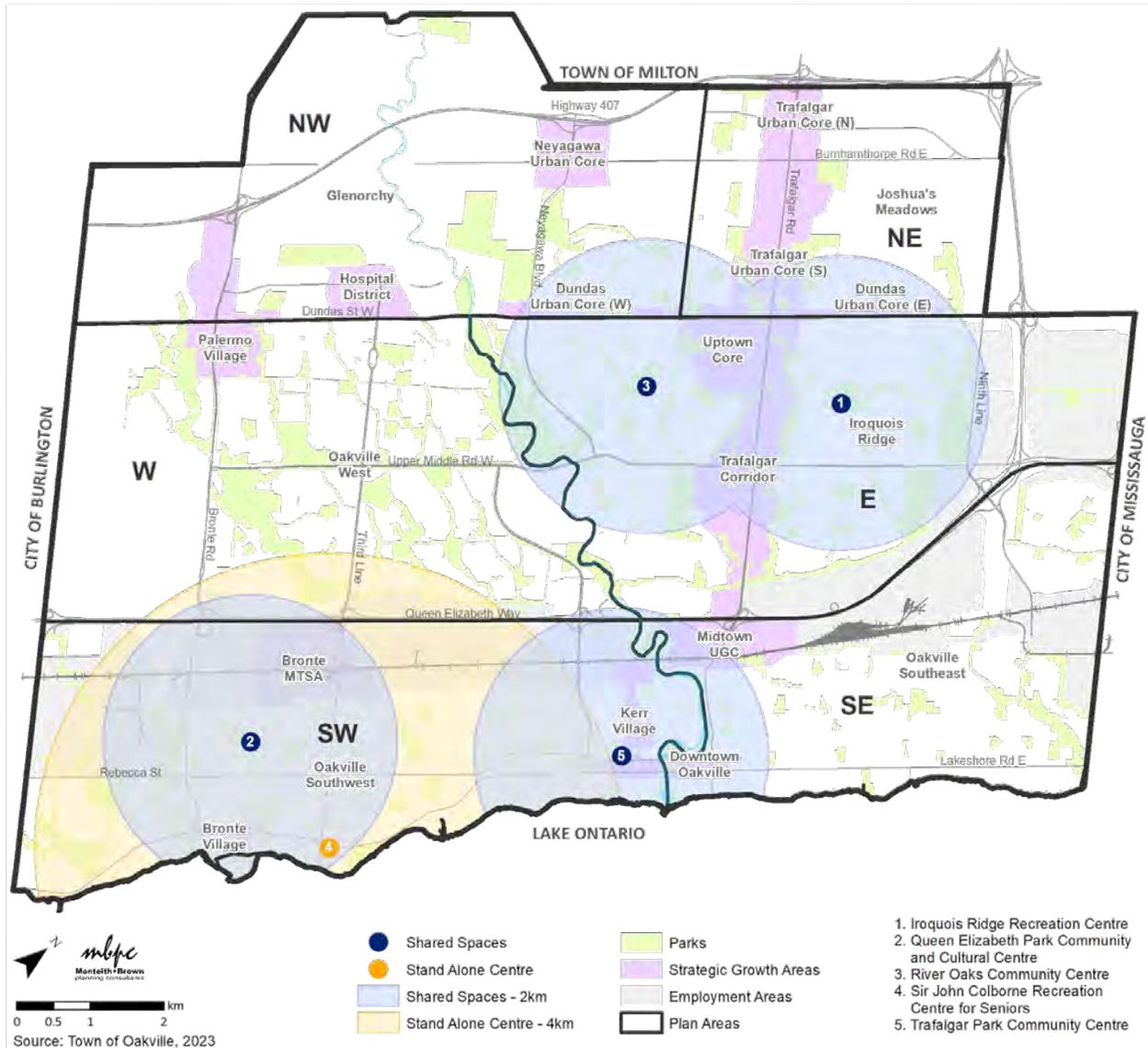
4.7 Seniors Recreation Spaces

Oakville operates one (1) seniors centre and four (4) older adult spaces within community centres through which recreation and culture programs and activities are offered. These spaces are heavily supported by volunteers and are governed by a Policy Review Board as well as elected boards that are responsible for finance, program, property, and volunteer management.

These facilities include:

- Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors – stand-alone facility
- Iroquois Ridge Older Adults Centre – IRCC
- Queen Elizabeth Park Older Adults Centre – QEPCCC
- River Oaks Mature Adults Club – ROCC
- Trafalgar Park Older Adults Centre – TPCC

Figure 17: Town of Oakville Seniors Recreation Spaces, including General Catchment Areas



The town's approach to program development at its older adult centres involves an integrated model where participants (age 50+) are able to attend registered and drop-in programs at all of the seniors' facilities for a reduced fee under a membership model. All five facilities have a combined active membership of approximately 3,100 persons, representing nearly 4% of the town's older adult population (79,115 residents, 2021 Census). The pandemic had a significant impact on membership, but most seniors are returning and the town has nearly reached pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, many members are enjoying the town's Without Walls program and connecting to others using remote means (telephone, virtual programming, etc.).

The following tables provide more detail on current seniors centre members. For example, Sir John Colborne – the town's largest and only stand-alone seniors centre – is the most used facility, accounting for 42% of all drop-in visits in 2023, followed by Trafalgar Park (26% of drop-in visits). The highest attended drop-in programs are pickleball and snooker.

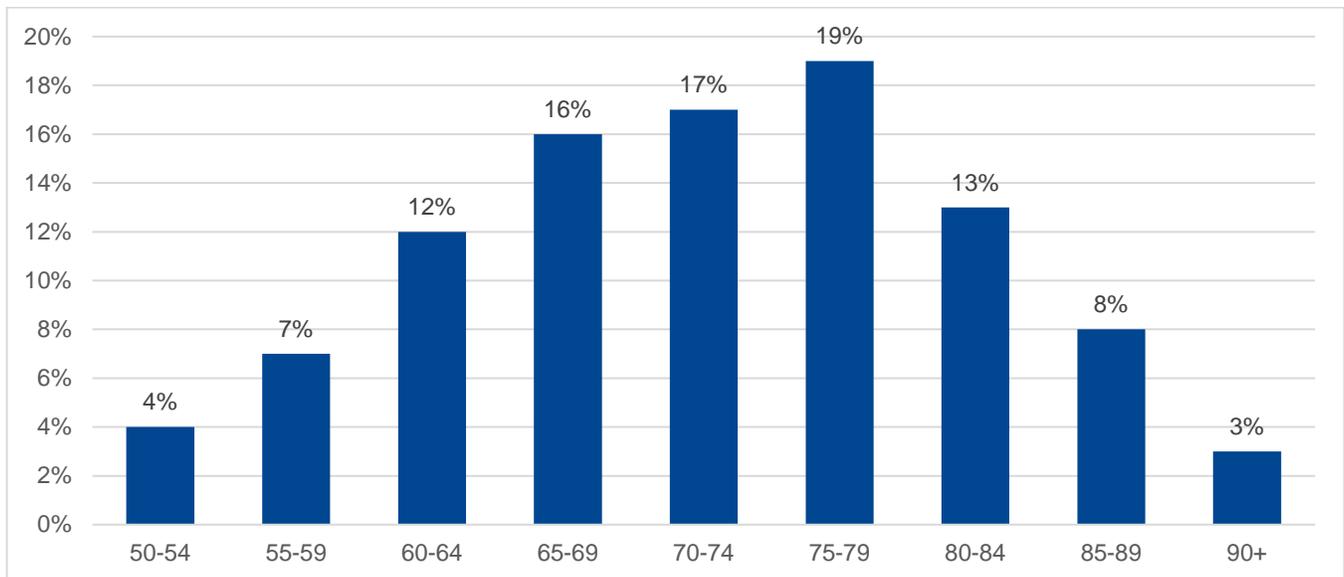
Additionally, more than one-half (52%) of members are aged 65 to 79 years and 75% are under 80 years.

Table 28: Seniors Services Membership by Location, 2023

Location	Active Members	Drop-in Visits*
Iroquois Ridge	525	3,603
River Oaks	147	3,696
QEPCCC	369	4,202
Sir John Colborne	1,300	14,821
Trafalgar Park	758	9,305
Total	3,099	35,627

* January to October 2023

Figure 18: Seniors Services Membership by Age, 2023



The town also offers a wide range of fitness, aquatic, and cultural programs through its community centres that are geared to the general population, yet increasingly attract older adults. The new Sixteen Mile Community Centre will include flexible multi-use space that can accommodate seniors and residents of all ages.

Nearly two out of every five (37%) Oakville residents are older adults (age 50+), and this proportion has been rising for years. With baby boomers now in the range of 60 to 80 years old, demand for seniors services is currently quite strong. Within the 30-year horizon of this plan, this percentage will eventually decline (as a proportion of the overall population) as the population ages and new younger residents are attracted to the town. However, sustained demand for seniors' services can be expected into the future.

The town's approach to space provision anticipates a shift in older adult recreation to shared spaces that support more active pursuits (e.g., pickleball in gymnasiums, etc.). To support existing members, the town should continue to maintain its existing supply of exclusive space

as older adults need age-appropriate services and opportunities to be with their peers. Given that greater proportions of older adults live in the more established areas in South Oakville, the existing service locations are well situated to provide convenient access to these residents. Expanding dedicated space for older adults into North Oakville is not recommended at this time, but can be reassessed through the design of new community centres (e.g., the proposed Palermo local community centre).

Going forward, a primary focus should be placed on expanding older adult and seniors programming through multi-use and activity rooms offered within libraries and community centres, as well as more active spaces such as gymnasiums, aquatic centres, and fitness centres. One-quarter (75%) of survey respondents indicating support for additional dedicated space for seniors within community centres. Spaces that appeal to people of all ages who may have different expectations of comfort and program interest will require designs that are flexible and easily adapted.

The **Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors** serves a unique role in the town’s delivery of services. As a stand-alone seniors centre, it acts as a welcoming hub for the older adult community. Members told us how important this facility and its programs are to their mental and physical wellbeing. The centre and other older adult locations provide essential spaces where seniors can connect with each other and with critical services, while also participating in activities that are meaningful to them. Given the strong levels of use at this facility, an expansion of Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors is recommended in the short-term to accommodate additional programming across the full older adult age spectrum as well as to allow for greater after-hours use of the facility by the broader community. Any future expansion should create the potential for multi-purpose spaces of different sizes to suit a variety of programs and participation levels, including consideration of a gymnasium space that would accommodate more active uses throughout the daytime, evening, and weekends.

Actions – Seniors Recreation Spaces		
<p>30. Expand and renovate the Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors to accommodate additional programming across the full older adult age spectrum, as well as to allow for greater after-hours use of the facility by the broader community.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth and non-growth related	275,000 population	Partner consultation and detailed design should be initiated in the short-term.

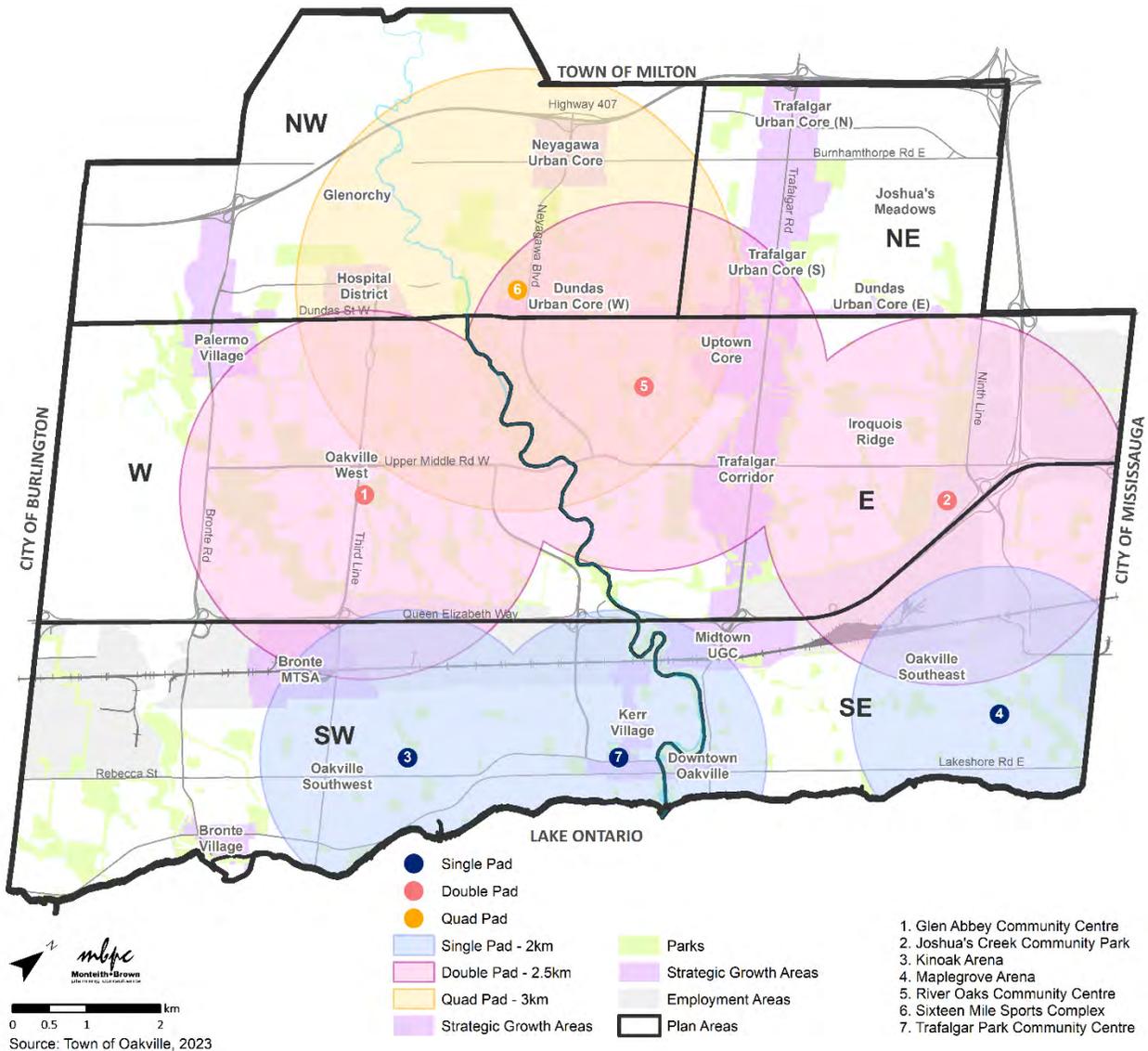
4.8 Arenas

The town currently provides thirteen (13) indoor ice rinks at five (5) locations, including:

- one quad-pad arena (Sixteen Mile Sports Complex – SMSC);
- three two-pad facilities (Joshua’s Creek Arenas – JCA, GACC, and ROCC); and
- three single-pad areas (Kinoak, Maple Grove, and TPCC).

Ice is maintained year-round at five (5) pads (SMSC and one pad at ROCC), while many other ice pads are used for camps, lacrosse, roller hockey, and other dry floor activities in the summer. Kinoak Arena and JCA receive very little summer use.

Figure 19: Town of Oakville Arenas and General Catchment Areas



In addition, there are two (2) private operations providing full-size indoor ice pads. Canlan Ice Sports offers four (4) ice pads that cater largely to the adult market but are also used for extra practice time by some youth organizations and Appleby College operates a single (1) pad arena. There are also several private off-ice training providers in Oakville.

Participation and Trends

In Oakville and many other urban communities, participation in organized ice sports is declining with registration in Hockey Canada affiliated minor programs peaking in 2008/09. Currently, about 8% of Ontario children and youth are registered with Hockey Canada, about one-third of the percentage that played twenty-five years ago.¹¹ Currently about four out of every five youth players are boys. Participation in other ice sports (e.g., figure skating, speed skating, etc.) can be cyclical, but does not drive demand for ice time nearly to the degree same degree as hockey.

This nation-wide decline in participation is most prevalent amongst boys and can be attributed to several factors:

- significant and escalating costs borne by households (for equipment, travel, ice rentals);
- lack of time for households to commit to sport, especially at competitive levels;
- difficulties in finding and/or compensating qualified coaches and volunteers;
- volunteer burnout leading to shortages at the executive level and among parent-coaches;
- declining post-pandemic participation, particularly amongst girls and women;
- changing demographics factors such as an aging of the population, immigration from countries that do not play ice sports, growing polarization between household incomes, etc.; and
- growing competition from other sports (e.g., indoor soccer, basketball, etc.) as well as unstructured, self-scheduled activities that are less expensive than ice sports.

As a result, many arenas across the nation are experiencing declining utilization, especially during less desirable hours. And most communities are slowing their construction of new arenas (even in the face of significant population growth) and are beginning to decommission or repurpose ice pads (particularly those that are older single pad templates). Modern arena design templates incorporate multiple ice pads to achieve economies of scale in operation, accommodate tournaments, and allow for groups to deliver simultaneous programming.

Despite population growth, rentals at Oakville arenas have declined by 20% since 2012; much of this change has been during prime-time hours, suggesting an overall eroding of demand. Rentals to youth-based organizations decreased by approximately 30% between 2012 and 2023, while permits to adult-serving groups decreased by 80%.

¹¹ Hockey Canada. Annual General Meeting Reports.

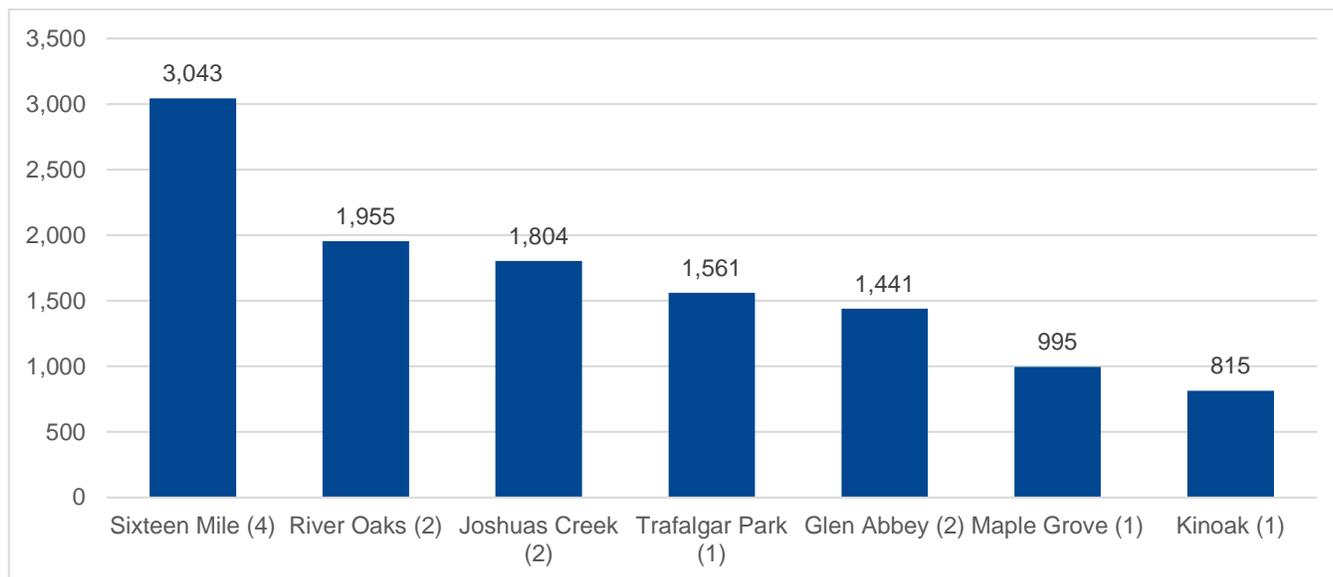
Table 29: Hours of use by Fee Permit Category, Town of Oakville Arenas, 2012-2023 (3-4 year intervals)

Year	Hours Permitted	Type of Group				Time of Day		
		Youth	Adult	Commercial	Undefined	Prime Time	Non-Prime Time	Undefined
2012	32,314	26,199	3,839	1,218	1,058	22,796	8,460	1,058
2015	31,598	25,070	5,182	299	1,047	21,765	8,786	1,047
2019	29,624	26,463	1,358	884	919	19,511	9,194	919
2023	25,940	22,679	785	786	1,586	17,141	7,213	1,586
Change (2012-2023)	-6,374	-3,520	-3,054	-432	528	-5,655	-1,247	528
	-20%	-13%	-80%	-35%	50%	-25%	-15%	50%

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

In 2023, Oakville’s 13 arenas were permitted for approximately 25,940 hours (including summer ice at select locations) for an average of 1,995 hours per ice pads. The statistics show very low usage at Kinoak Arena (765 hours) and Maple Grove Arena (995 hours). Data is not available for privately-run rinks, but it is CORE youth groups (primarily boys and girls hockey) indicated that they rent approximately 130 hours per week at the Canlan areas, which would translate into nearly 3,400 hours across a 26-week season (representing 13% of usage at all Town of Oakville rinks, or equivalent to approximately two ice pads).

Figure 20: Permitted Hours per Ice Pad, 2023



Source: Town of Oakville, 2023

In Oakville, registration in minor ice sports has declined by 24% since 2011/12, largely due to decreasing participation in boys hockey (down 36%) and girls hockey (down 26%). These findings align with the rental data and suggest increased capacity within the town’s arena system to accommodate future demand.

Table 30: Historical Registration, Minor Ice Users, 2011/12 to present (four-year intervals)

Organizations	2011/12	2015/16	2019/20	2023/24	Change (2011/12 to 2023/24)	
Minor Oaks Hockey Association	4,069	3,639	3,364	2,598	-1,471	-36%
Oakville Hornets	1,219	1,165	1,137	900	-319	-26%
Oakville Skating Club	2,400	2,611	2,602	2,348	-52	-2%
Speed Skating	175	134	133	83	-92	-53%
Oakville Cruisers (Sledge)	n/a	n/a	n/a	76	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	7,863	7,549	7,236	6,005	-1,858	-24%

Note: Excludes adult participants.

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

This data is supported by input from stakeholders that suggests that hockey participation peaked years ago and was accelerated due to the pandemic. Minor hockey has seen a notable erosion of house league players and – with rising costs and more newcomer families – the future outlook for the sport is uncertain. Figure skating has benefited from a bump in learn to skate activities coming out of the pandemic, and has largely seen stable registration over the years in Oakville. Neither the general public nor user groups identified new arenas as a priority, indicating that the current supply is sufficient for at least the short-term.

Reduced memberships have led some organizations to expand their program offerings and also to amalgamate with other associations to remain competitive. As a result, the demand for ice time is becoming more regional.

Trends and demographic factors suggest that further declines in ice hockey participation rates can be anticipated as Oakville grows and becomes more culturally diverse. Past master plans have recommended that the town maintain the existing arena inventory, while monitoring utilization.

Facility Needs

The town’s current level of provision is one rink per 17,300 residents. The benchmark average from the GTA comparator group is approximately one indoor ice pad per 27,000 persons, although there are fewer new arenas being built so this ratio is declining.

As arena use is largely participant-driven, a provision target that links to registration data is also considered. The current (2023/24) provision level is one pad per 462 registered youth (CORE) participants based on a municipal supply of 13 pads. In the past, the town has used a provision target in the range of one ice pad for every 650 youth participants to determine demand; however, this target should be updated to reflect current usage profiles. Most notably, the target should be adjusted to account for usage of private arenas by CORE groups (equivalent to approximately 2 private ice pads), as well as the declining of house league hockey.

A review of trends in minor sport registration and arena rentals supports a provision target of one municipal ice pad per 525 registered youth (CORE) participants. With 6,005 registrants

for the 2023/24 season and 13 municipal ice pads, this translates into a current demand for 11.4 ice pads or a surplus of 1.6 pads.

Without reliable age cohort forecasts, it is difficult to directly apply this provision target to future needs. An alternative is to convert this to a population-based figure. While the present demand (11.4 pads) equates to approximately one ice pad per 20,000 residents, per capita demand for arenas is likely to continue to decline into the future due to ice sport trends, an aging population, growing diversity, etc. For longer-term planning purposes (2051), a provision target **of one municipal ice pad per 20,000 to 30,000 residents (declining over time) is proposed**. The following table applies a blend of these provision targets over time to illustrate one version of evolving demand.

Table 31: Projection of Arena (ice rink) Needs based on Recommended Provision Target

Forecasted Population	Ice Pad Needs (1:20,000 to 30,000 pop., declining over time)	Deviation from Current Supply (13 pads)*
225,000 (current)	11.4 (1:20,000)	-1.6 (surplus)
250,000 (2026)	11.4 (1:22,000)	-1.6 (surplus)
300,000 (2032)	12.5 (1:24,000)	-0.5 (surplus)
350,000 (2038)	13.5 (1:26,000)	0.5 (deficit)
400,000 (2045)	14.3 (1:28,000)	1.3 (deficit)
442,941 (2051)	14.8 (1:30,000)	1.8 (deficit)

Application of the provision target indicates that the existing arena supply should be sufficient to meet the needs of a town with a population of 300,000+ persons. **By 2051, the anticipated demand will growth to 14.8 ice pads, approximately 2 more than are currently provided by the town.** These figures assume that the private arenas used by CORE groups will continue to be available; should access to these non-municipal facilities become restricted, the town should re-examine local needs and provision approaches.

Proposed Capital Program

Over time, efforts are needed to optimize the supply and location of arenas to best suit the evolving needs of Oakville residents. First, the town should address aging infrastructure and changing needs through the repurposing of selected arenas (discussed below). New development will also be required to serve longer-term growth. Multi-pad arenas will be the preferred model for future development and replacement (co-located with other recreation spaces where possible) as they respond to user needs, support tournaments, and offer efficiencies in operation. Future arena investments should respond to a wider array of community needs (both ice and non-ice related) and find ways to extend usage throughout the entire year.

Projections support a long-term target of 15 municipal ice pads by 2051, two more than at present. As discussed below, there is also merit in removing two of the town’s single pad arenas from service over time to address efficiencies and aging infrastructure concerns. This

would increase the capital requirement to 4 ice pads over the long-term (2 new and 2 replacement). It is recommended that these capital needs be addressed through two separate twin pad facilities, one in North Oakville (medium-term) and another in South Oakville (long-term). Partnerships with other providers and/or landowners may be required for new arena projects, particularly within established areas such as South Oakville.

Table 32: Recommended Arena Capital Program (listed in proposed order)

Recommended Actions	Recommended Timing
<p>1. Convert Kinoak Arena to alternative recreational and/or park uses: Remove Kinoak Arena from service in the short-term and convert to other in-demand recreation and/or park uses. Further study and public consultation will inform the uses and design.</p>	Short-term (2024-33)
<p>2. Twin Pad Arena in North Oakville (new): Develop a twin pad arena facility in North Oakville, with year-round usage potential (for ice and non-ice activities). A site and partnership assessment should be initiated in the short-term to evaluate the preferred location and operating model. The facility may be part of a community centre site, partnered site, or dedicated site.</p>	~325,000 population
<p>3. Convert Maple Grove Arena to alternative recreational and/or park uses: Remove Maple Grove Arena from service at such time as a new twin pad facility comes on-line. Further study and public consultation will inform the uses and design.</p>	~325,000 population
<p>4. Twin Pad Arena in South Oakville (replacement): Develop or partner to provide a twin pad arena facility to address future growth in South Oakville, with year-round usage potential (for ice and non-ice activities). A site and partnership assessment should be initiated in the short-term to evaluate the preferred location and operating model. The facility may be part of a community centre site, partnered site, or dedicated site. Opening of this facility should coincide with the prior or simultaneous removal of ice activities from Kinoak and Maple Grove Arenas.</p>	~400,000 population

Repurposing Options

With many ice sports on the decline, provision should be gradually brought into alignment with demand. Some of Oakville’s arenas are underperforming and aging and are unable to keep pace with the evolution of ice sports that prioritizes regulation-sizes multi-pad arenas as part of year-round multi-use complexes. Specifically, both Kinoak and Maple Grove Arenas are older stand-alone arena facilities that are under-utilized and have lower overall operational efficiency. Neither has sufficient space to be expanded or to offer a multi-pad arena that is the town’s standard within new or replacement arena facilities.

Over time, it is recommended that both Kinoak and Maple Grove Arenas be phased out as ice venues and be converted to other recreation and/or park uses. As arenas, these facilities received the lowest overall ratings through the community survey, with suggestions for updating/expanding and/or offering broader programming. The community has indicated that

they do not feel as welcomed or safe in these facilities and that they do not have the facilities or amenities that they are looking for. Further, these two arenas have accessibility challenges that may be difficult to overcome due to the original design. Significant investment would be required to bring them in line with current AODA requirements. Barrier-free access to ice level for all arenas needs to be prioritized if they are to remain in the active inventory.

Repurposing or conversion of surplus arenas to other in-demand uses makes the best use of sites in municipal ownership, while ensuring that these sites are transformed into locally appropriate uses that will serve residents in new ways. Repurposing can allow an existing facility to be used for a longer period if the building is structurally sound. Opportunities should be explored for repurposing Kinoak and/or Maple Grove Arenas to a dryland space (for activities such as ball hockey, soccer, court sports, etc.), park uses (e.g., outdoor pool, park amenities, green space, etc.), or another community use.

THINK BEYOND THE RINK

The two arenas being considered for repurposing share common attributes – they are both older, single pad facilities with accessibility challenges. Use of these facilities has also been declining with little to no usage during the warmer months. Neither arena would be considered successful in meeting the diverse needs of multiple age groups. Whether these facilities are maintained or repurposed, there is a growing need to “think beyond the rink” and expand the value of these facilities to a broader audience within their local neighbourhoods.

Across Ontario, municipalities are utilizing these assets as gathering places with welcoming spaces and facilitating self-driven community groups and associations. An arena facility should be more than an ice surface: it can be a community meeting place with indoor and outdoor public activity spaces. It should be part of the neighbourhood, a community asset, and can assist in strengthening local pride and cohesion.

Several Canadian communities have explored the adaptive re-use of their surplus arena facilities for a wide range of purposes, including (but not limited to):

- Community centre space – Kingsdale Community Centre, Kitchener
- Event space and floor activities – Queensmount Arena, Kitchener and Alliston Memorial Arena, Alliston
- Indoor soccer – Syl Apps Community Centre, Paris
- Gymnastics – Ken Giles Recreation Centre, Brampton
- Indoor playgrounds – Vancouver, BC
- Ball hockey/lacrosse facility – Silverwood Arena, London and Stephen Leacock Arena, Toronto
- Roller derby facility – New Hamburg Arena, Wilmot
- Indoor Skatepark – Zurich Arena, Zurich
- Movie Studio – Greater Sudbury
- Church – former Mount Forest Arena, Wellington North
- Storage (interim use) – AMA Arena, Amherstburg (since demolished)

Re-use options need not just be related to indoor recreation. Additional municipally-directed scenarios could include parks amenities, open space, and other civic uses.

Kinoak and Maple Grove Arenas have been assessed using the following criteria (weighted to account for varying levels of importance). Candidates for **removal or conversion to other park amenities** include those stand-alone single pad arenas that are:

- a. underutilized, particularly during prime time
- b. aging and in need of substantial capital renewal
- c. encumbered by notable design or functional challenges (e.g., small ice surface, insufficient change rooms, lack of barrier-free access, etc.)
- d. located in close proximity to another indoor arena and/or outdoor artificial ice rinks
- e. in areas with smaller youth populations;
- f. in stable to low growth communities
- g. able to accommodate an alternate use without considerable reinvestment

Table 33: Evaluation of Removal/Conversion Potential of Stand-alone Single Pad Arenas

Evaluation Criteria	Kinoak	Maple Grove
a. Arena Utilization	Low	Moderate
b. Capital Needs	Moderate	High
c. Design/Functional Challenges	High	High
d. Service Area Overlap	Moderate	Moderate
e. Youth Population	Moderate	Low
f. Growth Potential	Moderate	Low
g. Proximity to Alternatives	Moderate	High
Weighted Score (100% retain, 0% remove)	32%	14%
Recommended Direction	Remove from service and replace through twin pad project	Remove from service and replace through twin pad project

Notes:

- a. considers 2012-2023 usage data: Kinoak (45%), Maple Grove (55%)
- b. based on 2023-32 capital forecast: Kinoak (\$0.5k), Maple Grove (\$1.3M)
- c. functional challenges are documented in Stage 1 Report
- d. considers proximity to other municipal arenas
- e. based on 2021 population (ages 5 to 19 years) within 2km catchment area
- f. growth areas considered: Kinoak (part of Bronte MTSA), Maple Grove (none)
- g. considers proximity to non-municipal arenas and artificial skating rinks: Kinoak (Appleby College), Maple Grove (Canlan)

Based on this analysis, it is recommended that both Kinoak and Maple Grove Arenas be removed from service and converted to other in-demand recreation and/or park uses. Both arenas scored poorly based on the aforementioned criteria and – although Maple Grove scored slightly better – it is preferred that Kinoak Arena be converted first due to the ability for this site to meet other community needs (guided by future study). Subsequently, the conversion of Maple Grove Arena may be linked to the development of a new twin pad facility or the need for alternative uses on-site. Additional community consultation and study is required to define the proposed recreation and/or park uses for these two sites (e.g., non-ice sport facility, park uses, general community use, etc.).

Actions – Arenas

- 31.** Assess the potential to remove **Kinoak Arena** from service in the short-term and convert to other in-demand recreation and/or park uses (e.g., non-ice sport facility, park uses, general community use, etc.). Subsequently, remove **Maple Grove Arena** from service at such time as a new twin pad facility comes on-line.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Kinoak: Short-term (2024-33) Maple Grove: 325,000 population	Additional community consultation and study is required to define the proposed recreation and/or park uses for these two sites.

- 32.** Monitor demand and explore options to provide **twin pad arena facilities in: (a) North Oakville; then (b) South Oakville** to serve future growth. Site and partnership assessments should be initiated in the short-term to evaluate the preferred locations and operating models.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth and non-growth related	a) 325,000 population b) 400,000 population	Planning target is one municipal ice pad per 525 registered youth (CORE) participants or 20,000 to 30,000 residents (declining over time). New facilities may be part of community centre sites, partnered sites, or dedicated sites and should have year-round usage potential for ice and non-ice activities.

4.9 Indoor Sport Facilities

The town has helped to facilitate the development of sport-specific spaces for town-wide clubs such as gymnastics and soccer in the past. These arrangements offer a blend of land, financing, and/or shared delivery models within a partnership structure that leverages the strengths of all parties. In both the cases of soccer (Pine Glen Soccer Centre operated by the Oakville Soccer Club) and gymnastics (Glen Abbey facility operated by the Oakville Gymnastics Club), these buildings are municipal capital facilities that are operated under agreement.

The **Pine Glen Soccer Centre** consists of a full-size FIFA regulated indoor pitch that can be divided into four smaller fields. Built in 2008, this facility has allowed the club to expand its winter training and to offer additional programming to its members and the community. Prime time during the winter months is fully booked and the club has explored the feasibility of establishing a second indoor facility in the past. The consultation program also indicated strong demand for additional indoor turf facilities, especially from field sports other than soccer (e.g., football, rugby, baseball, etc.), with suggestions to establish a domed field at another location. It is understood that a high school planned for North Oakville will be installing a dome (operated by a third party), which may offer opportunities for community use.

The Oakville Soccer Club administers rentals at the Pine Glen Soccer Centre and generally receives the more favourable times – the club is not bound by municipal allocation policies and other users are less likely to receive access as a result. Additionally, the facility is seldom used during the daytime and the warmer months. While low usage is common during non-peak times, utilization of the field for a variety of recreation programs during off-peak times may be an opportunity to consider in the future. It is recommended that the town evaluate options for increasing public access to this facility and/or other indoor turf providers prior to the expiry of the Pine Glen agreement in 2028.

The public consultation program also yielded requests for **year-round tennis and pickleball courts** through the installation of an air-supported dome or other indoor structure. There are no public indoor venues for these sports in Oakville at present. Supported by Tennis Canada’s indoor court strategy and partnership framework, these facilities are becoming more common as interest in these sports grows. The lack of year-round opportunities is a barrier in Oakville and the demand for indoor courts to support community-based tennis and pickleball should be explored in more detail through further study, with the goal of expanding localized play opportunities. This objective should be included as part of the recommended Racquet Court Strategy, which is elaborated on in more detail in Section 6.5 (Tennis Courts).

The **Oakville Gymnastics Club** operates a 29,000 sf gymnastics centre at the GACC and also rents other spaces in the community. With around 4,000 members, the club is the largest in Ontario. As Oakville grows, the club anticipates greater demand and has expressed interest in additional space in North Oakville. Opportunities to expand the existing location may also be considered through the GACC’s expansion/revitalization process.

Any prospect for a new club-based facility (e.g., indoor turf field, gymnastics facility, court complex, table tennis, etc.) should be considered through the development of a detailed strategy and/or business plan (see section 4.11), with consideration of operating models, funding priorities, and community impacts.

Actions – Indoor Sport Facilities		
33. Explore options for increasing year-round programming and community access to the indoor turf fields.		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	The current agreement for operation of the Pine Glen Soccer Centres expires in 2028.

4.10 Arts and Culture Facilities

The town is responsible for the management of three notable venues offering cultural programming, all in Southwest or Southeast Oakville: Oakville Centre for Performing Arts (OCPA); Oakville Museum; and Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre. Some cultural programming is also offered through municipal facilities such as community centres and Oakville Galleries, which is independently run. Additionally, the network of arts and cultural spaces and services extends to the non-profit and private sector, with some organizations being partially supported through municipal grants.

Oakville’s arts and cultural facilities and services are guided by a separate **Cultural Plan**, most recently updated in 2016 and currently undergoing a refresh. The Cultural Plan and **Downtown Cultural Hub** (DCH) studies support the replacement of the OCPA, noting that there is a gap in quality local performance space offering more than the existing 485 seats. Implementing the DCH has been identified as a key priority for the current term of Council.

Through this master plan’s consultation program, cultural organizations indicated that the sector was hard hit by the pandemic, with many facilities closing and audiences/participants staying away. Most groups are recovering, but the return has been slower than with some other sectors. Conversely, attendance at outdoor events has grown considerably, outpacing capacities at some sites.

With QEPCCC and a re-imagined OCPA addressing both localized needs in South Oakville and many town-wide functions, growth in North Oakville will require consideration of new cultural infrastructure in the longer-term. Consideration should be given to the development of an **auditorium space** for community theatre, rehearsals, events, etc. within the community centre or library proposed for Trafalgar Urban Core South. Many organizations expressed a need for additional rehearsal and storage space, recommending that future community centres be designed with arts and cultural needs in mind.

Actions – Arts and Culture Facilities		
<p>34. Continue to advance the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative, including the cultural components.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	This is an ongoing priority for this current term of Council.
<p>35. Consider the development of an auditorium space for community theatre, rehearsals, events, etc. within the library or community centre proposed for Trafalgar Urban Core South.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Tied to library or community centre development	n/a
<p>36. Complete the Cultural Plan refresh and prepare a Public Art Master Plan. The Cultural Plan should include a cultural heritage landscape/tourism lens as well as a strategy for the delivery of cultural services and spaces in North Oakville.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
<p>37. Seek opportunities to integrate cultural programs and activities through shared spaces within existing and future community recreation facilities and parks.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

4.11 Other Indoor Facilities

Future requests for municipal participation in capital projects not identified in this plan can be expected. There are several other types of facilities that fall outside of the traditional municipal scope of provision, but may offer significant benefit to area residents and contribute greatly to the range of local services (e.g., table tennis, squash, saunas, etc.).

A formal partnership framework should be used to evaluate unsolicited requests from community organizations, with consideration to the town's long-term capital forecast and capacity to participate in such projects. The evaluation of potential capital partnerships should require the proponent to provide information such as (but not limited to):

- a comprehensive needs analysis
- a comprehensive business plan
- the proponent's financial capacity
- a demonstration of the sustainability of the project
- detailed evidence of community benefits
- full risk analysis

Through its Corporate Community Assistance Policy, the town has established a Community Loans Procedure that addresses many of the aforementioned items and may be used as the basis for further evaluation of capital requests.

Actions – Other Indoor Facilities		
38. Continue to utilize a formal partnership framework to evaluate capital proposals from community organizations, with consideration given to the town's long-term capital forecast and the town's capacity to participate in such projects.		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

5. Public Libraries

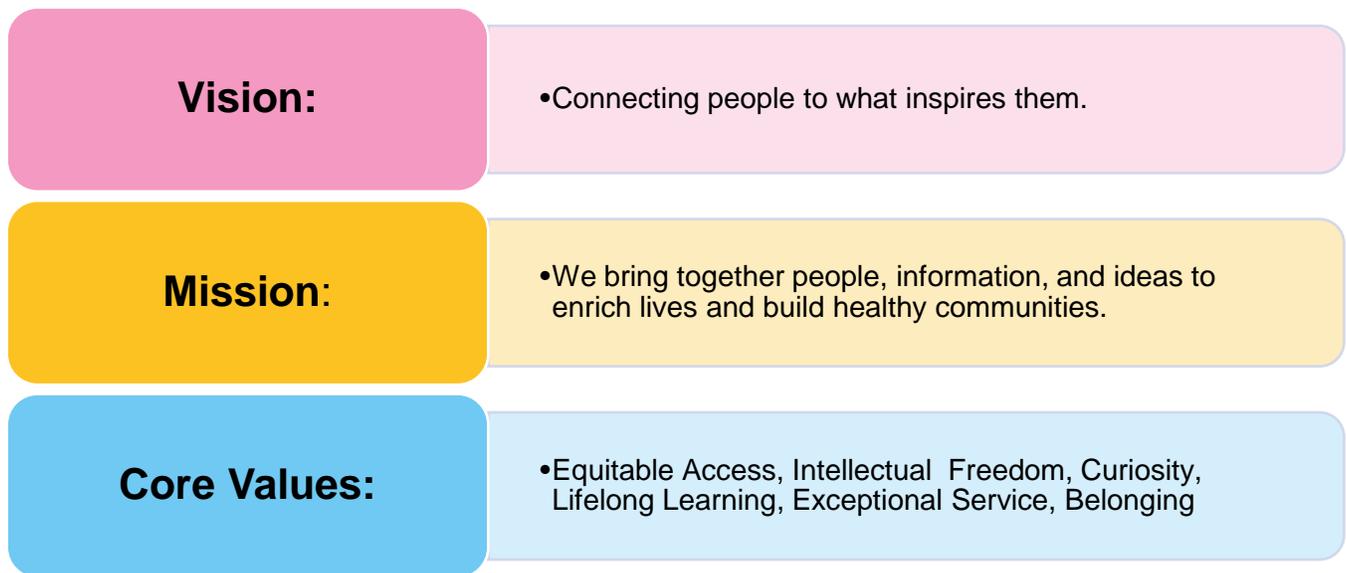
This section identifies public library facility needs and a preferred distribution model for the Oakville Public Library (OPL). Key service priorities are also reviewed, with strategic direction provided for the short-term.

5.1 Overview

Public library systems are the cornerstones of vibrant communities. With an emphasis on early and lifelong literacy, popular materials, digital resources, spaces for studying and gathering, and growing demand for new forms of creation and lending services, there is strong support for continued investment. The library is regarded as a welcoming place and a critical source for information and support for newcomers and long-time residents alike.

The Oakville Public Library’s Strategic Plan provides a solid foundation for the analysis of library services. OPL’s mission and vision speak to the aspirational role that OPL can play in the lives of its residents through core service elements such as programs, collections, technology, and space.

Figure 21: Oakville Public Library Strategic Plan 2022-2024 – Strategic Framework



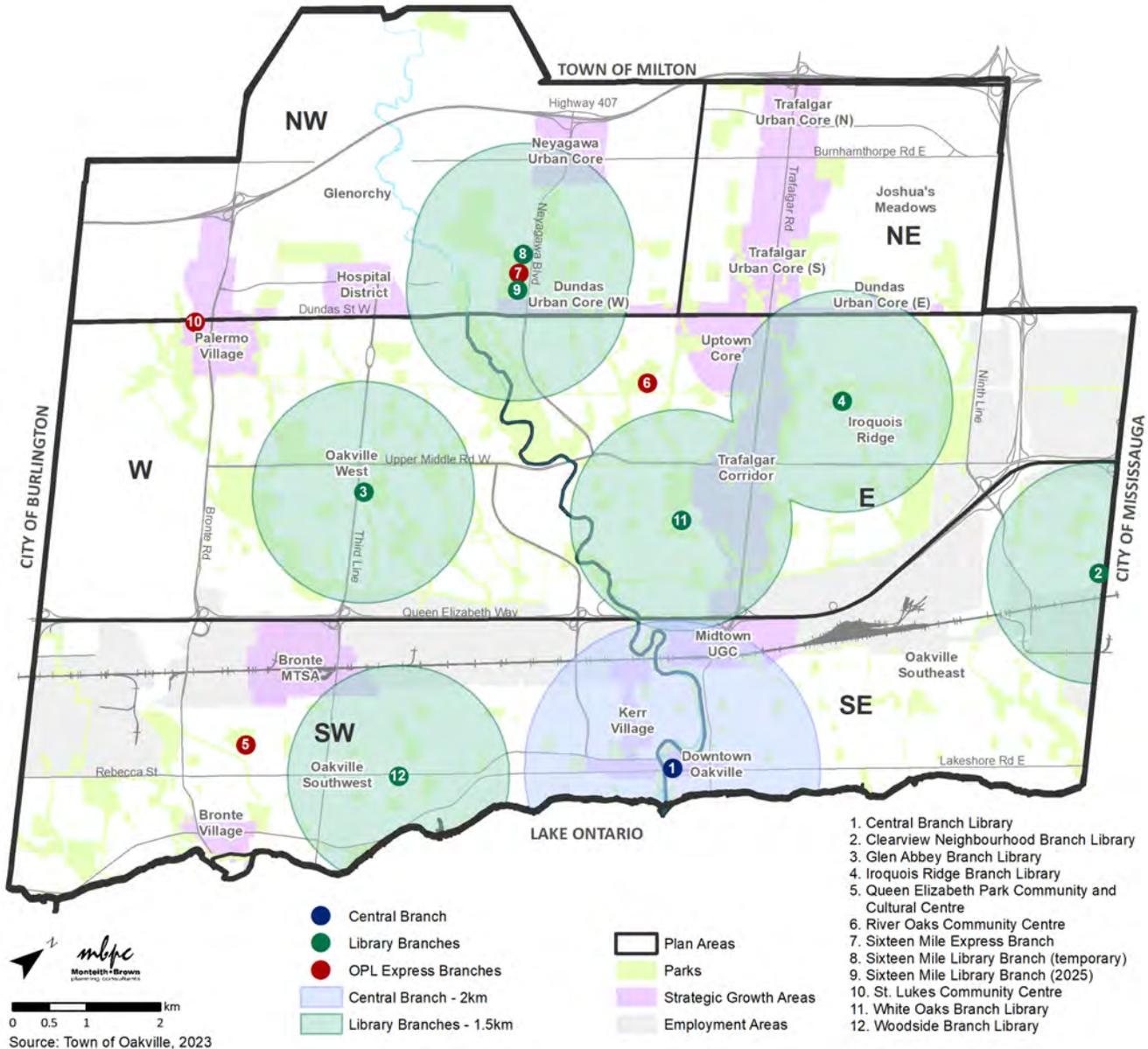
The Oakville Public Library currently operates seven branches (including one central), and four OPL Express locations, providing a total of 108,301 ft² of space. Many spaces are combined with other public facilities such as community centres and schools.

Table 34: Oakville Public Library Branch and OPL Express Inventory

Branch	Plan Area	Size (sf)
Central Branch	Southeast	43,920 sf
Clearview Branch	East	4,057 sf
Glen Abbey Branch	West	14,984 sf
Iroquois Ridge Branch	East	12,141 sf
Sixteen Mile Branch (temporary)	Northwest	5,048 sf
White Oaks Branch	East	9,261 sf
Woodside Branch	Southwest	18,890 sf
QEPCCC – OPL Express	Southwest	n/a
River Oaks CC – OPL Express	East	n/a
Sixteen Mile Sports Complex – OPL Express	Northwest	n/a
St. Luke’s Community Centre (church) – OPL Express	West	n/a
Total		108,301 sf

* Public Library usable space in a combined school/public library facility

Figure 22: Oakville Public Library Locations and General Catchment Areas



Construction has recently begun on the construction of a permanent Sixteen Mile Branch, attached to the new Sixteen Mile Community Centre in North Oakville. When it opens in 2025, this two-storey library facility will offer 18,354 ft² of space, including material and display space, casual reading areas, programming spaces, Creation Zone, Tinker Lab, quiet study room, flexible meeting spaces and an enclosed outdoor area. It is anticipated that the temporary library (5,048 ft²) will no longer be used as a branch when the permanent branch opens, resulting in a town-wide total of 121,607 ft² of space at that time.

Planning is also underway for the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative that will result in revitalized cultural facilities, including a new central branch to replace the current aging building.

The following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

- A. **Embrace Evolving Roles:** Demand is growing for unstructured space and community programming (e.g., STEAM, tech assistance, etc.). More and more, residents are viewing OPL as a “third place” – an inexpensive, accessible, welcoming, and comfortable space to study, work, hangout. This suggests a need for geographic equity and convenience in facility provision, as well as flexible spaces that can support evolving needs.
- B. **Enhance and Revitalize Existing Branches:** The community is excited for the Downtown Cultural Hub initiative to be advanced, including a new and revitalized Central Branch Library. There may also opportunities to reimagine and expand usage at existing locations to serve growth, as well as further animating outdoor library spaces. Innovative solutions may be sought to ensure that these spaces respond to evolving needs.
- C. **Provide New Branches in Strategic Locations:** Space needs are growing, and new libraries will be needed in several strategic growth areas to serve new residents. Future libraries should be integrated with other civic and community facilities, with strong coordination between service providers to optimize programming and avoid duplication.
- D. **Evaluate Alternative Service Models:** New ways of delivering service should continue to be explored and embraced, such as OPL Express locations, book bikes, community spaces with increased space for programs, activities and digital technologies and reduced footprint for collections. A continued focus on outreach will be important to create connections within emerging communities and expand OPL’s reach.
- E. **Maintain High Quality Services:** Quality service is a foundational requirement for public libraries – a continued focus on staff training and empowerment should be a leading priority for OPL. Oakville’s growth also means that a greater focus will need to be placed on services to newcomers including an expanded multilingual collection to respond to Oakville’s growing diversity.
- F. **Consider Extended Hours:** The community consultation program found considerable support for longer hours at busy library branches. In the longer-term, extending hours in strategic locations may offer an opportunity to expand services and impact without adding new space.
- G. **Support for At-Risk Populations:** Libraries are busier than ever and OPL plays a critical role in supporting programs and services for newcomers and equity-seeking populations. Thoughtful planning is needed to ensure that OPL can continue to serve important roles for all residents, including students, seniors struggling with isolation, people dealing with mental health challenges, under-housed residents, and other at-risk and vulnerable individuals.
- H. **Partner with the Town:** There is a strong level of collaboration between the Oakville Public Library and Town of Oakville, from communication and programming to joint facility planning. Oakville’s busiest community centres are those that also contain library branches and this co-location model is recommended within future building projects.

5.1 Analysis – Library Services

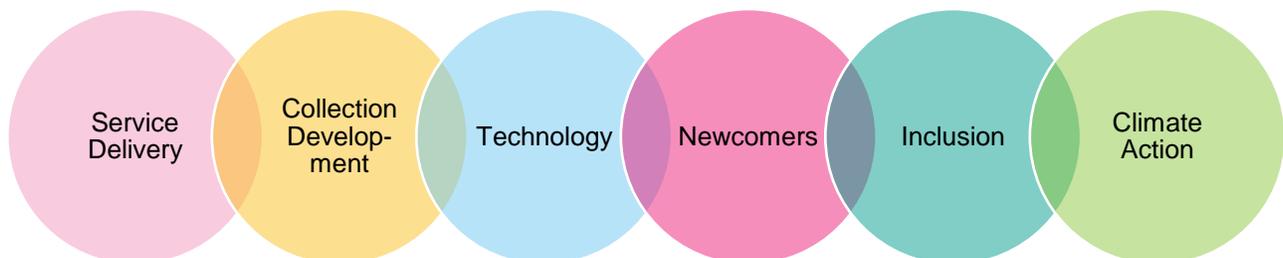
This section outlines in broad terms the areas of focus for future service delivery planning for Oakville Public Library. The themes outlined have been touched on both in professional literature and in consultations with OPL staff and customers.

OPL’s core values as articulated in its Strategic Plan underpin the core elements of library services and help create the linkages between each of the strategies outlined in this report. For example, growing and diverse collections can reduce barriers and promote equitable access. Technology plans not only increase technical skills, but they can be integrated into programming to develop digital literacy, inspire curiosity, and promote lifelong learning. Programs and their design can be leveraged to promote inclusion and a sense of belonging. The outcomes that can be achieved are numerous and made possible through strong core organizational values and strong library services components.

Oakville Public Library’s current Strategic Plan has been extended to 2026. It is hoped that the analysis and recommendations contained herein will support, enhance, and expand the strategic pillars in the Board’s current plan.

The general themes outlined in the analysis include a discussion, some recommendations, and questions for further consideration around service delivery, technology, collection development, inclusion, newcomers, and climate action.

Figure 23: Master Plan Strategies for Library Services



It is also hoped that this section acts as a springboard and framework for discussions around service delivery that will result in a living document created for and by the leadership and staff teams of Oakville Public Library.

Service Delivery Strategy

The population growth projected to 2051 combined with the strong and steady increases in usage of the library by the community (see Stage 1 Report) provides both compelling evidence and rationale for a significant expansion of OPL’s physical spaces. As referenced later in the report, this increase in space should comprise a mix of configurations beginning with a new Central Branch as part of the Downtown Cultural Hub plan. The next level of libraries represents library branches followed by OPL Express locations. What will this look like as the system expands and grows? This moment in time represents a valuable opportunity for OPL to identify and formulate direction for a future library service delivery plan to correspond to the expansion of space. The following are elements that are recommended for consideration.

Role and Structure

OPL has a solid foundation already in terms of the variety of facility types whether it be co-location in schools and community centres, stand-alone buildings, and alternative service delivery mechanisms such as OPL Express. The opportunity now exists to define and/or confirm the definition of the roles these facility types serve in OPL's system now and into the future. Not only does this ensure that financial, human, and capital resources are being deployed effectively and efficiently, but it also serves to provide parameters or a structure for OPL's service delivery model including service levels. The community profiles OPL has provided for each catchment area will be invaluable in this endeavour. What are the roles of OPL's different libraries and OPL Express locations? Will these roles change in the future? The establishment of community profiles for proposed locations would also be necessary and invaluable.

Figure 24: Sample Community Profile, Oakville Public Library



These profiles may also help in articulating a core level of service available at all locations at minimum while identifying customizable service elements to respond to each community in a catchment area or to identify “centres of expertise” or “centres of excellence” to foster experimentation and innovation. Guidelines from the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario Systems (ARUPLO) may be useful tool in this regard¹².

Extending Access to Service

Extending access to service can be done in several ways. The most obvious way is to increase the number of physical buildings. However, other tactics include: an increase or reallocation of operating hours, the enhancement of the website, and partnerships, collaborations, and networks.

The library's operating hours have been reviewed recently by OPL leadership and the Board for the current service points. In the future as new libraries come on stream some examination will be required to confirm the efficacy of the status quo. An increase in overall operating hours is inevitable with new buildings but how does this align with existing hours of current facilities in adjacent catchment areas? The [ARUPLO Guidelines, 4th edition](#) states

¹² Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario Systems. [Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems](#). 4th edition. June 2023.

that, “The single greatest barrier to library use as reported in community needs assessments is open hours of operation” (p. 9).

It is recommended that a future operating hours plan be developed for OPL in conjunction with role definition of each level of facility type and reviewed alongside ARUPLO Guidelines.

Programs

The significant value of programming in public libraries cannot be underestimated. Not only do public library programs augment collections, but they also provide huge benefits in terms of enhancing traditional literacy skills as well as digital literacy skills. The content developed by libraries for programming can often be seen as the ‘on ramp’ to topics and interests that might be otherwise unattainable to members of the community. Skills and interests such as photography or creative writing are introduced by library programs in a way that break down barriers and foster inclusion within a community.

Oakville’s growing population creates an opportunity for OPL to diversify its approach to programming. Currently, OPL has strong attendance for children’s programs; however, employing more place-based approaches could expand its reach to more segments of the community. This would entail building a framework for programming that focuses on local strengths while engaging the community on global, national, and local topics. The potential for enhanced collaboration and partnerships locally would also widen OPL’s audience while leveraging its programming activities to amplify inclusion efforts.

During the pandemic, public libraries adapted to lock downs and closures by offering programs online for all. 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 are assessing 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. The added value to adopting hybrid programming is the ability to expand access by offering online options alongside in person. This feature can also be seen to increase inclusion and break down geographic barriers.

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 facilitate skill development and lifelong 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 draws such as makerspaces will be more important than ever before because they will act as a means of reducing barriers for those who do not have access to these skills or equipment. OPL’s Creation Zones are not only an integral part of its technology strategy but provide incredible opportunities through its digital programming.

A recent report¹³ estimates that investment in programming generates over 6 times more economic and social benefits: “That is, for every \$1 invested in Canada’s urban libraries, \$6 is generated in community economic impact, a return of over 600%.” Programs that go beyond the traditional offerings of story times and book clubs can address community and societal issues and solidify the role of public libraries in providing a safe place for individuals to discuss controversial and timely topics. Libraries and librarians are finding themselves on the front lines of the culture wars that are playing out around the world. How can public libraries identify opportunities to proactively engage their community on timely topics such as climate change, freedom of speech, and other world issues through regular programming?

[The Website](#)

OPL already has a full-service website that represents a one stop entry point to information, services, and resources 24/7. It also facilitates extending some services of the library beyond the operating hours of its physical locations. Features such as Chat allows for interactions with customers for basic level information with options for connecting with live staff for more complex queries. Research on the use of library websites during the pandemic also suggests that library websites were forced to become de facto full-service branches and, in so doing, libraries were also able to identify their online shortcomings¹⁴. What are the gaps in OPL’s website that can be addressed in the future to extend service?

In order to sustain the high level of virtual services provided, OPL should continue to monitor technological trends and capabilities with regard to its website to identify ways to enhance functionality and engagement with its customers beyond open hours.

[Partnerships, Collaborations, and Networks](#)

Public libraries have generally aimed to leverage their mission to create alliances and play active roles in community networks and OPL is no exception. Libraries are presented with opportunities through partnerships and collaborations to deliver services that are closely aligned with their expertise and professional skills. This activity has served to increase access to library services and resources and has allowed the libraries to be a contributor in meeting the needs of their communities. In recent years, formal partnerships have been established between libraries and non-library entities depending on the unique circumstances of each community. For example, partnerships with post-secondary institutions (e.g., Sheridan College, etc.) could be considered to offer enhanced services to residents and students alike.

Libraries can embody a community development mindset and provide potential models or pilots to build library capacity and extend its reach in a more agile way. As new OPL facilities are planned and existing facilities are being renewed, this is a perfect opportunity to review, assess, and identify if there are formal partnerships or collaborations within each catchment area that OPL can initiate to extend service and perhaps also to offset operating costs.

¹³ Canadian Urban Institute. [Overdue: The Case for Canada’s Public Libraries](#). 2023.

¹⁴ McLay Paterson, Amy. [What is a Library Website, Anyway? Reconsidering Dominant Conceptual Models](#). Partnership Volume 16, Number 1, 2021, p. 1–22.

Questions to consider:

- a. How can innovation be built into this model?
- b. How can robust staff training and development opportunities be achieved?
- c. Are there other partners that might help OPL advance its mandate?
- d. Does the library have a role to play in cushioning the shocks of climate change and global/political/social disruption and upheaval?

Collection Development Strategy

OPL's strong and stable usage rates for print resources alongside significant increases in digital and streaming resources is a reality that will require a balancing act of space versus demand in both existing and future library locations. ARUPLO Guidelines state that libraries are decreasing the size of their physical collections due to several factors:

- the growing use of digital;
- decreasing usage of print and formats such as CDs and DVDs because of costs and/or availability;
- the requirements of providing accessible shelving; and
- the need to repurpose space for other functions.

Repurposing existing library space is a growing imperative as Oakville Public Library expands its already robust 'Library of Things'. This collection makes available items such as loanable kits for storytimes, sports, and connectivity. This concept promotes the circular and sharing economy which has many benefits for the environment and represents an important element of the library's Climate Action Strategy. In addition, the items offered (e.g., park passes, life jackets, etc.) can break down barriers for members of the community by providing access to amenities they may not otherwise be able to afford. This function of the 'Library of Things' can also be seen as a key piece of OPL's inclusion strategy.

Beyond the discussion of quantitative requirements, an updated Collections Strategy will also examine the mix of resources as well as specific audiences and subject matter. OPL's Collection Development Policy will need to address broadly the direction for future resource procurement, selection, and deselection in a rapidly changing environment. Again, the community profiles will be essential in this endeavour to sufficiently respond to user preferences in each catchment area's libraries. Leveraging other mechanisms such as consortium purchasing and reciprocal borrowing will help OPL's collection dollars stretch farther. Efficient transfers (holds) of material between library locations and the effective use of floating collections are and will continue to be key.

Physical collections will continue to coexist with emerging digital formats for the foreseeable future, which illustrates the necessity of maintaining a diverse collection to meet the needs of the entire community. This will continue to require robust and sustained funding for OPL's collection budget as the population increases and new locations are built. In addition, the acquisition of eBook titles has created added pressure on library material budgets due to the circulation limits per eBook that each publisher imposes on the library. 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 the ability 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. The future collection budgets for OPL should consider the trends in publisher pricing models for digital resources as well as the benefits of resource sharing with other library systems.

And lastly, for communities across Canada including Oakville, increased resources for library collections represents an investment in Canada's future prosperity. A recent report on public libraries in Canada estimates that for every 1% increase in literacy for adults, an annual benefit of \$67 billion could be created; this is the equivalent of an extra \$1,800 in the pocket of every Canadian.¹⁵

Questions to consider:

- a. What will the role of locally acquired material be in the system versus popular fiction and non-fiction collections for adults?
- b. What is the strategy for the ratio of print, non-print, and streaming collections?

Technology Strategy

Technology and digital services within public libraries have evolved and transformed from providing access to connectivity and skills training to exposure to new and emerging technologies. The user groups that libraries are aiming to serve have become just as diverse. The technology needs of entrepreneurs, new Canadians, lifelong learners, students, and marginalized populations are unique and represent substantial effort on the part of libraries to meet their requirements.

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.¹⁶

For those who do not have the means to own hardware or to pay for internet access at home, the library's free in-house WIFI, loanable laptops, and loanable hotspots facilitate the crucial activities of learning, working, and communication for many community members. According to the Urban Libraries Council "In Canada, 66% of households with incomes less than \$32,000 don't have broadband or computers."¹⁷

Just as importantly, public libraries must also focus on new and emerging technology services. Creation Zones at Glen Abbey and Iroquois Ridge libraries foreshadow the next iteration of OPL's future technology plans. Now more than ever, libraries must work hard to

¹⁵ Canadian Urban Institute. [Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries](#). 2023.

¹⁶ Nordicity and Toronto Public Library. [Technology Access in Public Libraries: Outcomes and Impacts for Ontario Communities](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/bridge/pdfs/nordicity-full-report.pdf). www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/bridge/pdfs/nordicity-full-report.pdf

¹⁷ Urban Libraries Council. [Leadership Brief: Digital Equity in the Age of COVID-19](http://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/Leadership-Brief_Digital-Equity.pdf). www.urbanlibraries.org/files/Leadership-Brief_Digital-Equity.pdf

plan services that integrate more advanced skill building for its community as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality, and other emerging technologies become mainstream.¹⁸

Library programming, outside of the Creation Zones, will continue to be an important building block in OPL's efforts to enhance digital literacy skills alongside traditional literacy skills. A robust strategy will need to continue to include ways to integrate technology into all library programs.

How will OPL's technology plans respond to current and future states? It is recommended that an updated technology strategy may be a useful tool for future technology planning and establishing service levels. Such a plan may include:

- a rationale for what locations will offer a Creation Zone;
- the target for the number of loanable hotspots at each location;
- how AI and other emerging technologies will be incorporated into programming; and
- the transition from desktops versus in-house loanable laptops.

A technology strategy would also inform facility planning for new and renewed locations including establishing a footprint for desktop computers, ventilated spaces for equipment, noise attenuation for equipment, outlets, furniture selection, and placement and storage requirements for hardware.

Questions to Consider:

- a. How does the library sustain and expand access to technology (computers, maker technology, Wi-Fi) and creative/tech-related programming?
- b. How does the library sustain and expand its role in helping the community achieve proficiencies in digital literacies (e.g., navigating sources of information and different information platforms)?

Newcomer Strategy

With estimates of 500,000 of newcomers immigrating to Canada annually, OPL will need to continue to assess the impact of the influx of newcomers on public library services. To many newcomers, the concept of a public library may be unfamiliar. What will Newcomer Services look like at the different types of library locations within OPL? What services should be strengthened or added? Do these factors present opportunities to co-locate or collaborate with federal agencies and regional or local settlement services? What does this mean for the library's multilingual collections? What implications does this have on space for libraries in catchment areas with a high immigrant population such as Sixteen Mile? How will the library partner or collaborate with the town and Recreation and Culture Department?

Knowing the communities within each existing and new catchment area is vital. It is recommended that this strategy utilize insights from OPL's community profiles to broadly identify where efforts should be focused. Components of the strategy may include:

¹⁸ Ibid.

- an outreach and engagement plan to explore embedding settlement services within strategic library locations;
- a collections plan based on demographics of languages spoken, including estimates of the footprint needed for multilingual resources;
- a programming plan to address ESL proficiencies as well as other integration tactics for individuals and families;
- computer training and job skills development; and
- digital plan to enhance online resources for newcomers on the library’s website through a Newcomers Portal.¹⁹

Inclusion Strategy

Unstructured, Flexible Spaces

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.”

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. OPL’s vision, mission, and values reinforce its commitment to inclusion within both its physical spaces and its service delivery.

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 at risk/marginalized populations, and storage for non-traditional lending (Library of Things).

Truth and Reconciliation

Oakville Public Library is committed to action regarding the principles of Truth and Reconciliation through its current strategic plan. OPL 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

¹⁹ Example: Vaughan Public Libraries. <https://www.vaughanpl.info/newcomers>

for all public libraries in Canada based on the recommendations provided by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Committee Report.²⁰

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. The impacts on institutions, staff members, and citizens during the last three pandemic-impacted 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."

Public Libraries as Civic Integrators

Library space can be used to facilitate the physical coordination and collaboration with other social service agencies (e.g., Halton Region, etc.) that directly serve at risk and marginalized populations. The gaps in serving the needs of vulnerable members of society have been exposed during the pandemic and libraries can play a role in facilitating services to close the gap. 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 patrons who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health challenges, and poverty. Oakville Public Library is no exception in this regard.

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. As noted in the next section, the Canadian Urban Institute's 2023 report (Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries) highlights the many possible facility configurations that OPL could consider for future locations.

Questions to consider:

- a. How might OPL leverage its role in the community to help all levels of government achieve their goals for its citizens?
- b. Should OPL become the community access point for all public services?

²⁰ Canadian Federation of Library Associations. Truth and Reconciliation Report and Recommendations. 2017. https://cfla-fcab.ca/en/indigenous/trc_report/

Climate Action Strategy

In the absence of national guidelines regarding the role of public libraries in climate change mitigation and adaptation, an opportunity is apparent for public libraries in Canada to work closely with their local governments to integrate both the libraries' needs as well as its contributions to the overall strategy.

New library buildings will need to be built to withstand extreme weather events while existing buildings may need to be retrofitted. Energy efficiency will also be required not only for budgetary reasons but also to set an example as part of the overall public sector infrastructure for both residents and businesses to emulate.²¹ Oakville Public Library's buildings are already incorporated into the town's Climate Strategy Plan for built environments.²²

Public libraries are seen as trusted institutions that provide accurate information. Their strong local presence and broad range of users makes them an effective venue for all levels of government to disseminate information around climate change to the community.²³ Oakville Public Library is also identified as a valued partner in providing education programming around climate conservation for residents of Oakville.²⁴ In the future, programming and the 'Library of Things' could be reviewed for opportunities to expand the focus of climate change education for residents. Collaborations with the town's recreation and parks departments could also enhance these efforts. The outcomes of these initiatives include promoting behavioural changes and climate empowerment amongst residents.

The library can also help community members develop new skills as new competencies emerge with a greener economy.²⁵ Halifax Public Library's approach to education and engagement is offered as a best practice in this regard. This system has developed a robust web presence to document its community partnership efforts while also including citywide initiatives and supports for residents.²⁶

The consequences of climate disasters have made communities more vulnerable as trusted infrastructure has often failed residents after storms, floods, and fires caused by extreme weather. Public libraries including OPL have a key role in building community resilience because of the strong social infrastructure they can offer. There are many examples of libraries and other public institutions that can reliably provide temporary shelter, food, internet, and water after a weather-related disaster.²⁷ For those residents who are underserved already, this is a huge component of a community's social safety net.

²¹ International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. 2021. [IFLA Trend Report 2021 Update](#).

²² Town of Oakville. [Climate Change Adaptation Initiative](#).

²³ Government of the United Kingdom. Department of Digital, Culture, Museums, Sport, Libraries. [Climate Change and the Power of Libraries](#). <https://dcmslibraries.blog.gov.uk/2021/11/09/climate-change-and-the-power-of-libraries/>

²⁴ Town of Oakville. [Climate Change Adaptation Initiative](#).

²⁵ International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. 2021. [IFLA Trend Report 2021 Update](#).

²⁶ Halifax Public Library. <https://www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca/science-and-environment/climate-action/>

²⁷ Klinenberg, Eric. *Palaces for the People*. New York: Broadway Books, 2018.

Actions – Public Library Services

39. Initiate the following actions in support of **OPL’s Service Delivery Strategy**:

- a) Frequently review and update community profiles for proposed new locations to inform facility and service planning.
- b) Identify “centres of expertise” or “centres of excellence” amongst new and existing locations to foster experimentation and innovation.
- c) Formulate a system hierarchy of service points based on OPL’s resources and community needs that will define the role of each facility type and accompanying service levels in OPL’s system now and into the future.
- d) Develop a future operating hours plan in conjunction with role definition of each level of facility type and reviewed alongside ARUPLO guidelines.
- e) Explore the implementation of more place-based programming to augment the existing slate of programs offered currently and into the future both online and in person.
- f) Continue to monitor technological trends and capabilities regarding OPL’s website to identify ways to enhance functionality and engagement with its customers beyond open hours.
- g) Review, identify, and assess partnerships or collaborations as new OPL facilities are planned and existing facilities are being renewed, including opportunities to co-locate with Town of Oakville community facilities.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High (a, d, e, f, g) Medium (b, c)	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

40. Initiate the following actions in support of **OPL’s Collection Development Strategy**:

- a) Review the planned footprint for the size of the collections at future locations with the recommendations from industry guidelines, where feasible.
- b) Continue to conduct diversity audits within OPL’s collection with a view to utilize findings for planning more diverse collections in new locations as well as in existing OPL libraries.
- c) Continue to review Lean processes for material transfers to reduce wait times for holds between locations and seek to implement revised processes in future locations.
- d) Explore the feasibility of expanded reciprocal borrowing and resource sharing arrangements to mitigate cost pressures of eBook pricing models on collections budgets.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High (a, b, c) Medium (d)	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

Actions – Public Library Services

41. Initiate the following actions in support of **OPL’s Technology Strategy**:

- a) Complete an expanded technology strategy to inform facility planning for new and renewed locations including establishing a footprint for desktop computers, ventilated spaces for equipment, noise attenuation for equipment, spaces for outlets, furniture selection, and placement and storage requirements for hardware.
- b) Establish service levels to define: the locations for future Creation Zones; the number of loanable hotspots at each location; how AI and other emerging technologies will be incorporated into programming; and the transition from desktops versus in-house loanable laptops.
- c) Continue to integrate technology serving all ages into programs.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High (a, b) Medium (c)	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

42. Initiate the following actions in support of **OPL’s Newcomer Strategy**:

- a) Expand OPL’s Newcomer Strategy by: exploring the possibility of embedding settlement services within strategic library locations; developing a collections plan that included estimates of the footprint needed for multilingual resources; developing a programming plan to enhance ESL proficiencies; expanding computer training and job skills development; and expanding newcomers’ resources on OPL’s website.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

43. Initiate the following actions in support of **OPL’s Inclusion Strategy**:

- a) Ensure that a flexible, unstructured footprint for new and renewed libraries includes not only the space needs for the library collection, but also for the needs of programming, partnerships, collaborative study, coordination of non-library services for at risk/marginalized populations, and storage for non-traditional lending (Library of Things).
- b) Explore the feasibility of embedding regional and/or local social services within future library locations to better support at risk and marginalized populations while balancing the need to provide safe, welcoming spaces for all.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High (a, b)	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

Actions – Public Library Services

44. Initiate the following directions in support of **OPL’s Climate Action Strategy**:

- a) Expand program offerings focused on climate mitigation and adaptation in collaboration with the town’s recreation and parks departments.
- b) Assess the addition of items within the ‘Library of Things’ to encourage participation in climate conservation amongst customers of the OPL.
- c) Identify partnership and collaboration opportunities with local environmental groups to expand the library’s reach and enhance its role in leading climate action initiatives.
- d) Create a greater presence within OPL’s website to promote climate change issues, events, and resources to increase community engagement.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High (d) Medium (a, b, c)	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

5.2 Analysis – Library Facilities

Library Space Provision

Public libraries are continuing to evolve and are as relevant as ever, their value underscored during and since the pandemic for the essential services that they offer to residents from all walks of life. Libraries go well beyond books, offering a broad array of critical supports that nurture our personal knowledge, mental wellbeing, social cohesion, community life, and economic prosperity.

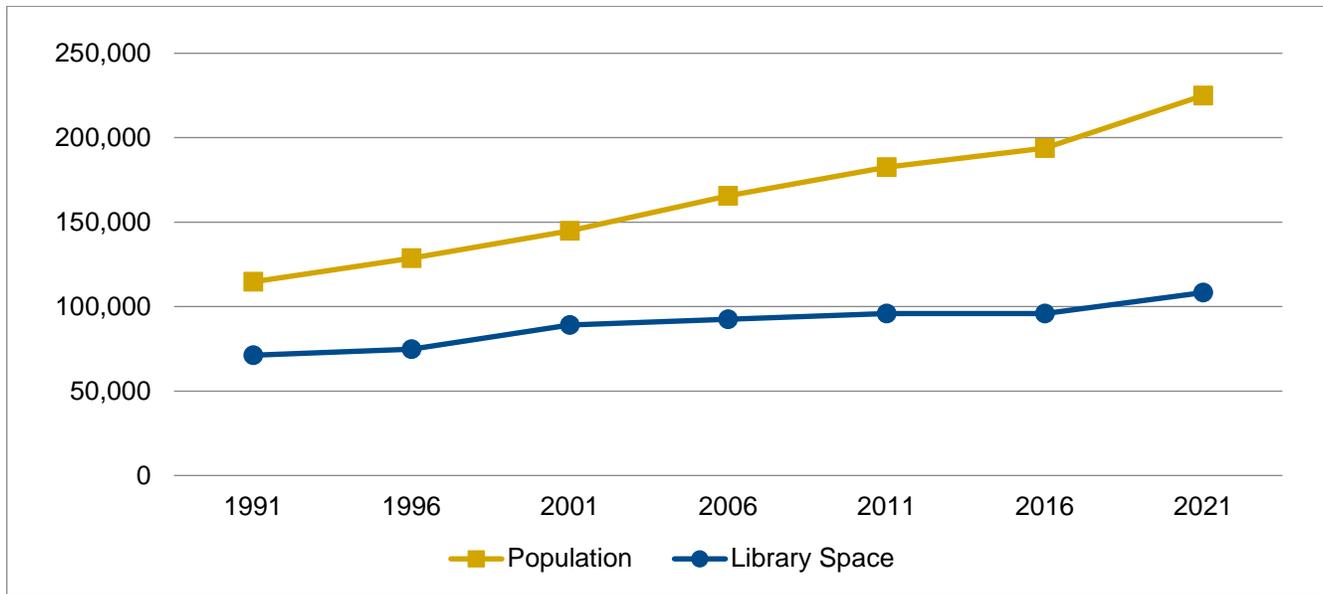
Library facility needs are assessed through a combination of space requirements and geographic distribution, with consideration being given to potential joint use locations with other civic facilities. Oakville residents expressed strong interest in expanded library opportunities with 79% of survey respondents indicating support for additional public libraries. With a growing emphasis on the library’s role as a community gathering place, space remains at a premium – per capita standards allow for the projection of long-term space needs.

Since 1991, the per capita supply of library space in Oakville has gradually been declining from its peak of 0.62 sf/capita. At present, the town has a service level of 0.48 sf/capita (108,301 ft² for a population of 225,000). Due to increased land and construction costs, sustainable funding and investment is needed to ensure that the gap between population and library space will not continue to widen in the future.

“Over the decades, with the advent of technology, there was speculation about whether bricks-and-mortar public libraries would become obsolete. Instead, they have become indispensable to their communities, while retaining their traditional role as a place to go for information, to do research and study.”

- Canadian Urban Institute. Overdue: The Case for Canada’s Public Libraries (2023).

Figure 25: Population Growth and Library Space in Oakville, 1991-2021



Since 2006, OPL has set a target of 0.58 square feet of library space for every resident, well below the 1.0 sf/capita suggested by ARUPLO²⁸. Currently, the town’s provision of library space (0.48sf/capita) is similar to the average of comparator communities (0.51 sf/capita). With Oakville’s rapid growth, new building projects are needed to maintain service levels.

The way in which libraries are used informs the creation of a space provision target for OPL today and into the future. Increasingly, people are using the library for a growing range of uses – both traditional and new, structured and unstructured. The library as a “third place” – a space to hangout and get off devices without having to spend money – is a trend that is accelerating as new housing units get smaller, but the number of persons within each grows. In turn, additional library space is needed for individual and collaborative study, flexible programming, new forms of lending, technologies and creation zones, and wider aisle ways and accessible stacks to accommodate persons with disabilities. Total foot traffic to OPL locations in 2023 has regained and surpassed pre-pandemic levels. At minimum, these factors support maintaining current per capita space ratios.

Going forward, it is recommended that OPL strive to maintain a supply of 0.5 square feet per resident – this is in line with current ratios and those being achieved by other library systems and can be supported based on current and anticipated demands. The following table applies this provision target against Oakville’s forecasted population figures. To meet this target, nearly 100,000 square feet of additional library space will be required to serve Oakville’s 2051 projected population of 442,941 persons. Space expansion in concert with population growth has been the library’s objective in recent years and should continue to be a priority.

²⁸ ARUPLO. *Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems*. 4th edition. June 2023.

Table 35: Projection of Library Space Needs based on Recommended Provision Target

Forecasted Population	Existing Library Space (sf)	0.5 sf per capita	
		Library Space Needs (sf)	Deviation from Current Supply
225,000 (current)	108,301 sf (2023) 121,607 sf (2025)	112,500	4,199**
250,000 (2026)*		125,000	3,393
300,000 (2032)*		150,000	28,393
350,000 (2038)*		175,000	53,393
400,000 (2045)*		200,000	78,393
442,941 (2051)*		221,471	99,864

* includes the additional net space provided through the permanent Sixteen Mile Library (2025)

** reflects current provision of 108,301 ft²

Proposed Library Facility Development Program

A series of capital projects are recommended to address these space needs, with consideration being given to the location and timing of population growth, existing library locations, and geographic equity. The present distribution of libraries is very good, but new and expanded facilities will be required to serve growth areas. An extension to hours of operation may also assist in meeting growing needs, as might alternative delivery models.

Recommended projects aimed at revitalizing existing library locations and addressing gap areas and growing communities are listed in the following table. Sites will need to be secured for many of these projects and should be made a priority in the short-term. Aside from the Central Branch, new library branches will generally be in the range of 10,000 to 30,000 square feet, serving catchment areas of 20,000 or more persons. These may be supplemented by alternative models such as OPL Express locations situated in strategic locations. As is the case with any major building project, feasibility studies will be prepared to define branch locations and confirm design, sizing, and financial implications.

Table 36: Recommended Library Development Program (listed in proposed order of implementation)

Recommended Directions	Approximate Square Footage	Recommended Timing
1. Sixteen Mile Branch (under construction): Open the permanent Sixteen Mile Branch (18,354 sf) and close the temporary branch (5,048 sf).	13,306 sf (net)	2025
2. Central Branch (reconstruction): Redevelop the Central Branch as part of Downtown Cultural Hub initiative on the site of the former post office. Growth in the area suggests that the new library should be of similar size (40,000 to 50,000 sf) if it is to continue to serve as OPL's central administrative hub.	No net change anticipated	2026+

Recommended Directions	Approximate Square Footage	Recommended Timing
<p>3. Trafalgar Urban Core South (new): Develop a larger library branch to serve residents in Trafalgar Urban Core South and the Dundas Urban Core Areas.</p>	20,000+ sf	~275,000 population
<p>4. Bronte (new): Review options and locations for enhanced library services within the Bronte area and vicinity, including the potential to add a library branch at QEPCCC. Consideration should be given to an operating model that places a greater emphasis on physical and virtual collaborative learning (“learning commons”). Additional site analysis is required, with input from local stakeholders.</p>	Up to 10,000 sf	~300,000 population
<p>5. Palermo (new): Develop a library branch north of Dundas Street to serve residents in Palermo and vicinity. The site may be co-located with other civic uses (e.g., community centre) or be part of a condominium development. Consideration should be given to an operating model that places a greater emphasis on students and technology-based programming.</p>	15,000 sf	~325,000 population
<p>6. Midtown Oakville (new): Establish a library and community hub to include a gathering and meeting space, library services, and community resources for area residents, including seniors. The library would be the operator but may partner with other organizations and municipal departments to offer community-responsive services that may evolve over time. The location and space model are to be considered further within the secondary plan for this area.</p>	5,000 to 10,000 sf	~350,000 population
<p>7. River Oaks (new): Establish a library branch as part of the River Oaks Community Centre to enhance service to area residents and growing communities like Uptown Core. Options for repurposing space and/or creating a second-floor space at this location may be considered as part of a broader facility expansion/revitalization project. Rationalize continued service provision of the White Oaks Library Branch at this time.</p>	10,000+ sf	Medium-term (2034-2041)
<p>8. Glen Abbey Library (expansion): Explore options for expanding the existing Glen Abbey branch to address long-term growth, including the possibility of adding a second floor. Additional site analysis is required.</p>	Up to 15,000 sf	~400,000 population

Recommended Directions	Approximate Square Footage	Recommended Timing
<p>9. Trafalgar Urban Core North (new): Develop a library branch to serve residents in Trafalgar Urban Core North. The site may be co-located with other civic uses (e.g., community centre) or be part of a condominium development.</p>	15,000 sf	~425,000 population
<p>10. Future Spaces (tbd): Address future service gaps through the development of additional service points or expansions to existing locations.</p>	Remaining balance of up to 10,000 sf	To be determined

OPL and the town are encouraged to work together on planned capital projects to ensure that they are delivered on time, on budget, and to the satisfaction of all parties. It is important to recognize that planning and execution can take several years as many building projects are complex undertakings that involve multiple partners, funding sources, approvals, and site-specific considerations. Projects should only proceed when funding has been confirmed and should involve additional public consultation, followed by design and engineering, tendering and procurement, and construction. Funding approvals may be required at each stage. As was the case of the Sixteen Mile Branch, consideration may be given to the use of temporary library facilities in advance of permanent construction as a way of phasing library service into a growing community.

In addition to the library branch development priorities identified above, it is recommended that OPL conduct a review of the library service model in the Clearview community. At 4,057 square feet, this branch is the smallest in the OPL system and is co-located with a public school. The Clearview community – which is disconnected from Oakville by employment areas and is served more by western Mississauga (including the nearby Clarkson Library – had a population of nearly 7,000 in 2021 and is forecasted to grow to 7,410 by 2051. Consultation on the draft master plan identified suggestions from area residents for expanded community and library space in Clearview, while the metrics associated with the current library indicate that it is among the lowest performing locations in OPL’s system.

A recent report entitled “Overdue: The Case for Canada’s Public Librarians”²⁹ recognizes how our urban structure and form of development is changing. The report recommends centring community development around libraries. This model has many benefits, including improved service delivery, user convenience, economies of scale and land assembly, collaboration, and integrated service delivery. Through its existing facilities that are co-located with community centres and schools, OPL enjoys many of these benefits today and should be open to new arrangements with shared benefits in the future.

²⁹ Canadian Urban Institute. Overdue: The Case for Canada’s Public Libraries. 2023.

Figure 26: Examples of Possible Future Library Provision Models



Source: Canadian Urban Institute. *Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries*. 2023.

OPL Express Locations

In addition to the recommended capital projects, service to existing and emerging communities may also take the form of outreach or alternative delivery models. The current service model for OPL Express is for kiosks and lockers to be placed in community facilities throughout the town. These kiosks allow customers to borrow, pick-up, and return physical items. These service points are designed for busy customers who appreciate the convenience of accessing library services 'on the go'.

While these service locations do not reduce the overall square footage needs within the system of library branches, they do expand OPL's reach and additional OPL Express kiosks should be a priority in strategic locations into the future. OPL's express library service responds to a need within the community as portions of the population continue to become more mobile and rely less on their 'local' library.³⁰ As mobile populations increase, it will be important for OPL to look at future express service points in high leverage locations.

In surveying the various provincial and international library guidelines for building and service standards, there is little guidance in terms of standards for providing express access to library services and materials. However, in general, it is acknowledged that, "a public library's

³⁰ International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. 2021. *IFLA Trend Report 2021 Update*.

service offerings can be delivered in different ways to different users at different times,”³¹ This represents an opportunity to innovate and experiment with different models and technologies to extend and expand services in conjunction with physical library spaces that will address Oakville’s specific needs.

Express or remote library services can take many forms including bookmobiles, book bikes, pop-up library sites, vending machines, and book lockers. The gaps these service extensions fill is equally diverse. They include convenience, equity, and providing service where no physical building current exists. As new catchment areas are identified and current catchment areas are reviewed, it will be important to confirm the intended purpose of express library services at OPL. Is it strictly for convenience or is there a rationale for extending service for equity purposes and to fill a need for library services, temporarily, until a physical location is built? This examination could also open the possibility of placing express library locations in places beyond community centres. In the cost/benefit analysis, staffing, funding, and partnerships and collaborations should also be reviewed as potential challenges and opportunities.³²

Assessments of current and future OPL express service locations should be guided by criteria such as:

- Distance from permanent library branches and other OPL Express locations. (Does the proposed location improve equity and address the existence of book deserts or gaps in service geographically?)
- The potential population served by the proposed location, both in terms of number of people and their socio-demographic characteristics. (Is there value in this location for both customers and the OPL and is the anticipated traffic sufficient to justify the cost?)
- Site-specific considerations such as the safety and visibility of kiosk placement and potential hours of access. (Is the location suitable and practical?)
- Efficacy of the service model to produce the desired results. (Does the technology of the express kiosk or other factors present a barrier to use in this location?)
- Long-term viability of the location and/or partnership. (Is the proposed location sustainable?)

³¹ Australian Public Library Alliances. Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries. 2021. <https://read.alia.org.au/apla-alia-standards-and-guidelines-australian-public-libraries-may-2021>

³² Ibid., p. 9

Actions – Public Library Facilities

45. Take immediate and sustained steps to implement the **recommended 2024-2051 library branch development program** outlined in this master plan. This includes (in general order of priority):

- a) the replacement of the Central Branch
- b) development of branches in: (i) Trafalgar Urban Core South, (ii) Bronte and area (site analysis required), (iii) Palermo, (iv) Midtown Oakville; and (v) River Oaks
- c) expansion of library space in West Oakville, possibly at the Glen Abbey Branch
- d) the development of a branch in Trafalgar Urban Core North

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related (new builds)	a) Short-term (2024-2033)	Planning target is 0.5 square feet per resident.
High (revitalization projects)	b(i) 275,000 population	Some branches may be part of multi-stakeholder sites or condominium buildings.
	b(ii) 300,000 population	
	b(iii) 325,000 population	Sites and/or partnership agreements will need to be secured for many of these proposed projects to proceed and should be made a priority many years ahead of construction.
	b(iv) 350,000 population	
	b(v) Medium-term (2034-41)	
c) 400,000 population		
d) 425,000 population		

46. In consultation with the community, undertake a review of the **library service models in Clearview and Bronte** to ensure that delivery is optimized for those living and working in these neighbourhoods and aligned with the Oakville Public Library’s resources.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-2033)	n/a

47. Revitalize and reinvest in **existing library branches** as needed to ensure that spaces remain relevant and responsive to all users. Ensure that libraries offer flexible spaces that can support evolving needs, services, and programming.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

Actions – Public Library Facilities

- 48.** Continue to expand **outreach and alternative delivery models** to emerging communities and gap areas. In doing so, OPL should:
- a) Assess the feasibility of offering express library services at all current and future community centres that are not co-located with a library branch.
 - b) Using the criteria provided, initiate an assessment of other locations in Oakville as potential express library service locations at high-traffic sites such as civic buildings, transit hubs, retail outlets, and higher density residential complexes.
 - c) Investigate the feasibility of locations within new catchment areas to install express library sites as a temporary measure until physical library locations are built.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

6. Park Facilities

This section contains an examination of park facility needs based on the approach identified in Section 1.4. Supporting inventory, condition and usage data, recommendations from related studies (and their current status), and public and stakeholder input can be found in the Stage 1 and 2 Reports.

6.1 Overview

Oakville's active parks are defined by their high-quality sport and community recreation amenities, from courts to sports fields, playgrounds to splash pads, and much more. Demand for outdoor activities increased dramatically during the pandemic and remains strong, underscoring the need to maintain and enhance outdoor amenities.

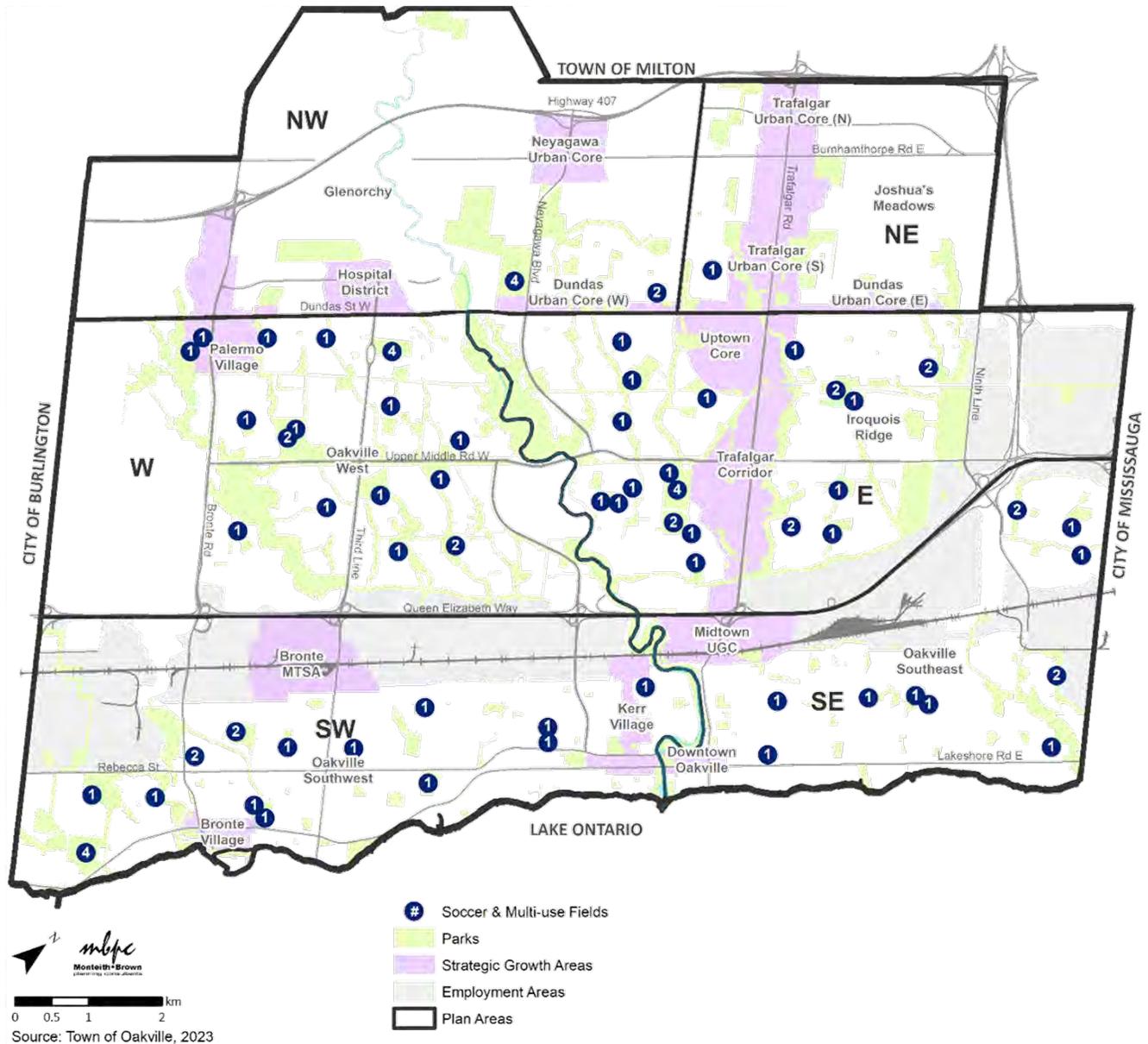
The following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

- A. **Optimize our Sports Fields:** With less future parkland, it will be necessary to strengthen partnerships and make the most of the assets we have. A good example is sports fields, which require large land bases. Adding lights and artificial turf will help increase our capacity without having to secure proportional amounts of land – part of our capital revitalization strategy. Working with schools to maximize their fields and revisiting the restrictions on field lighting south of Dundas Street should be pursued. A sports field strategy is required to determine the preferred approach to implementing the actions of this master plan.
- B. **Support Emerging Sports and Park Amenities:** More outdoor courts, playgrounds, splash pads, skate parks, leash-free areas, community gardens, etc. will be needed to support growth and the trend for casual and unscheduled use. The sport of pickleball – a common request from the public – is here to stay. While this master plan provides several recommendations for court development and management, a racquet sports strategy is recommended to guide the sustainable delivery of outdoor tennis and pickleball courts, as well as indoor play opportunities.
- C. **Animate Parks and Supporting Events:** Park animation (waterfront/harbour parks, etc.) and local events will become more important to strengthening community, addressing social isolation, and engaging residents. Initiatives aimed at enabling and supporting community-driven events should be pursued, such as a small events funds, pop-up events, designation of event spaces and parks, etc.

6.2 Rectangular Fields

The town accommodates a variety of field sports through its parks system, including soccer, football, field hockey, field lacrosse, and rugby. Fields owned and/or maintained by schools and the private sector help to round out the supply. The installation of artificial turf on some fields has led to extended access, but current restrictions on new lighting installations in some areas can affect their placement. The community survey yielded more requests for multi-use fields (66%) than soccer fields (52%), reflecting the growing demand for football and rugby in Oakville.

Figure 27: Existing Soccer and Multi-use Fields in Oakville Parks



Soccer

The town currently provides 65 rectangular fields (soccer and multi-use), of which four are lit artificial turf and 10 lit grass fields. Through community use agreements, the town also permits an additional 20 school fields for public use. For master planning purposes, it is common practice to convert these fields to “unlit equivalencies³³” as lighting and artificial turf surfaces allows for greater usage. In total, these 85 fields are equivalent to 98 unlit fields. The town also provides one dedicated field hockey field, while the Crusaders Rugby Club maintains three full-size rugby fields on lands leased by the town from the province.

Soccer continues to be the most popular organized sport among Canadian youth, although registration in Ontario Soccer Association affiliated programs peaked several years ago (with some usage shifting to unaffiliated organizations). More recently, demand has been growing for adult soccer as well as enhanced training opportunities for youth, sometimes offered through private providers. Changes to the sport’s long-term player development model has brought about new field sizes, which has led to new field configurations at some sites. Demand is generally greatest for the highest class of fields, including artificial turf and lit fields.

Locally, permitting of soccer fields and player registration have declined significantly in recent years. The number of hours rented on town fields has dropped by 39% since 2012, declining year over year for both youth and adult rentals. Slight increases have been seen in demand for turf fields and for rentals from for-profit groups. Usage on smaller and lower quality fields (many of which are on school lands) has been reduced by more than 90% since 2012, indicating that these fields are significantly under-utilized.

Table 37: Hours of use by Fee Permit Category, Town of Oakville Soccer Fields, 2012-2023 (3-4 year intervals)

Year	Hours Permitted	Type of Group			Type of Field		
		Youth*	Adult	Commercial	Turf	A	B/C
2012	30,312	26,120	3,607	585	2,151	20,179	7,982
2015	27,344	21,103	5,435	806	2,872	17,652	6,820
2019	23,717	19,151	3,502	1,064	3,305	17,818	2,595
2023	18,506	15,057	2,331	1,117	2,755	15,083	667
Change	-11,806	-11,063	-1,276	532	604	-5,096	-7,315
Change	-39%	-42%	-35%	91%	28%	-25%	-92%

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

*Youth includes community use of schools

The average level of usage on each field is 380 hours per year. Annual usage is greatest on major fields such as turf and Class A fields and lowest on Class B/C fields. Based on 2023 permit data, nearly one-half of the available fields have capacity for additional usage (while

³³ 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).

keeping within acceptable standards of usage and maintenance), conservatively estimated to be equivalent to **12 fields of unused capacity (mostly on mini and minor fields)**.

Along with usage levels, local participation has also been declining, particularly for youth soccer which fell by 1,856 registrants between 2013 and 2023 for a 26% reduction. Adult registration in outdoor soccer has grown by 38% over the past 10 years, but only accounts for about 25% of all players. The town should continue to collect registration data to help track supply and demand over time.

Table 38: Historical Registration, Oakville Soccer Club, 2013-2023 (four-year intervals)

Soccer Participation	2013	2016	2019	2023	Change (2013 to 2023)	
Oakville Soccer Club – Youth	7,036	6,686	5,843	5,180	-1,856	-26%
Oakville Soccer Club – Adult	1,256	2,446	1,960	1,729	473	38%
Total	8,292	9,132	7,803	6,909	-1,383	-17%

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

The supply of permitted outdoor soccer and rectangular fields is well distributed throughout the town. The greatest opportunity for new fields will be through park development in North Oakville. However, sports fields are less likely to be provided in strategic growth areas as the town intensifies due to their land-based requirements. Upgrades to existing fields may be necessary to address localized needs. Schools will also represent an opportunity for new fields, including the installation of turf on selected sites some of which could help to accommodate sports such as football.

A town-wide provision target of **one soccer field per 100 registered youth and adult participants** is recommended. This target responds to standards of play and considers appropriate usage/rest periods for fields. Based on 2023 registration data and an inventory of 93.5 soccer fields (ULE) (excluding multi-use fields), the town’s level of provision is one soccer field (unlit equivalent) per 74 participants, aligning with the available capacity that is estimated to be within the current inventory (mostly on lower quality fields).

Looking ahead, additional fields will be required to address growth-related needs. Assuming that participation rates remain stable (approximately 10.7% of residents aged 5 to 19 years play organized soccer, or 3.1% of the overall population) – while recognizing that the number of youth will increase over time, but at a slower rate than the overall population – this target can be adjusted to be equivalent to a population-based standard of **one field (ULE) per 3,500 Oakville residents**. With a projected population of 442,941 by 2051, this equates to a long-term need for 126.5 fields (ULE), which is 33 new fields – a 35% increase. Given the low levels of usage at present, many of these new fields will not be required until future years, such as when the town exceeds a population of 300,000 persons.

Table 39: Projection of Soccer Field Needs

Forecasted Population	Soccer Field Needs (1: 100 players* or 1:3,500 population)	Deviation from Current Supply (93.5 fields – ULE)
225,000 (current)	69.0*	-24.5
250,000 (2026)	71.5	-22.0
300,000 (2032)	85.5	-8.0
350,000 (2038)	100.0	6.5
400,000 (2045)	114.0	20.5
442,941 (2051)	126.5	33.0

Beyond new fields provided within new parks, other strategies to expand the supply may be considered, including adding lights to existing fields, installing artificial turf, and partnering with schools and user groups. With two-fifths of its projected population growth to be located south of Dundas Street (an additional 91,045 residents by 2051) and likely few large park block opportunities suitable for new sports fields, it recommended that the town consider revisiting its municipal lighting restrictions on selected community-level fields in the years to come. Adding lights and/or artificial turf to existing sports fields (municipal and high school fields) can increase their capacity by 50% to 300% without having to secure any additional land. As discussed in the next section, more fields should offer multi-sport designs that provide greater versatility as trends and demands change.

Potential **criteria** to be considered when evaluating the potential to add lights to unlit sports fields are outlined below. The town is encouraged to review and formalize these criteria through the recommended sports field strategy. Potential candidate sites would be those that:

- are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood, with consideration of reasonable buffers and sensitive land uses;
- are full-size fields, particularly those with artificial turf surfaces and within multi-field complexes;
- have the amenities (e.g., washrooms, off-street parking, etc.) to support extended play;
- are a desirable location for user groups;
- can leverage a community partnership (e.g., school);
- are cost feasible.

Furthermore, the demand for unprogrammed space is evident in North Oakville and it is possible that some parks previously planned for soccer will need to be designed for unorganized uses (such as special events and casual sport activities), especially in the short-term. In turn, the town will need to optimize existing field sites to ensure that long-term needs are addressed.

WHERE ARE NEW FIELDS NEEDED?

Presently, 26.5 soccer and multi-use fields (unlit equivalents) are proposed for future community parks in North Oakville, including:

- Soccer Fields: 4 major lit grass fields and 4 major lit turf fields at West Oakville Sports Park and North Park North, equivalent to 18 unlit fields; and
- Multi-use Fields: 1 lit turf field, 1 major lit field, and 5 major unlit fields at various sites in North Oakville, equivalent to 8.5 unlit fields.

Additionally, new fields may be possible at future school sites and the town should consider permitting community access to those that are of higher quality and required to satisfy needs.

Football and Rugby

Depending on the level of play, sports such as football, field lacrosse, ultimate frisbee, rugby, and field hockey can be accommodated on specially designed (single use) fields or multi-use fields. Each of these sports differs slightly in their field requirements and access, but most can use a full-size rectangular field similar. Artificial turf can be used to mitigate some of the challenges with field sharing and provides for a more accessible and robust surface. In Oakville, some of these sports are accommodated on fields shared with soccer (e.g., football at Bronte Athletic Park), while others have dedicated fields (e.g., field hockey at Glen Abbey Park and rugby at Crusaders Park). School fields are also often used for football activities.

Several of these field sports are growing in Oakville. Of note, the Oakville Titans Football capped registration in 2023 due to a lack of fields (including a growing flag football program). Further, registration levels with Crusaders Rugby have nearly doubled in recent years according to the club, with strong registration levels for both boys and girls.

Table 40: Historical Registration, Other Field Sports (excluding soccer), 2013-2023

Other Field Sports	2013	2023	Change (2013 to 2023)	
Oakville Minor Lacrosse	463	215	-248	-54%
Oakville Titans Minor Football	296	948	652	220%
Oakville Crusaders Rugby Club	n/a	1,400	n/a	n/a
Halton Field Hockey – Youth	223	n/a	n/a	n/a
Halton Field Hockey – Adult	108	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

Field demand for football and field sports other than soccer is approaching or exceeding current capacity. Applying a town-wide provision target of one multi-use field per 50,000 population to future growth equates to a need for approximately 5 new multi-use fields to 2051. This should serve as a general guideline for the town when it is designing new sports fields as it may impact field dimensions, lines, supporting amenities, and permitting. Lines for lacrosse and field hockey are being added to a new multi-use turf field at Sixteen Mile Sports Park, which will address a portion of new demand. In the future, the needs of all field sports should be considered when designing new artificial turf fields.

WHERE ARE NEW FIELDS NEEDED?

There is also opportunity for several new multi-use fields within future neighbourhood and community parks in North Oakville, although some of these spaces will also be required to serve as spaces for informal event and unorganized use. For football, one additional municipal multi-use field with appropriate dimensions, uprights, lights, and clubhouse potential is recommended for West Oakville Sports Park or an alternative site in North Oakville (in addition to continued use of school fields and appropriate park sites).

For rugby, there is concern that the current land lease from the province will not be renewed past its expiry in 2033 – this site accommodates all of the club’s outdoor activities (on 3.5 fields), but is also impacted by a lack of municipal services that limits clubhouse/washroom upgrades and field maintenance. The town should work with the rugby club to find a suitable long-term field replacement alternative.

Actions – Rectangular Fields

- 49.** Continue to develop **rectangular soccer and multi-use fields** in new parks in North Oakville to address demonstrated needs, with a focus on community parks and appropriate neighbourhood park sites, as well as schools. Long-term needs are estimated at 33 new fields (unlit equivalents) by 2051. Provision strategies should include a minimum of **one lit field suitable for minor football** in North Oakville (future community park site).

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	To be determined through future study; needs will be greatest in medium-term (2034-41) and longer-term (2042-51).	Planning target is one soccer field per 100 players or one per 3,500 population (note: these are unlit equivalents, where one lit field equals 1.5 unlit fields and each artificial turf field equals 3 unlit fields).

- 50.** Develop a **sports field strategy** to examine opportunities to enhance the capacity of fields (e.g., soccer, baseball, cricket, etc.). The restriction on field lighting south of Dundas Street locations should be revisited in the medium-term, informed by key criteria and site-specific analysis.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	To provide greater versatility, the needs of all field sports should be considered when designing new artificial turf fields (multi-use field designs).

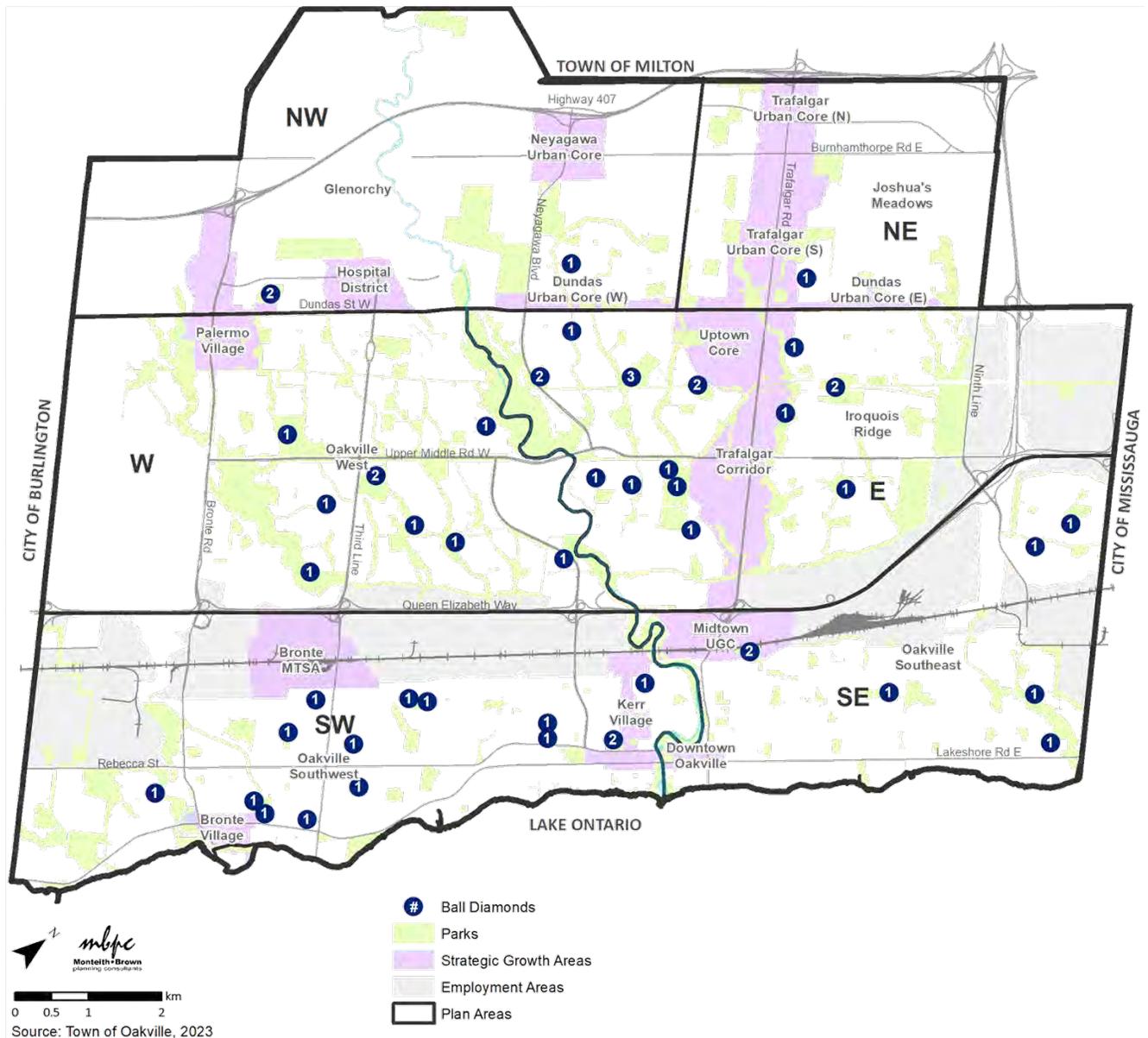
- 51.** Work with the **Oakville Crusaders Rugby Club** to ensure that the long-term field needs of this sport are addressed.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	Strategies may involve the securement of an alternate site supported by an appropriate cost-sharing agreement that reflects the dedicated access sought by the group.

6.3 Ball Diamonds

The town currently provides 45 ball diamonds (15 are lit and 30 are unlit) and permits another 9 school diamonds for public use. These 54 diamonds are equivalent to 69 unlit diamonds³⁴. This equates to an average of one ball diamond (unlit equivalent) per 3,260 Oakville residents. On a per capita basis, the supply is generally well distributed throughout the town, except for West Oakville which has fewer diamonds.

Figure 28: Existing Ball Diamonds in Oakville Parks



³⁴ Each lit ball diamond is equivalent to 2.0 unlit diamonds.

Participation in baseball has fluctuated in recent years, partly linked to the success of the Toronto Blue Jays and a greater focus on higher-level competitive play. This has led to increased demand for larger diamonds (both softball and hardball) that can accommodate youth and adult play. As a result, the town has been slowly phasing out smaller, under-utilized diamonds for other uses and reducing the number of school diamonds permitted.

Permitting levels for ball diamonds have been quite stable over the years, declining by 2% since 2013. Rentals for youth ball have not changed, while rentals for adult play have declined by 16% and commercial activity has tripled, indicating growing demand for competitive training and higher levels of play.

Table 41: Hours of use by Fee Permit Category, Town of Oakville Ball Diamonds, 2012-2023 (3-4 year intervals)

Year	Hours Permitted	Type of Group			Diamond Type	
		Youth*	Adult	Commercial	A	B/C
2012	23,769	20,621	3,036	112	18,467	5,302
2015	22,907	19,278	3,386	243	18,340	4,567
2019	23,358	18,307	3,908	143	16,683	5,670
2023	23,388	20,496	2,550	342	18,196	5,192
Change	-381	-125	-486	230	-271	-110
Change	-2%	-1%	-16%	205%	-1%	-2%

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

*Youth includes community use of schools

Usage is greatest on hardball diamonds (of which the town has ten), around 1,100 hours per diamond in 2023. By comparison, the town’s 35 softball diamonds were permitted on average for 370 hours each in 2023; many of these diamonds are smaller and unable to support multiple levels of play. The amount of unused capacity within the diamond inventory is estimated to be equivalent to approximately **13 softball diamonds (mostly junior)**.

After several years of declining registration, baseball has rebounded in recent times, including amongst younger age categories. Local participation increased by 18% between 2013 and 2023 (essentially the same rate as the town’s population), although this increase has slowed in recent years and has been slower to build back since the pandemic. There are currently 2,345 players within area minor ball organizations. The town should continue to collect registration data to help track supply and demand over time.

Table 42: Historical Registration, Minor Baseball, 2013-2023

Baseball Participation	2013	2023	Change	
Oakville Minor Baseball (OMBA) – Youth	625	807	182	29%
Oakville Little League – Youth	1,030	1,003	-27	-3%
Oakville Girls Softball – Youth	275	527	252	92%
OMBA/OLL/OGS – Adult	53	8	-45	-85%
Total	1,983	2,345	362	18%

Source: Town of Oakville, 2016, 2023

Oakville’s increasing ethnic diversity may mean a slower growth trajectory for baseball in the future, a sport that has more limited appeal amongst many newcomer groups. Furthermore, lower interest was expressed for investment in ball diamonds, with 44% of survey respondents indicating support for more fields.

Based on standards of play and accounting for a system that is largely youth-based, a typical diamond can accommodate approximately 60 or more players. Assuming that participation rates remain stable (approximately 4.9% of residents aged 5 to 19 years play organized baseball) – while recognizing that the number of youth will increase over time, but at a slower rate than the overall population – this target can be adjusted to be equivalent to a population-based standard of **one diamond (ULE) per 5,000 Oakville residents**. With a projected population of 442,941 by 2051, this equates to a long-term need for 88.5 diamonds (ULE), which is 22.5 new fields – a 34% increase. These figures should be monitored and recalculated through future master plan updates, informed by local participation rates.

Table 43: Projection of Ball Diamond Needs

Forecasted Population	Ball Diamond Needs (1: 60 youth players* or 1:5,000 population)	Deviation from Current Supply (66 diamonds – ULE)
225,000 (current)	50.0* (estimated)	-16.0
250,000 (2026)	50.0	-16.0
300,000 (2032)	60.0	-6.0
350,000 (2038)	70.0	4.0
400,000 (2045)	80.0	14.0
442,941 (2051)	88.5	22.5

Looking ahead, additional full-size diamonds (particularly hardball diamonds) will be required to address growth-related needs. Aside from hardball diamonds, many of these new fields will not be required until future years, such as when the town exceeds a population of 300,000 persons.

WHERE ARE NEW DIAMONDS NEEDED?

Previous assessments have found the supply of diamonds south of Dundas Street to be adequate (to the extent that some smaller, lower quality diamonds could be converted to other uses, as is occurring in Wallace Park), but there is a need for new fields to serve growth in North Oakville. Fortunately, the greatest opportunity for new diamonds will be through park development in North Oakville, where the town should seek sites that can support multiple diamonds at a single location.

Presently, 4 major ball diamonds (with some possibility of adding lights to fields in community parks to extend usage) are proposed for future parks in North Oakville, including 2 major softball and 1 major hardball diamonds in Joshua Meadows Community Park and 1 major softball diamond in NP8. Additional diamond development opportunities should be sought at community park sites (e.g., West Oakville Sports Park, etc.).

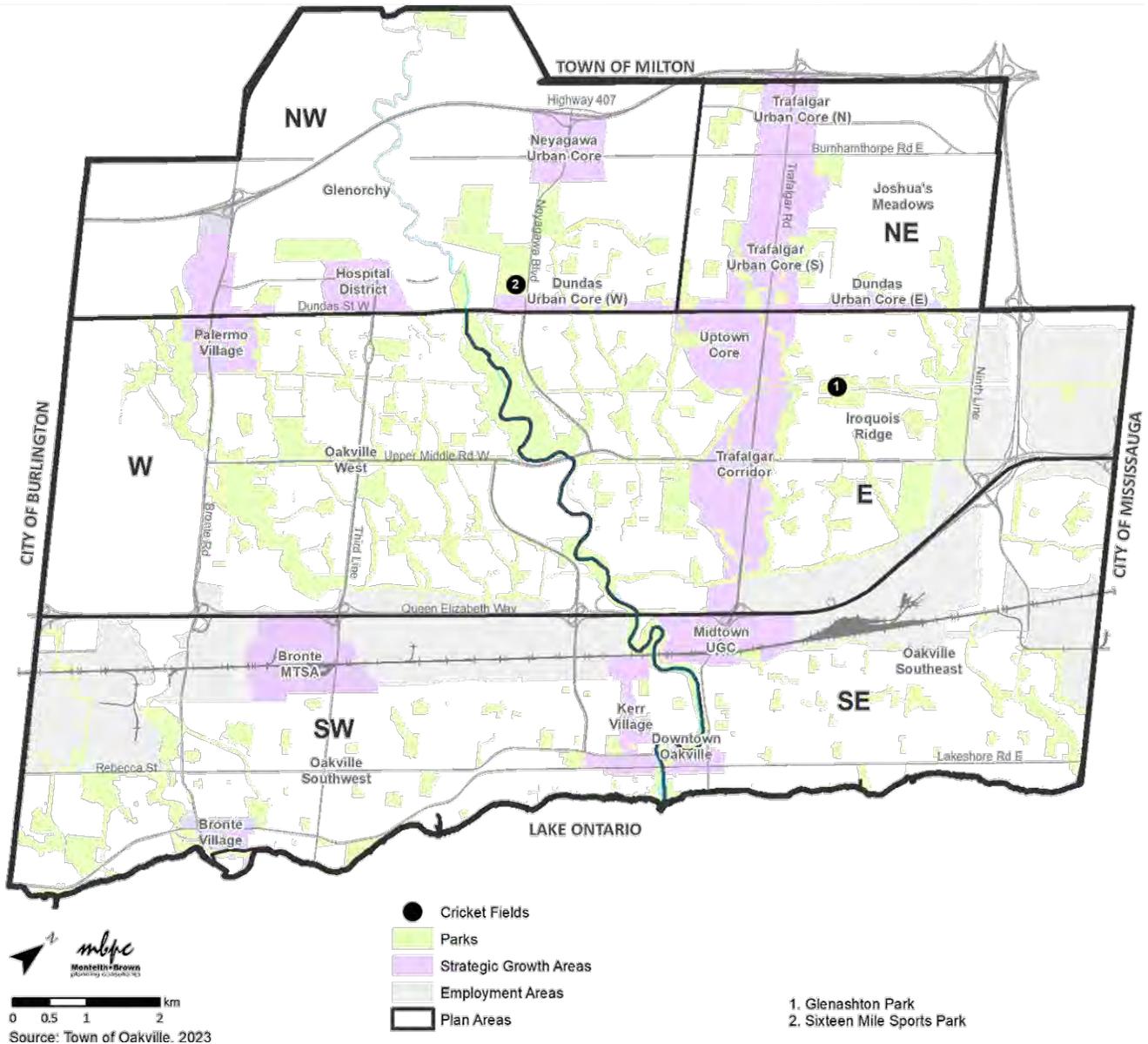
Future demand should be addressed through a combination of strategies, including new development, optimizing use of diamonds, and upgrading existing diamonds to fit with needs. As sports fields are less likely to be provided in strategic growth areas due to their land-based requirements, upgrades to existing diamonds may be necessary to address localized needs in some areas, including expanding under-sized fields where possible. Strategic diamond improvements may assist in dealing with potential shortfalls and should be further assessed through discussions with local baseball organizations. As noted earlier, the development of a sports field strategy is recommended to examine opportunities to enhance the capacity of fields (including ball diamonds), with a focus on those south of Dundas Street.

Actions – Ball Diamonds		
<p>52. Continue to develop ball diamonds in new parks in North Oakville to address demonstrated needs, with an immediate focus on hardball diamonds in community parks. Long-term needs are estimated around 22.5 new diamonds by 2051 (unlit equivalents). Provision strategies should include a tournament site with up to 4 full-size lit diamonds as well as for one or more sites for with full-size hardball diamonds.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	To be determined through future study; needs will be greatest in medium-term (2034-41) and longer-term (2042-51).	Planning target is one diamond per 60 youth players or one per 5,000 population (note: these are unlit equivalents, where one lit diamond equals two unlit diamonds).
<p>53. Continue to work with local user groups to optimize existing diamonds and undertake strategic upgrades where possible and supported by demonstrated needs.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	Upgrades may be informed by the proposed sports field strategy.

6.4 Cricket Fields

With a new purpose-built cricket pitch currently under construction at Sixteen Mile Sports Park, the town will soon have a supply of two (2) cricket fields (including a practice field in Glenashton Park that was permitted for nearly 1,000 hours in 2023, indicating a high level of use).

Figure 29: Existing Cricket Fields in Oakville Parks



Cricket is one of the most popular international sports and appeals to the town’s increasingly diverse population. 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. The sport appeals to a broad spectrum of age groups from children to older adults and it is expected that its popularity and growth will continue as Oakville becomes more ethnically diverse. Currently, there are 193 players registered with the Oakville Cricket Club, although many residents may play the sport casually or as part of clubs in other communities.

Cricket requires especially large blocks of land – it takes 2+ hectares to accommodate a field that is up to 150 metres in diameter (plus buffers), with artificial turf fields and grass fields that are cut shorter – which are becoming harder to assemble as the parks system matures. Some communities have had success overlaying a cricket field across two soccer fields, with

the pitch placed between them; this approach was considered for Sixteen Mile Sports Park but was not adopted due to the level of anticipated demand for cricket. Cricket games are played predominantly on weekends, although short-format cricket is becoming more common which allows for shorter games and more weekday play. Games are popular social events for non-participating family members and should be supported by picnic areas and other recreational amenities.

Lower interest was expressed for investment in cricket fields through the consultation program, with 33% of survey respondents indicating support for more fields. However, interest is likely greater as cricket is strongly associated with immigrants from South Asia and the Caribbean, respondents who may have been under-represented on the survey.

Oakville is currently providing cricket fields at a rate similar to comparator communities, although it should be noted that provision varies widely from municipality to municipality. Previous master plans supported the expansion of cricket fields in North Oakville and an assessment of longer-term needs once the new field at Sixteen Mile Sports Park was in place. With the growing appeal of the sport and changes in the town's population, a target of one field per 100,000 residents should be adopted for long-term planning purposes as this reflects current levels of service and ratios in comparator municipalities (adjusted to account for a more diverse population in the future). This generates a need for 2 fields at present (equalling the current supply) and a total of 4 to 5 by 2051 when the town reaches its population of 442,941. Continued monitoring of participation rates is recommended to ensure that this planning target remains appropriate.

WHERE ARE NEW FIELDS NEEDED?

Cricket should be accommodated in appropriate locations within the town's parks system, including larger sites that can accommodate regulation-size fields. Dedicated cricket fields are preferred but cricket/soccer field overlays may be considered where appropriate. Potential sites for cricket include West Oakville Sports Park and/or under-utilized lands. Locations in proximity to areas where newcomers reside are preferred, as well as sites with washrooms, parking, and transit access. As noted earlier, the development of a sports field strategy is recommended to examine opportunities to enhance the capacity of fields (including cricket fields).

Actions – Cricket Fields

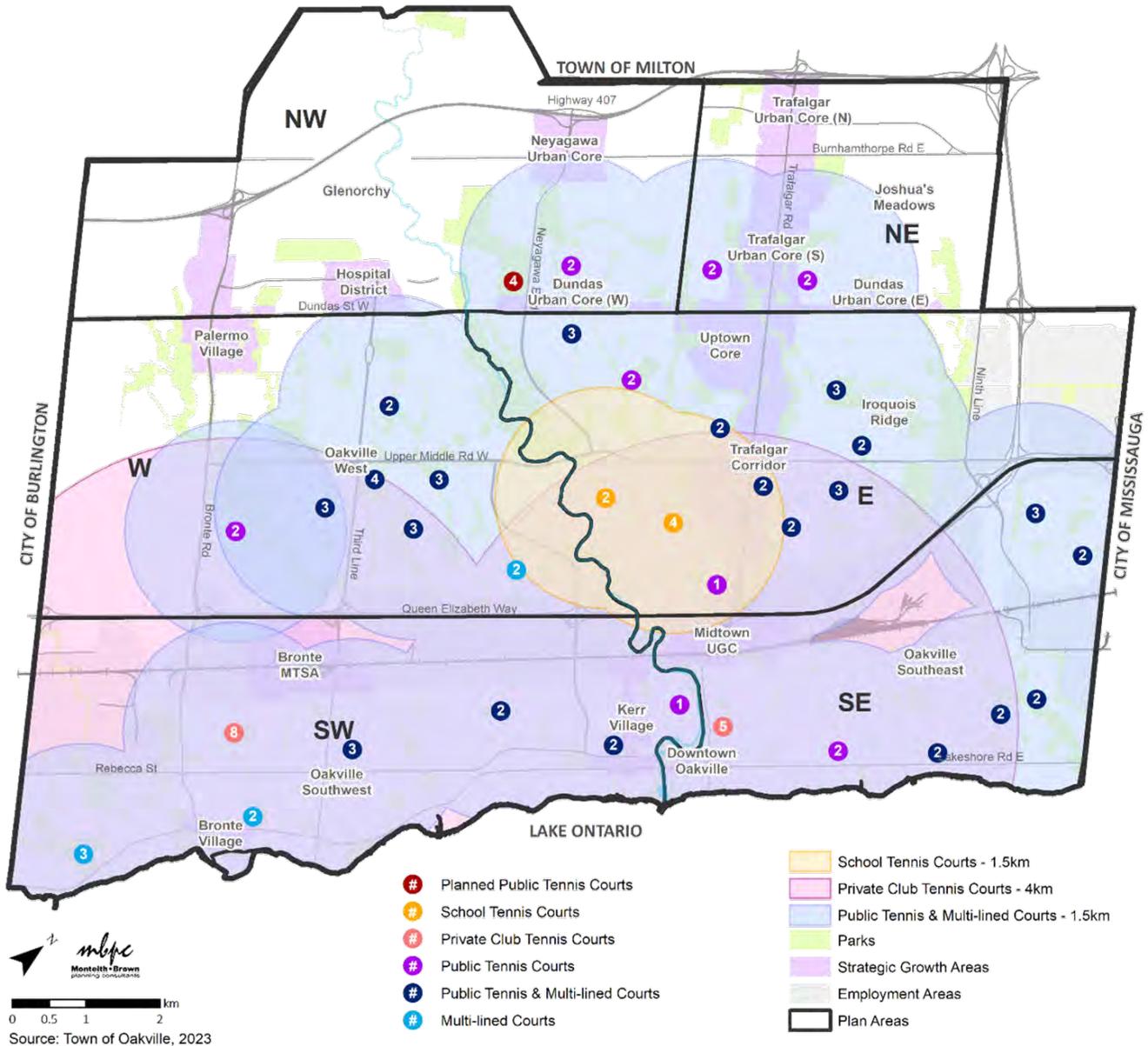
54. Develop a minimum of **2 additional cricket fields** within the town's parks system by 2051 (excluding the field that is being built at Sixteen Mile Sports Park).

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	1 in Short-term (2024-33) 1 in Medium-term (2034-41)	Planning target of one field per 100,000 residents. Potential sites include West Oakville Sports Park and a location to be determined.

6.5 Tennis Courts

The town is responsible for 49 public tennis courts (available for casual use, including selected school courts), 11 club courts (membership-based complexes used for tennis instruction, league play and social events), and 30 public courts that are multi-lined for both tennis and pickleball activities (first-come, first-served basis) – for a total of 90 courts. Additionally, the town is planning to develop 4 lit public tennis courts at Sixteen Mile Sports Park in 2024/25. Several private courts are available through racquet clubs, residential complexes, etc.

Figure 30: Existing Tennis and Multi-lined Courts in Oakville Parks



The town's current level of provision is one tennis and multi-use court per 2,500 residents, higher than the benchmark average of one per 4,200 persons. However, some of Oakville's

courts are aging with surfaces that are in disrepair, limiting usage for the intended activities. Recent rehabilitation projects have included improvements to tennis courts at Hopedale Park, Ardleigh Park, and Glenashton Park (planned). Sites with multiple and higher quality courts sustain the greatest amount of use.

Tennis has seen a resurgence in recent years after decades of eroding participation, and was positively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The sport's popularity can be attributed to the growing segment of baby boomers that are seeking lower impact activities, its appeal to diverse populations, a growing focus on grassroots programming, and recent success by Canadian players on professional tours.

More than two-thirds (68%) of survey respondents in Oakville indicated support for additional tennis courts (ranking 13th out of 31 facility types), with 32% reporting playing tennis in the past five years. Improvements to existing tennis courts (as well as new courts) was a top theme expressed through the consultation program.

The recent growth in pickleball is the most significant trend affecting the racquet sport industry. To accommodate this sport, the town has added pickleball lines on a high number of tennis courts to allow for both sports to use the courts on a first-come, first-served basis. New dedicated pickleball courts are also being introduced through capital park projects. This model of provision requires further examination to determine its future feasibility.

A **Racquet Sports Strategy** is recommended to guide the sustainable delivery of outdoor tennis and pickleball courts (plus indoor play opportunities) to respond to continued demand for these amenities. At minimum, the strategy should consider the condition and distribution of existing courts, participation trends, design considerations, leading practices and service levels in comparable communities, and input from stakeholders and the general public. The strategy should build on the findings of this master plan by identifying locations for new and/or improved courts, as well as considering the demand, potential provision, and operating model for a year-round community-based court complex.

To provide interim direction leading into the Racquet Sports Strategy, this master plan also provides direction on longer-term needs.

WHERE ARE NEW COURTS NEEDED?

Based on a 1.5-kilometre serve area, the distribution of public courts throughout the town is reasonable and future court development should be largely focused on North Oakville. Given the town's considerable supply, a provision target of **one tennis court (public, club, or multi-lined) per 5,000 persons** should be applied to North Oakville, resulting in the need for 31 total courts by 2051, or **25 more than are currently provided**.

Opportunities for tennis court development in the short-term include 4 courts at Sixteen Mile Sports Park (ongoing project), 6 club courts in North Park North, and approximately 11 additional courts at other park sites in North Oakville. Beyond these projects, approximately four additional courts will be required to be distributed across Northeast and Northwest Oakville. New courts should be developed in groups of two or more and may consider co-location with other sport court uses.

No new courts are required south of Dundas Street, except for Palermo Village (which currently has a geographic gap in service) and the courts at Sunningdale Public School (which are in disrepair but could be taken over by the town and improved to address a localized gap in service).

Through the Racquet Sports Strategy, it is recommended that the town evaluate its inventory to identify under-utilized courts that could be considered surplus and candidates for conversion to alternate uses, such as pickleball or basketball (should they meet town standards and respond to demonstrated needs).

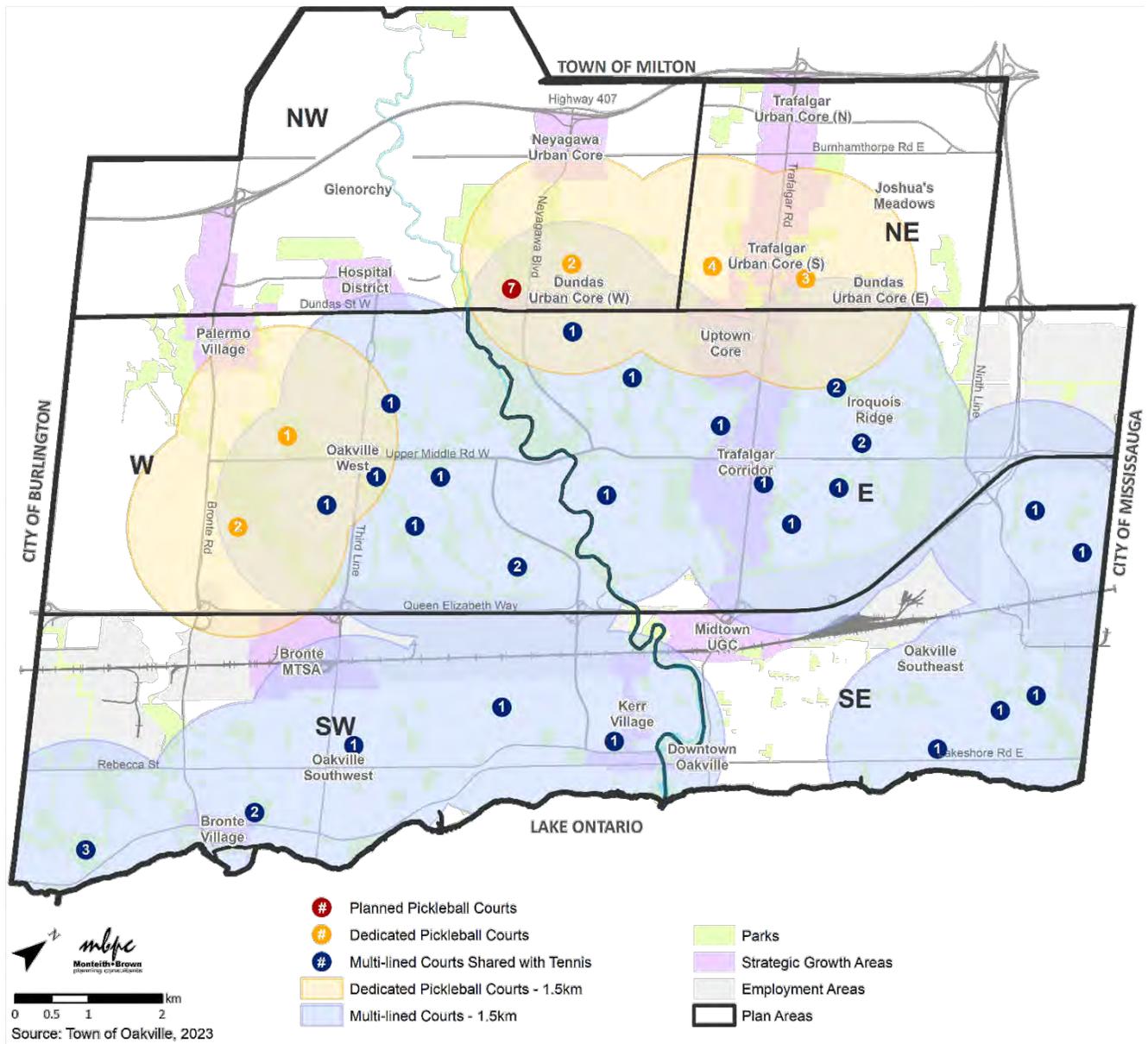
Actions – Tennis Courts		
<p>55. Prepare a Racquet Sports Strategy to guide the sustainable long-term provision of outdoor tennis and pickleball courts and the potential for a year-round community-based court complex, informed by stakeholder and public input.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
<p>56. Target the development of up to 25 additional tennis courts to serve population growth in North Oakville by 2051. A location for courts should also be sought in Palermo Village.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	To be determined through future study	Planning target for North Oakville is one tennis court (public, club, or multi-lined) per 5,000 persons. There is a sufficient supply of courts south of Dundas Street.
<p>57. Continue to undertake tennis court rehabilitation projects at high priority sites, including securing public access to the courts at Sunningdale Public School. The town should review its design, construction, and maintenance standards for tennis and pickleball courts with a view toward improving their longevity.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Selected courts may be removed through attrition or converted to alternate uses, as informed by the Racquet Sports Study.

6.6 Pickleball Courts

The town offers 13 dedicated pickleball-only courts, as well as 30 multi-lined courts that are shared with tennis on a first-come, first-served basis. With a total of 43 outdoor pickleball courts (dedicated and shared), the average level of provision is currently one court per 5,200 residents, much higher than provision levels in comparable communities. The town's winter program has allowed for extended use of many outdoor courts in the later winter/early spring timeframe (note: winter use is not suitable for all locations due to the impact of snow clearing on court quality). In addition, the town accommodates pickleball within many gymnasiums

and is planning to develop 10 dedicated pickleball courts at Sixteen Mile Sports Park in 2024/25.

Figure 31: Existing Pickleball and Multi-lined Courts in Oakville Parks



Pickleball is the number one growing sport in North America and is gaining popularity within numerous age groups, particularly adults and older adults. In response to growing demand, all of the town’s outdoor pickleball courts have been established in the past few years.

Pickleball can be played both indoors and outdoors. It is an affordable and social sport, able to be played by newcomers and more seasoned players alike. Doubles is more popular than singles, and many players have a very high frequency of play, participating multiple times per week if possible. Due to its popularity with seniors, daytime usage is more frequent than evening use, although this may change with time.

With the number of older adults expected to increase at a faster rate than the overall population, continued demand for pickleball can be anticipated. Due to the smaller size of the courts, it is possible to fit two to four pickleball courts within the same footprint of one tennis court. Like tennis, multi-court complexes are recommended.

Strong interest in pickleball was expressed through the public consultation program. Through an open-ended survey question, it was the top activity that respondents would like to see offered in Oakville (followed by tennis and swimming) and more pickleball opportunities was also a common theme expressed through the community open houses. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents to the master plan survey indicated support for additional pickleball courts (ranking 14th out of 31 facility types) and 17% reported playing the sport outdoors in the past five years. This suggests that more would like to play but may not have had the opportunity to do so.

From the consultant's work throughout the province, pickleball courts are among the most requested facilities at public input sessions and have been for the last few years. Comments typically relate to the growth of pickleball and the lack of facilities, with a desire for dedicated outdoor courts and more opportunities for indoor play. More non-profit and private groups are forming with the intent of developing (mostly) indoor complexes to serve the sport, including the growing tournament market.

As the sport 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 being taught in some schools). A survey³⁵ completed in January 2022 by Pickleball Canada suggests that one million Canadians play pickleball at least once a month, a near tripling of the number of pickleball players in Canada in two years.

Due to the rapid rise of the sport, very few municipalities have yet to establish targets for outdoor pickleball court provision. The master plan benchmarking exercise indicates that there is an average of one municipal outdoor pickleball court (dedicated) per 68,600 persons, though provision is likely to improve over the coming years.

Pickleball is an emerging sport that will continue to be accommodated within the parks system using appropriate strategies in response to demonstrated community need. **A target of one outdoor pickleball court per 5,000 to 10,000 residents represents a reasonable range for future planning at this time (to be confirmed through the proposed Racquet Sports Strategy).** With 43 outdoor pickleball courts (dedicated and shared), the town is offering significantly more outdoor opportunities than comparable municipalities. This target range suggests a need for 44 to 88 outdoor courts by 2051 (442,941 population).

While Oakville's overall level of provision is strong, part of the challenge is that many of these courts are shared with tennis. It is difficult for shared courts to support semi-organized play due to the absence of guaranteed access for the sport. Further, most multi-lined courts include one or two pickleball courts (sometimes in poor condition), and users are seeking larger pickleball-only court complexes that can support greater demand. Oakville currently

³⁵ <https://pickleballcanada.org/january-2022-survey-national-release/>

has one location with 4-courts (Fowley Park), with another 4-court complex designed for NP9 in North Oakville and a 10-court complex being planned for Sixteen Mile Sports Park.

WHERE ARE NEW COURTS NEEDED?

Going forward, the primary focus of pickleball court provision should be on dedicated courts (generally 4 to 8 courts per site) within community park sites to accommodate organized play. This includes, but is not limited to, gaps in Southeast and Southwest Oakville and new park development opportunities in North Oakville. Furthermore, multi-lined courts can be effective to support casual play and should continue to be provided on an equitable basis through new construction and court rehabilitation/conversion projects within neighbourhood parks, being mindful of setback requirements to nearby houses.

In establishing new locations, a **site evaluation and selection process** should be included in the proposed **Racquet Sports Strategy**, with consideration of the following criteria:

- a) Pickleball courts may be established through conversion of under-utilized amenities or new construction. The town may establish minimum standards for court surfacing.
- b) Courts should be developed in pairs (ideally oriented north-south), using fixed pickleball net equipment and fencing to support dedicated use. Consolidating courts is more economically efficient, will help to leverage community partnerships, and can better support organized play.
- c) Shared use courts (e.g., pickleball, tennis, basketball, etc.) are less desired and will not typically be supported as long-term options.
- d) Court locations must consider potential for noise impacts on adjacent properties.
- e) Nearby parking, washrooms, and/or lights for night play are desired, but will only be considered within appropriate park types.
- f) Reviewing the town's design, construction, and maintenance standards for courts to extend their lifecycle and improve overall playability.
- g) Enhanced levels of service (such as winds screens, acrylic surfacing, and other supporting amenities) may be considered through sponsorship or other partnership opportunities (e.g., community-based clubs).

Increasingly, communities are citing problems with pickleball courts being located too close to residential areas due to both the racquet noise and the social nature of the game, sometimes leading to litigation. Guidelines recently prepared by Pickleball BC³⁶ identified minimum setbacks for pickleball courts from residential or other sensitive uses ranging from 30 to 160 metres based on a target noise level of 50 decibels. The lower end of this range represents a location that consists of a small number of courts, noise barriers, and intervening terrain that is acoustically soft (e.g., grass). **For a 2-court complex with no noise mitigation – which is a common configuration for many of Oakville's neighbourhood parks – the preferred minimum setback is 50-metres.** This increases to 85 to 115m in a typical community park setting, depending on the number of courts and noise attenuation measures. These

³⁶ Pickleball BC. [A Guide to Pickleball Court Planning and Operation](https://www.pickleballbc.ca/uploads/1/4/2/5/142597665/pbc_court_guidelines__r1[1]_sept_30_2023.pdf). (2023)
[https://www.pickleballbc.ca/uploads/1/4/2/5/142597665/pbc_court_guidelines__r1\[1\]_sept_30_2023.pdf](https://www.pickleballbc.ca/uploads/1/4/2/5/142597665/pbc_court_guidelines__r1[1]_sept_30_2023.pdf)

guidelines should be considered as the town establishes or reinvests in outdoor pickleball sites.

The town should work with pickleball organizations to monitor and assess the need for additional dedicated court complexes over time. Opportunities for a club-managed location (similar to tennis clubs at Bronte and Wallace Park) may be explored through the Racquet Sports Strategy (with defined roles and standards for community-based clubs). One useful metric (for more formalized play) has been established by the City of Mississauga, which uses minimum membership thresholds for the creation of new tennis and/or pickleball clubs: 2 to 3 courts = 100 members; 4 to 5 courts = 200 members; and 6 to 8 courts = 300 members. The goal should be to address community-driven needs, rather than to establish a regional tournament location.

Additionally, permitting of multi-lined courts was raised as an issue through the consultation process. Oakville’s courts are publicly available to all residents on a first-come, first-served basis. Some municipalities are allowing selected courts to be booked online through municipal recreation software or third-party sites. This may be considered further by the town as a way to reduce conflicts and to increase usage of existing courts.

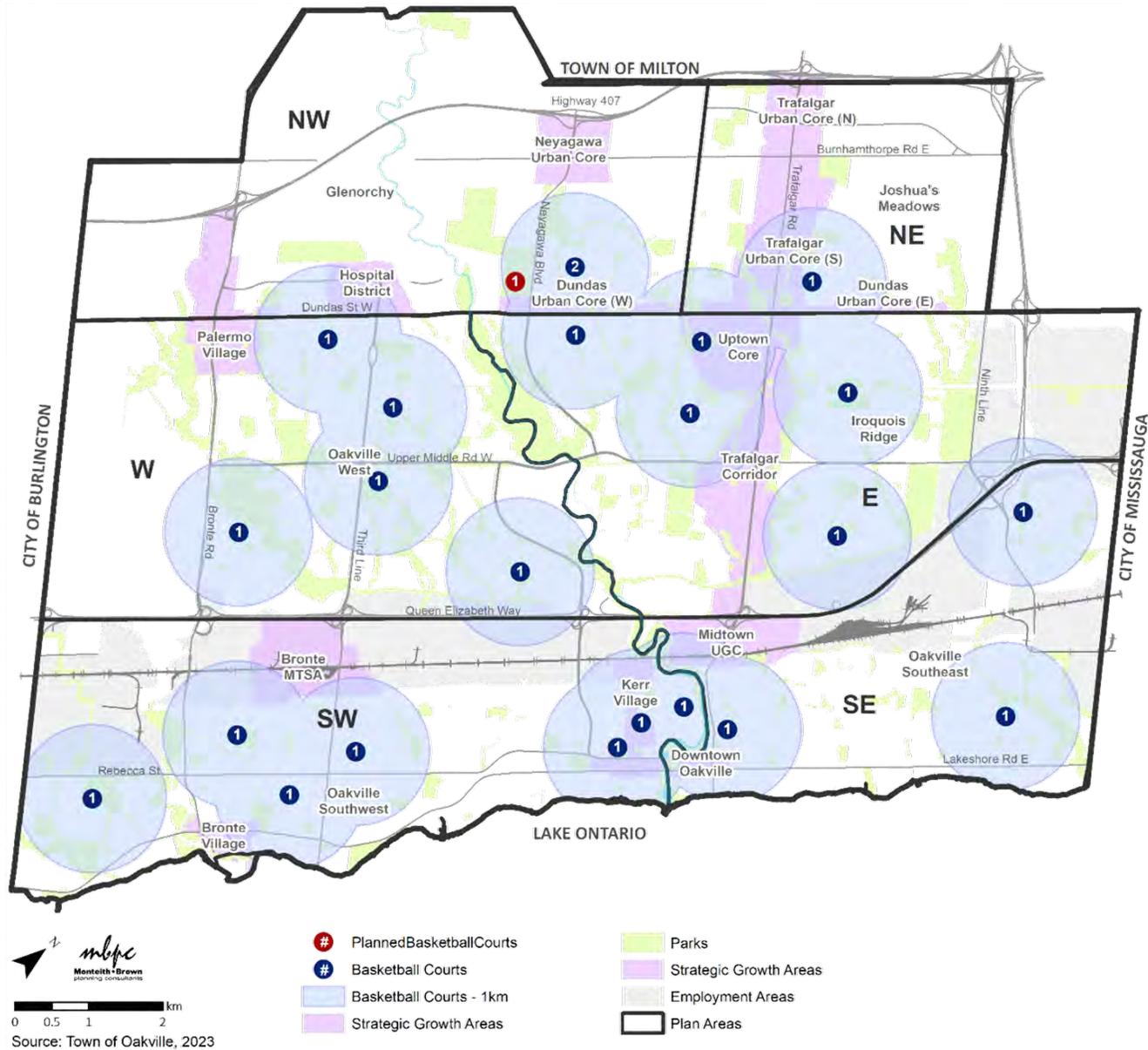
Actions – Pickleball Courts		
<p>58. Target the development of up to 45 additional outdoor pickleball courts to serve population growth across Oakville by 2051. Approaches to provision should be confirmed through the proposed Racquet Sports Strategy, but should be informed by the actions and criteria of this master plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a greater focus on dedicated pickleball-only courts in community parks (generally complexes of 4 to 8 courts); b) equitably distributed opportunities for casual use within neighbourhood parks, including multi-lined courts or the conversion of under-utilized tennis courts; c) appropriate setbacks for courts from adjacent houses; d) joint ventures with third-party clubs (with defined roles and standards for community-based clubs); and e) implementation of a court permitting system for selected courts. 		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	To be determined through future study	Planning target is one outdoor pickleball court per 5,000 to 10,000 residents the recommendation uses one per 5,000 population as a starting point.

6.7 Basketball Courts

The town provides sixteen (16) full outdoor basketball courts (two hoops each), seven (7) half basketball courts (one hoop each), and one (1) ball hockey court for a total of 20.5 courts (counting half courts as 0.5). Some of these courts – such as a new installation in George Savage Park – allow for multiple uses such as ball hockey. Additional basketball hoops may be provided at area schools and within residential areas. Several new municipal courts have

been constructed in recent years as the town seeks to extend its supply throughout all areas of Oakville.

Figure 32: Existing Basketball and Multi-use Courts in Oakville Parks



As an outdoor activity, participation in basketball has increased since the pandemic, and had been on the rise in the years prior. The sport is popular with both boys and girls (including newcomer children and youth) due to its growing international appeal. It is an affordable and accessible sport that can be played by most ages and abilities, both individually and as a team. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of survey respondents indicated support for additional basketball courts in parks.

A per capita target of **one basketball or multi-use court per 12,000 residents (counting half courts as 0.5)** should be used to guide long-term planning. Going forward, a range of court sizes and uses should be considered, with sensitivity to local needs and site context.

Where possible, full-size multi-use courts are desired as they allow for maximum flexibility and capacity. Multi-use courts also provide options for extended play and cost savings, while requiring less park space to accommodate multiple amenities on the same footprint. They are acceptable uses within most park types, including neighbourhood parks. Sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, including consideration of the conversion of underutilized assets.

WHERE ARE NEW COURTS NEEDED?

Youth should have equitable geographic access to outdoor basketball courts. New courts will be required to address gaps and growth, located within appropriate park types. An evaluation of court distribution suggests that there are approximately 17 geographic gaps across Oakville based on 1km catchment areas. General provision targets by plan area include:

- Northeast Oakville – 3 (including Trafalgar Urban Core North and South, etc.)
- Northwest Oakville – 4 (including Neyagawa Urban Core, Hospital District, etc.)
- East Oakville – 3 (including Trafalgar Corridor, etc.)
- West Oakville – 2 (including Palermo Village, etc.)
- Southeast Oakville – 3 (including Midtown Oakville, Dunvegan Park, etc.)
- Southwest Oakville – 2 (including Bronte MTSA, etc.)

There is also growing interest in issuing community permits for rental of basketball courts. The town may consider a pilot project for one or more selected courts on an as-needed basis.

Actions – Basketball Courts

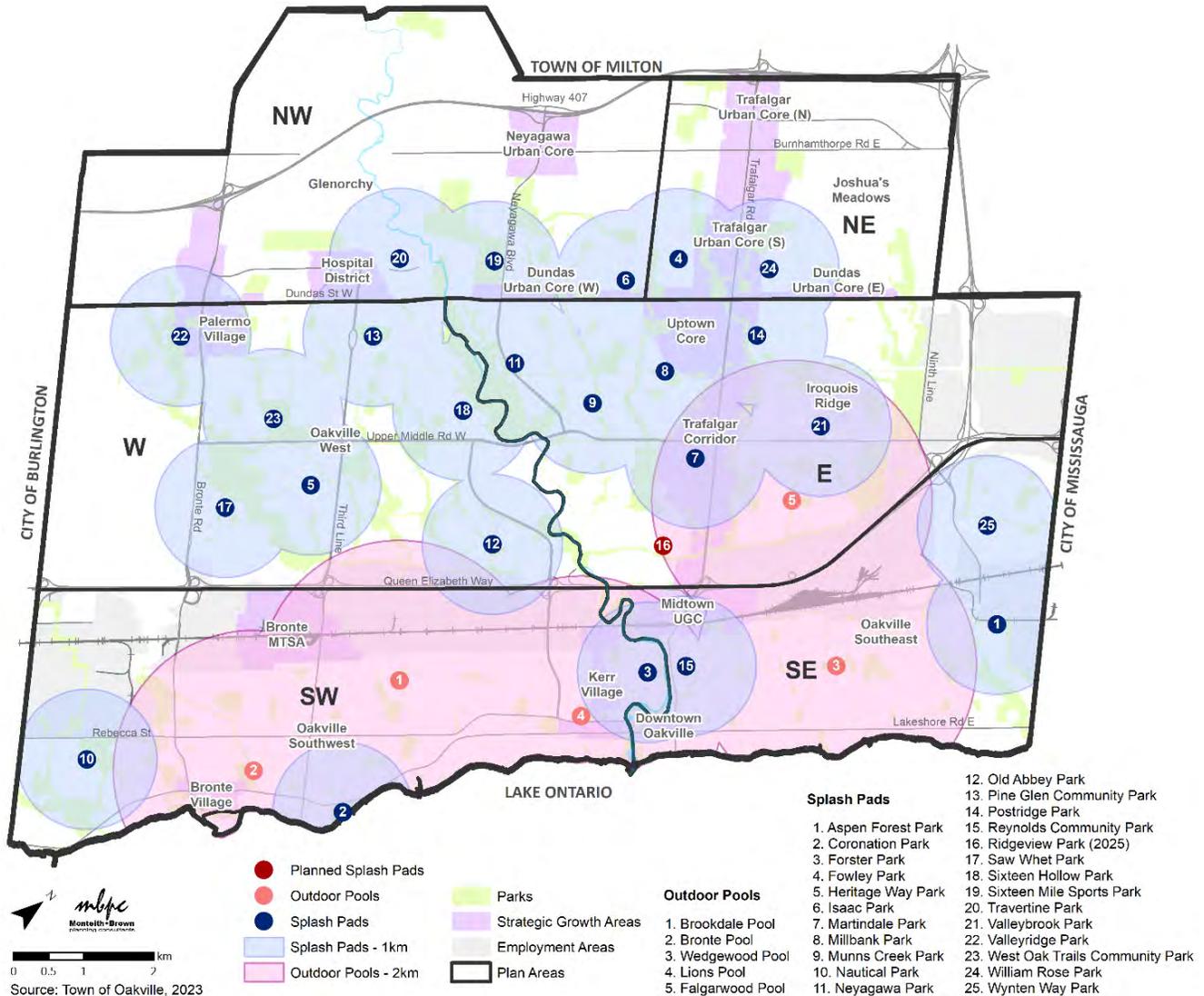
59. Develop a minimum of **17 basketball courts** to improve distribution across Oakville by 2051.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Targets: 7 in Short-term (2024-33) 6 in Medium-term (2034-41) 4 in Longer-term (2042-51)	Planning target is one basketball or multi-use court per 12,000 residents (counting half courts as 0.5), with consideration of a 1-km catchment radius. Where possible, full-size multi-use courts are desired as they allow for maximum flexibility and capacity.

6.8 Splash Pads

Currently there are 24 splash pads with Oakville’s parks, plus another one planned in the short-term. These are unstaffed amenities that spray water from a variety of features activated by the user, with designs and themes that create unique and interactive experiences. They appeal to young children and families looking for a fun and affordable way to cool off during the warmer weather months.

Figure 33: Existing Splash Pads in Oakville Parks



Splash pads respond very well to growing demands for unstructured, spontaneous forms of recreation as they are free, drop-in facilities that can be enjoyed by people (often young children) with no swimming experience. Oakville is currently providing them at a rate of one per 9,375 persons, which is a higher level of provision compared to benchmarked municipalities. However, the town frequently receives community requests for new installations and nearly three-quarters (73%) of survey respondents indicated support for additional splash pads, suggesting that there is public backing for maintaining a strong rate of provision.

Many of the town's splash pads have been built within the past twenty years and are heavily focused in new communities as a result. Geographic distribution is strong in East and West Oakville, but gaps remain in Southeast and Southwest Oakville (although these areas are currently better served by outdoor pools). The town should continue taking steps to address high priority gap areas through park development and redevelopment opportunities. For example, should any outdoor pools be phased out, there may be an opportunity to improve distribution through replacing them with splash pads.

WHERE ARE NEW SPLASH PADS NEEDED?

Splash pads or spray features should continue to be a focus of future development in strategic growth areas in using a **1-kilometre distribution target**. To meet this target, it is estimated that approximately 10 additional splash pads will be required by 2051. This generally works out to an average rate of provision of one splash pad per 12,500 residents.

General targets and possible locations include:

- Northeast Oakville – 4 (NP5, NP10, Joshua Meadows Community Park, etc.)
- Northwest Oakville – 4 (Palermo Park, NP6, NP8, etc.)
- Southeast Oakville – 1 to 2 (Midtown Oakville, etc.)
- Southwest Oakville – 2 to 3 (Bronte MTSA, etc.)

Splash pads are best provided in higher-order parks that serve multiple neighbourhoods and are complementary to other on-site facilities such as playgrounds, washrooms, seating, shade, bike racks, and off-street parking/transit access. Impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood and other park uses must also be considered when selecting sites.

It is also anticipated that the town will be increasingly focused on replacing older splash pads (projects are underway at Postridge Park and Wynten Way Park), which may offer opportunities for enhanced experiences at selected sites.

Actions – Splash Pads

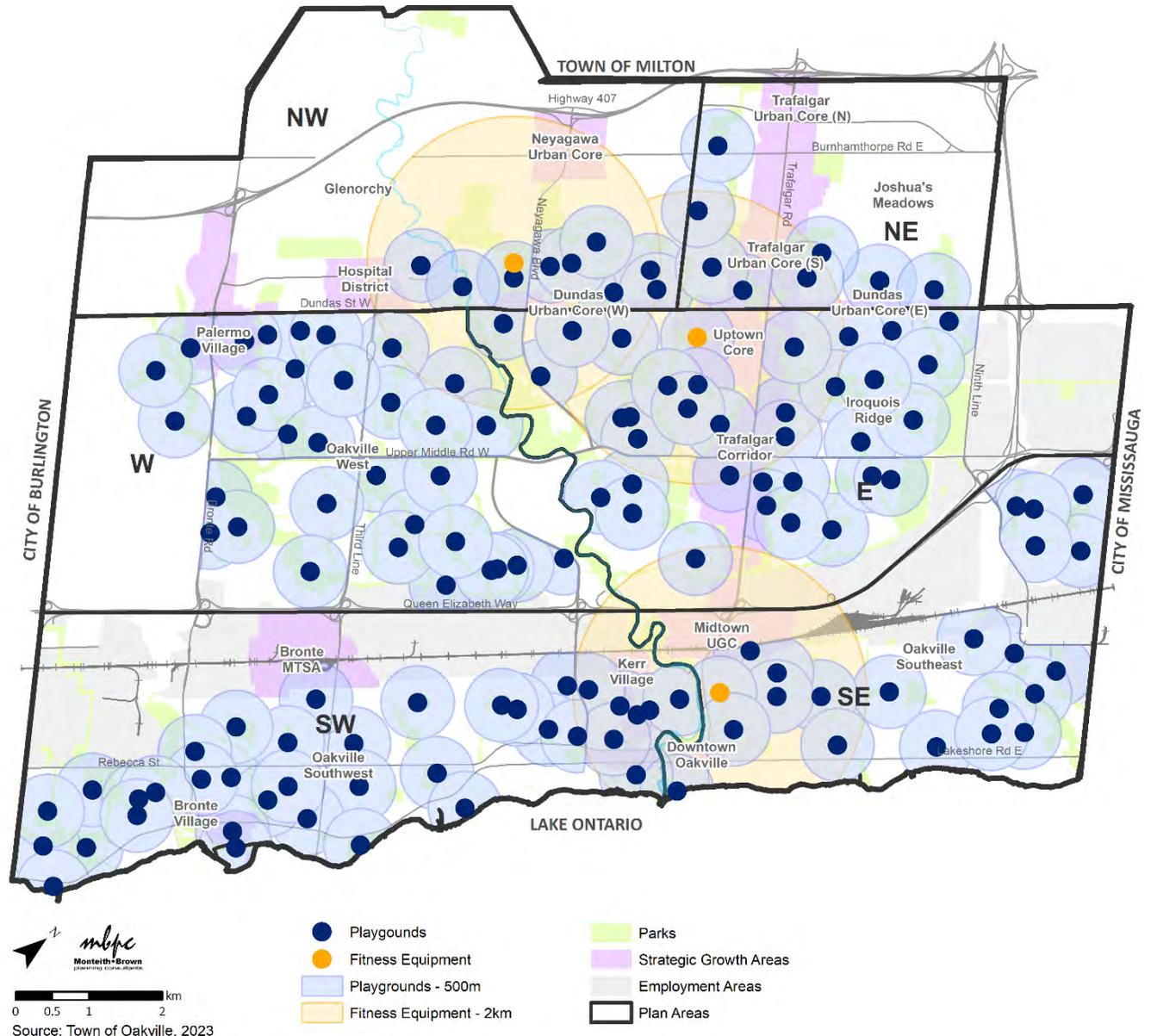
60. Develop approximately **10 splash pads** in growing communities and gap areas (based on a 1-kilometre service area radius guideline) by 2051.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Development will be aligned with opportunities. Targets: 4 in Short-term (2024-33) 4 in Medium-term (2034-41) 2 in Longer-term (2042-51)	A 1-km radius is the planning target for splash pads. Splash pads are ideally located in higher-order parks that have access to playgrounds, washrooms, seating, shade, bike racks, and off-street parking/transit access.

6.9 Playgrounds

Playgrounds are a foundational component of the parks system and are provided in 143 town parks, with many containing multiple play features. These locations provide amenities that benefit childhood development, foster cognitive development and social skills, and encourage physical activity. Traditional playground equipment generally consists of swings, slides, and an array of climbing structures. More recently constructed playgrounds are designed to offer more creative and accessible play experiences.

Figure 34: Existing Playground Locations in Oakville Parks



Several new playgrounds have been installed in recent years, predominantly in North Oakville, with more on the way as new parks are established. Per capita supplies and

geographic distribution are very equal across all plan areas, although the community survey found strong support (76%) for additional playgrounds.

As Oakville intensifies, there will be fewer backyards, increasing the need for accessible outdoor play opportunities such as playgrounds. Planning for new playgrounds considers equitable spatial distribution to ensure that all children and families have convenient access. Oakville's targets range from 400 to 800-metres (5-to-10-minute walk), depending on community structure, but as the town intensifies it is recommended that a standard of one playground within 500-metres of residential areas (without having to cross a major road or physical barrier) be adopted as a town-wide target. This measure can be used for future park planning and responding to public requests.

WHERE ARE NEW PLAYGROUNDS NEEDED?

Based on this measure (500-metre radius), there are no major gaps in geographic distribution within any of the town's existing residential areas. Additional playgrounds will be required to serve North Oakville and some strategic growth areas, where the town may decide to exceed the distribution target in order to ensure an adequate supply to the population (the town is currently providing one playground per 1,630 residents of all ages).

In terms of existing installations, playgrounds are replaced at the end of their lifespan (generally around 20 years). On an annual basis, the town considers the age and condition of each playground to determine priorities for replacement. Approximately 7 playgrounds are replaced annually, although the figure can vary from year to year. The average install date of the town's play equipment was 2008, suggesting that the typical playground in Oakville is 15 years old and has reached 75% of its lifecycle. One-quarter (25%) of the town's play structures were installed 20-years ago and are candidates for replacement. Moving forward, it is recommended that the town enhance its funding levels for playground replacement and also consider "play value" in this assessment as residents are increasingly expecting high-quality playground features that facilitate unique experiences. The town should also establish a service level for natural/adventure playgrounds that make use of the existing landscape and materials (e.g., wood, logs, ropes, stones, boulders, etc.).

Accessibility for persons with disabilities is a key consideration for playground replacement and design (including both the playground and surrounding spaces, such as pathways). New playgrounds are required to incorporate accessibility features, such as sensory and active play components for children and caregivers with various disabilities. The town has established a goal of establishing fully barrier-free playgrounds at all community parks, which is a common approach for many municipalities. An accelerated playground replacement schedule may be necessary to meet this goal as the town strives to offer an appropriate array of accessible spaces in a timely manner.

Actions – Playgrounds

61. Provide playgrounds in growing residential areas based on a minimum provision target of **one playground within 500-metres** of all neighbourhoods. Service levels and design considerations should be established for natural/adventure playgrounds, which can offer an alternative experience to traditional structures.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Development will be aligned with opportunities	A 500-m radius (without crossing a major road or physical barrier) is the planning target for playgrounds.

62. Enhance funding levels to ensure the timely **replacement of playgrounds** and to support the town’s policy of installing **barrier-free playground equipment** at community parks.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Playground replacement is necessary to provide safe, engaging, and accessible opportunities for play. Funding may need to be accelerated to achieve this goal.

6.10 Outdoor Fitness Equipment

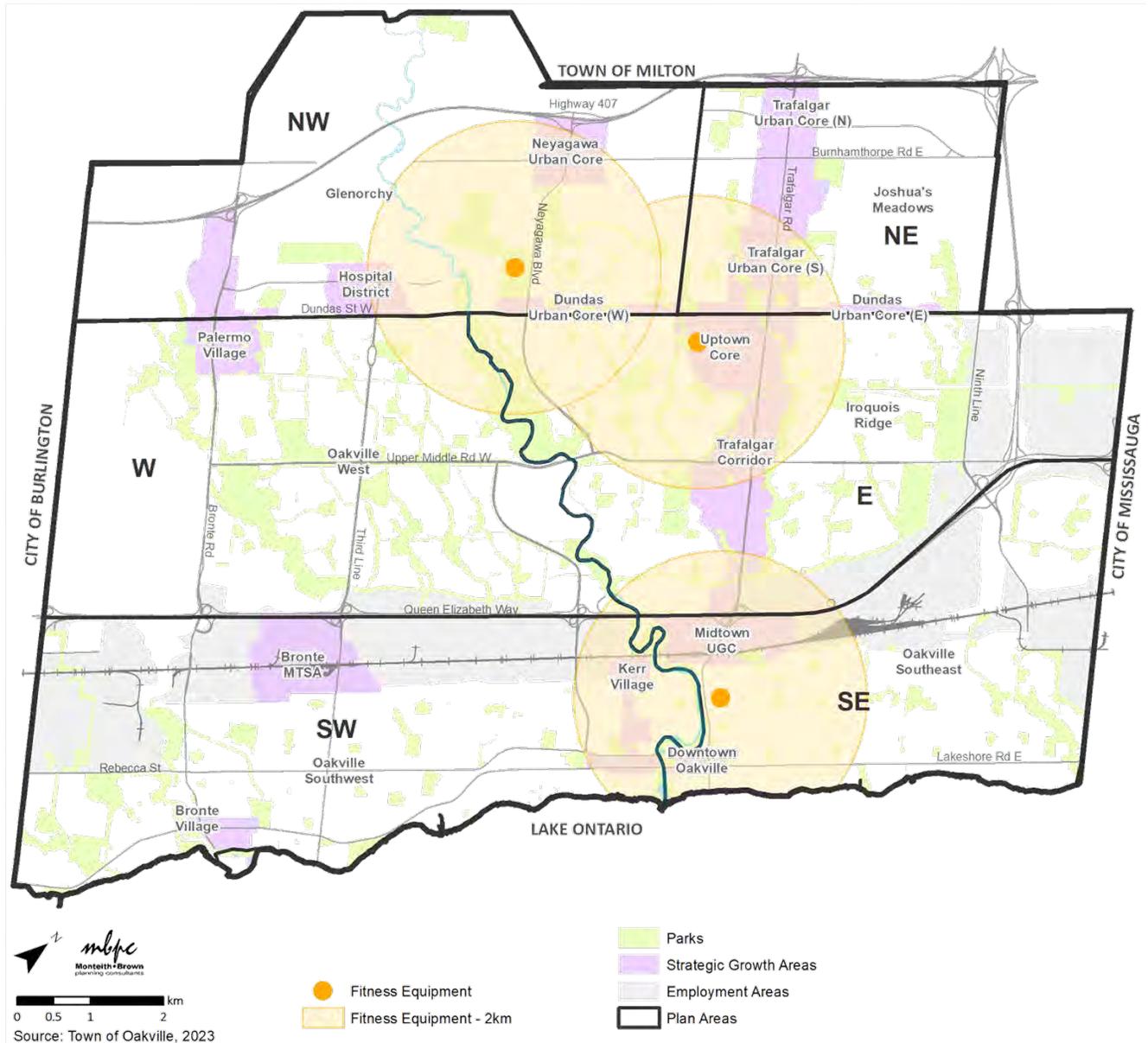
Outdoor fitness stations (also referred to as calisthenics parks) feature low-impact, joint-friendly equipment that use resistance created by a person’s own body weight; the equipment is stationary with no moving parts. Oakville offers three (3) locations within parks, each containing multiple pieces of equipment for free public use.

Popular throughout the United States and Europe, many Canadian municipalities have begun introducing outdoor fitness equipment that allow people to participate in free outdoor activities and engage people in the public realm. During the pandemic, interest in outdoor unstructured recreation activities soared, making outdoor fitness an important option for many.

Outdoor fitness stations can be used by teenagers, adults, and seniors. Experience in other area municipalities suggests that their appeal is strongest with active older adults and seniors (particularly new Canadians), an age group that will increase over the study period. These stations can provide several benefits, from improved balance, speed, and coordination to reduced isolation and associated mood ills like depression.

These installations offer the community affordable opportunities to stay fit and should continue to be provided in locations that offer an improved distribution and a focus on growing communities. The preferred design involves clustering of components in relaxed park settings that are connected to a trail system and close to residential areas, with good access to parking and shade.

Figure 35: Existing Outdoor Fitness Locations in Oakville Parks



Oakville has a lower level of provision of outdoor fitness stations compared to benchmarked municipalities. Moderate interest was expressed for additional locations through the community survey – nearly three out of five (58%) respondents indicated support for additional outdoor fitness opportunities in parks. In particular, the survey found high demand for outdoor fitness equipment in Northeast Oakville, a growing area of the town.

WHERE ARE NEW OUTDOOR FITNESS LOCATIONS NEEDED?

A 2-kilometre distribution-based target is recommended for future planning of outdoor fitness locations, with the town filling gaps where possible recognizing that outdoor fitness stations may not be a fit with every park. This may mean up to **six (6) additional locations by 2051**, such as:

- Northeast Oakville – 1 (future park in the Joshua Meadows area)
- Northwest Oakville – 1 (future park in the Palermo Village area)
- East Oakville – 1 (existing park to be determined)
- West Oakville – 1 (existing park to be determined)
- Southwest Oakville – 1 to 2 (possibly St. John Colborne Recreation Centre plus another park location near Midtown Oakville)

Opportunities should also be sought to establish designated outdoor open space exercise zones that can be used for permitted group fitness activities that are supported by the town's parks by-law.

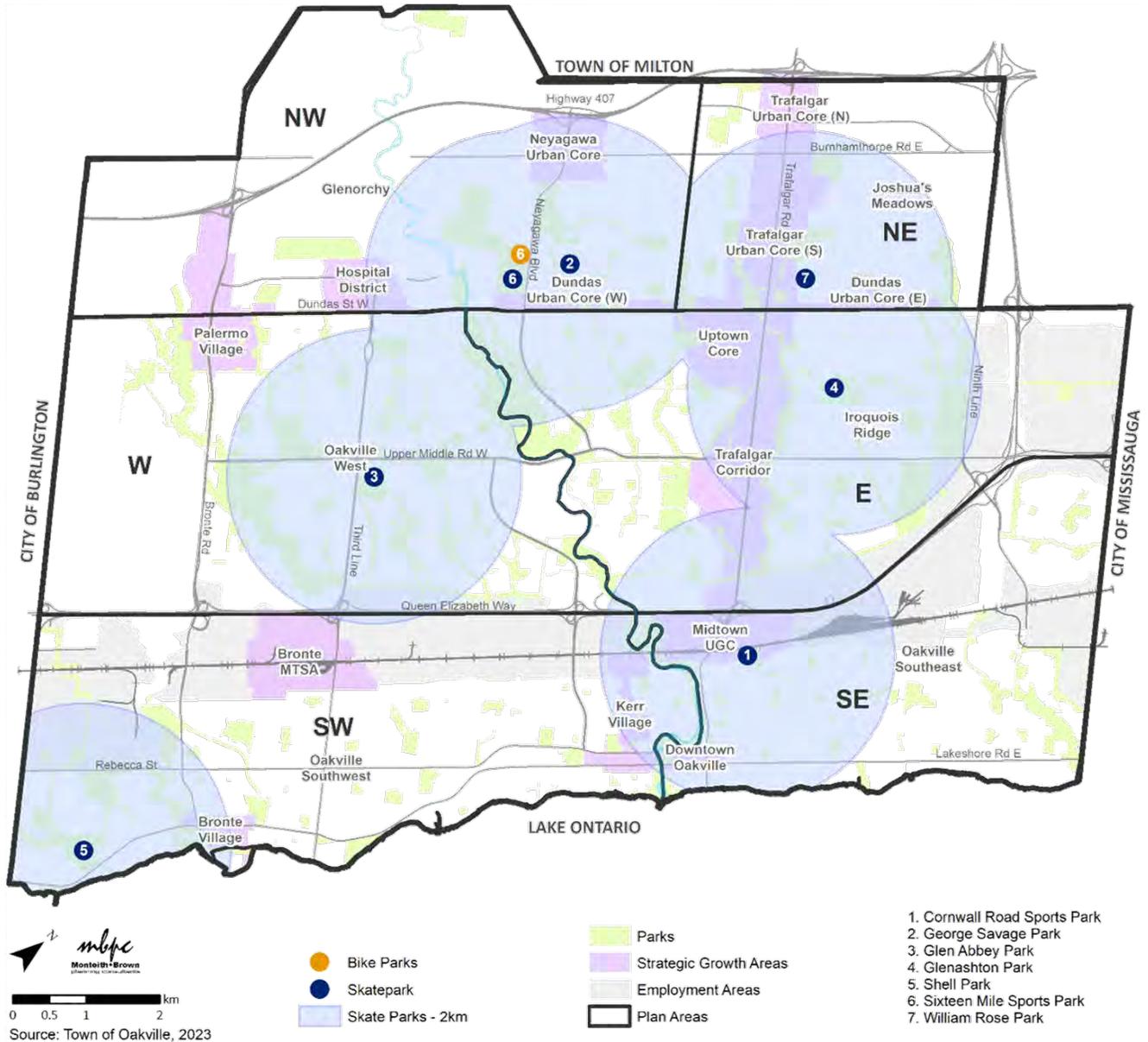
Actions – Outdoor Fitness Equipment		
<p>63. Expand the network of outdoor fitness equipment locations by establishing up to 6 new sites by 2051 within appropriate park types that address geographic gaps in distribution.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Development will be aligned with opportunities	A 2-km radius is the planning target for outdoor fitness locations.
<p>64. Develop guidelines to support the design of designated open space exercise zones where the community can organize fitness classes (yoga, tai chi, etc.).</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	These guidelines should give consideration to appropriate park types, support amenities, and other site characteristics that would support strong usage levels.

6.11 Skateboard (“All Wheels”) and BMX Bike Parks

All Wheels Parks

The town will soon have seven (7) skateboard parks within its network, including the newest installations in Cornwall Road Sports Park and Sixteen Mile Sports Park. Each plan area has at least one skate park, although the size and features of each park vary. With two new parks, Oakville is now providing all wheels parks at a slightly higher rate than the benchmarked municipalities.

Figure 36: Existing All Wheels Parks in Oakville Parks



Skateboard parks are now considered to be a core recreation facility in most municipalities, providing a safe place for human-powered wheeled action sports such as skateboards, scooters, inline skates, and sometimes bikes. They consist of a variety of features (such as rails, ledges, ramps, bowls, etc.) and are often constructed of poured concrete (preferred), but may also use modular equipment. Because they can be used for a wide range of wheeled sports – scootering which is now a dominant use in many locations – the term “all wheels parks” is becoming more common.

Wheeled sports have gained mainstream popularity and increasingly appeal to children and adults (not just youth). These spaces offer opportunities for physical activity, self-expression, and resilience, often appealing to those that do not participate in organized sport.

Equity of access is important as many users travel to all wheels parks by walking, wheeling, or transit. Further, different designs appeal to different rider groups, thus there is a need for diversity within the inventory. In response, Oakville’s network of all wheels parks should provide a variety of opportunities that are equitably distributed throughout the town.

Previous plans recommended a two-tier hierarchy consisting of community-level facilities (10,000 to 15,000 sf in size, located within community parks) and neighbourhood-level facilities (or “skate spots”, each being about 2,000 sf in size and situated in convenient walk-to locations). Supporting amenities such as lighting, water, washrooms, and shade are important considerations and should be provided for community-level parks at minimum. This typology is consistent with those employed in many municipalities and remains appropriate in guiding the town as it expands its inventory.

Wheeled action sports appeal to a broadening age group, though youth are the primary market. **The suggested provision target for all wheels parks is one per 5,000 youth (ages 10-19).** With approximately 33,000 youth (2021 Census), the overall provision of all wheels parks town is sufficient to meet short-term needs. This was reinforced through the findings of the community survey that found moderate to low support for additional skate parks (47%) and bike parks (40%).

WHERE ARE NEW “ALL WHEELS” PARKS NEEDED?

Additional locations will be required to serve growth. The number of Oakville youth is expected to increase over time, but at a slower rate than overall population growth. By 2051, it is estimated that 4 to 5 new locations will be required. Future censuses and population forecasts should be reviewed to guide longer-term planning. The recommended provision model consists of:

- At minimum, 2 community-level all-wheels parks to serve growing communities, such as Northwest Oakville (Joshua Meadows Community Park and West Oakville Sports Park).
- Consideration of neighbourhood-level all-wheels parks in more localized residential areas that have an identified need, as supported by community interest and local research, such as at NP9 in North Oakville and a future site in Southwest Oakville.

Site selection criteria should be established to assist in identifying potential sites and public engagement is essential in any skate park design project. Proactive renewal of existing skate parks will also be required over time.

Bike Parks

The town is installing its first bike park in Sixteen Mile Sports Park. Bike parks (sometimes referred to as “pump tracks”) are specially designed courses used by cyclists to enjoy off-road cycling and build skills. They provide free and safe spaces for users to develop their skills and connect with others within a purpose-built environment, deterring property damage from illegal biking in environmental areas.

Well-designed bike parks offer a diversity of progressive and technically challenging features generally consisting of berms, rollers, ramps, and/or similar features, although it is notable

that different designs appeal to different rider groups (e.g., some riders may use all wheels parks as well). Wheeled action sports appeal to a broadening age group, though youth are the primary market.

Bike parks represent a relatively new level of service for the town and their designs continue to evolve. Dirt tracks are giving way to hardscape pump parks that are more inclusive of different ages or abilities (the bike park at Sixteen Mile Sports Park will be asphalt). These venues are now often combined with all wheels parks. The latest evolution includes “bicycle playgrounds”, which are mini street courses that appeal to younger children on bikes.

WHERE ARE NEW BIKE PARKS NEEDED?

Additional bike parks will be required to offer enhanced accessibility throughout the town. Monitoring of usage and feedback from the Sixteen Mile Sports Park facility will help to determine future strategies. For planning purposes, selecting sites in Northeast Oakville (e.g., Joshua Meadows Community Park) and another location south of Dundas Street would improve access for youth in particular. Selection of bike park locations requires a site-specific analysis and should consider the availability of water, washrooms, shade, etc. (locations within community parks would be most advantageous).

Actions – Skateboard (“All Wheels”) and BMX Bike Parks

- 65.** Reclassify skateboard parks as “all wheels parks” and integrate this term into the town’s signage and promotions. Develop **4 to 5 new all-wheels parks** to address needs in growing areas and geographic gaps in Northeast, Northwest Oakville, and Southwest Oakville.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Development will be aligned with opportunities. Targets: 2 in Short-term (2024-33) 2 in Medium-term (2034-41) 0-1 in Longer-term (2042-51)	Planning target is one “all wheels” park per 5,000 youth (ages 10-19), with consideration of 2-km catchment radius. Potential locations include Joshua Meadows Community Park, NP9, West Oakville Sports Park, etc. Community-serving sites are appropriate in larger community parks, while smaller neighbourhood-level all-wheels parks should be considered in localized gap areas.

- 66.** Monitor usage at the new BMX park at Sixteen Mile Sports Park to inform an assessment of future needs for this facility type. At minimum, seek community park sites for **2 new bike parks** (at least one with an asphalt base) in Northeast Oakville and another location south of Dundas Street.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Targets: 1 in Short-term (2024-33) 1 in Medium-term (2034-41)	Joshua Meadows Community Park is one potential location.

opportunities to skate outdoors (an unstructured, non-organized activity) and this is likely to continue.

However, with more volatile winter weather and temperatures, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain natural rinks in the local climate. Demand for outdoor skating was a popular request in Oakville during the pandemic, but concerns over declining volunteerism are also a threat to their viability.

Some municipalities are turning to artificial rinks, covered pads, and alternative technologies such as synthetic ice sheets (no water or electricity needed). Different designs have also proven popular, including skating trails and loops. The town's second refrigerated rink (Wallace Park) will help to address some of these growing needs across an extended season.

WHERE ARE NEW RINKS NEEDED?

For Oakville, geographic equity of skating opportunities is an important consideration in future planning. With soon-to-be two artificial rinks in Southeast and Southwest Oakville, demand will build in the north. Locations in the Northeast and Northwest should be considered:

- 1) **Northeast Oakville:** A covered refrigerated pad (with a roof and open sides) should be considered in proximity to the Trafalgar Urban Core and Uptown Core areas. When they are not being used for winter skating, these rinks have the potential to serve other recreational purposes during the warmer months, such as sport courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, pickleball, ball hockey, etc.). Furthermore, covering an artificial rink would provide for an extended season (60+ days per year, depending on weather and temperature variation) and improved ice conditions (and shade in the summer). Such a site requires access public transit, nearby parking, and washrooms, and may also benefit from proximity to other civic and community spaces.
- 2) **Northwest Oakville:** A refrigerated skating trail may be considered for the Fogolar's property that was recently acquired by the town, pending a design and business planning process for the site. Skating trails offer opportunities for unstructured skating activities, often in natural settings. They can serve as community destinations offering unique experiences to residents and visitors. Like artificial rinks, they require access to support buildings for comfort amenities and mechanical systems). During the warmer months, they can be used as pathways or water features.

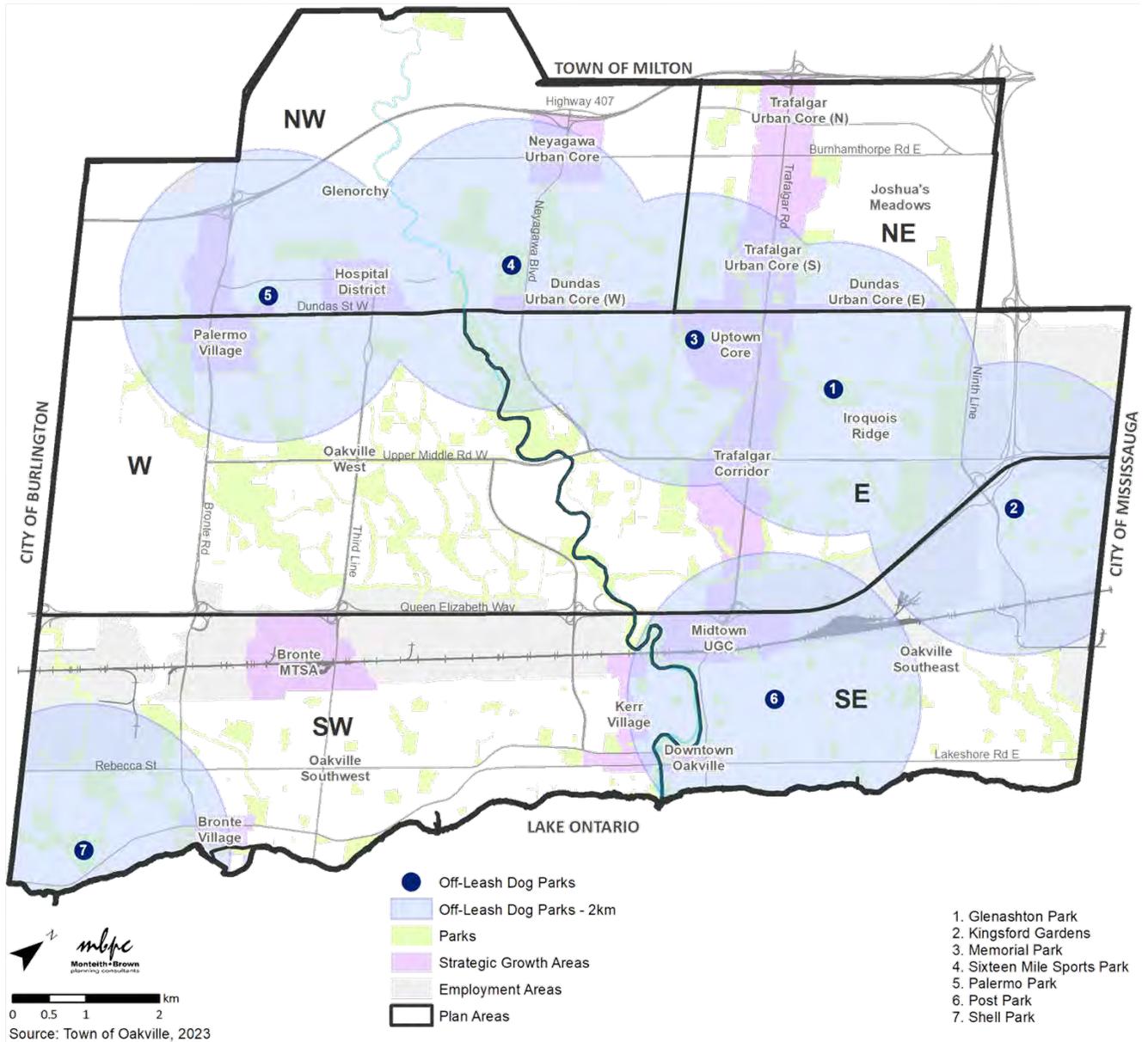
Support of the volunteer-based neighbourhood rink program should also be continued as long as it remains viable. Not all parks are candidates for natural rinks; access to water, lighting, and support buildings may be necessary, with consideration of impacts on adjacent sites.

Actions – Outdoor Skating Rinks		
<p>67. Develop a covered and refrigerated outdoor rink in Northeast Oakville (proximate to the Trafalgar Urban Core and Uptown Core areas) that can also serve other recreational purposes (e.g., basketball, pickleball, ball hockey, etc.) during the warmer months.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Medium-term (2034-41)	n/a
<p>68. Consider the development of a refrigerated skating trail in Northwest Oakville, possibly at the Fogolar’s property (pending a design and business planning process for the site).</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Dependent upon park revitalization strategy.	n/a
<p>69. Continue to facilitate the provision of natural outdoor skating rinks in cooperation with volunteer associations to provide affordable and accessible neighbourhood-based opportunities.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

6.13 Leash-free Dog Areas

The town currently provides seven (7) leash-free dog parks, which represents a higher level of provision than the benchmarked communities. All of Oakville’s leash-free dog parks are fully fenced areas that are self-funded by dog walking groups. These sites provide pet owners with an opportunity to legally exercise and socialize their dogs off-leash in a controlled area. Off-leash areas are increasingly being provided by urban municipalities as one approach to reduce conflict within shared park spaces, as well as to offer a social opportunity for responsible dog owners.

Figure 38: Existing Leash-Free Dog Areas in Oakville Parks



The demand for off-leash areas is expected to continue or even rise in the future due to a recent increase in pet ownership during the pandemic and greater residential densities that are reducing lot sizes, thereby increasing the reliance upon public space for exercising and toileting dogs. Space for dogs is a growing concern in areas of intensification across the GTA. More than one-half (52%) of survey respondents indicated support for additional off-leash dog parks. 37% of respondents reported dog walking as a common activity, suggesting that more than one-third of Oakville households own a dog.

The town's off-leash areas are spread throughout the town generally at intervals of 2 to 3-kilometres to provide convenient access to residents, which is necessary as many users visit off-leash parks multiple times a week, often throughout the year. More off-leash areas are located in Oakville's newer communities as this is a relatively new level of service that was not contemplated in parks decades ago.

WHERE ARE NEW LEASH-FREE DOG AREAS NEEDED?

There are, however, several gaps in distribution based on a 2-km catchment radius, including West Oakville (1-2 sites), Southwest Oakville (1 site), and Northeast Oakville (1 site, longer-term). Given the premium placed on parkland in these communities, sites for new off-leash dog parks should be sought on under-utilized lands, including remnant park spaces, naturalized lands (excluding sensitive habitats), surplus municipal lands, hydro corridors (approval required), and other partnered or alternate spaces. Establishing off-leash parks in mature communities can be difficult due to concerns of conflicting uses, nuisance, and perceptions of safety. New sites should only be advanced in cases where the town's location criteria can be met and in partnership with sponsoring organizations.

As the town grows and sees more higher density residential development, leash free areas serving these areas may require different approaches due to competing interests for parkland. Condominium developers should be encouraged to provide pet-friendly spaces to support their residents. The City of Toronto's recently published Pet Friendly Design Guidelines and Best Practices for New Multi-use Buildings may be a helpful reference in this regard.

Actions – Leash-Free Dog Areas

- 70.** Continue to seek an equitable balance of **leash-free dog areas** across the town, in response to community need and only in cases where location criteria can be met.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	Targets: 1-2 in Short-term (2024-33) 1-2 in Medium-term (2034-41) 1 in Longer-term (2042-51)	A 2-km radius is the planning target for leash-free dog areas. Evaluate opportunities to establish leash-free areas in West Oakville (1-2 sites), Southwest Oakville, and Northeast Oakville (longer-term), with a focus on under-utilized lands such as remnant park spaces and other sites in public ownership (e.g., hydro corridors).

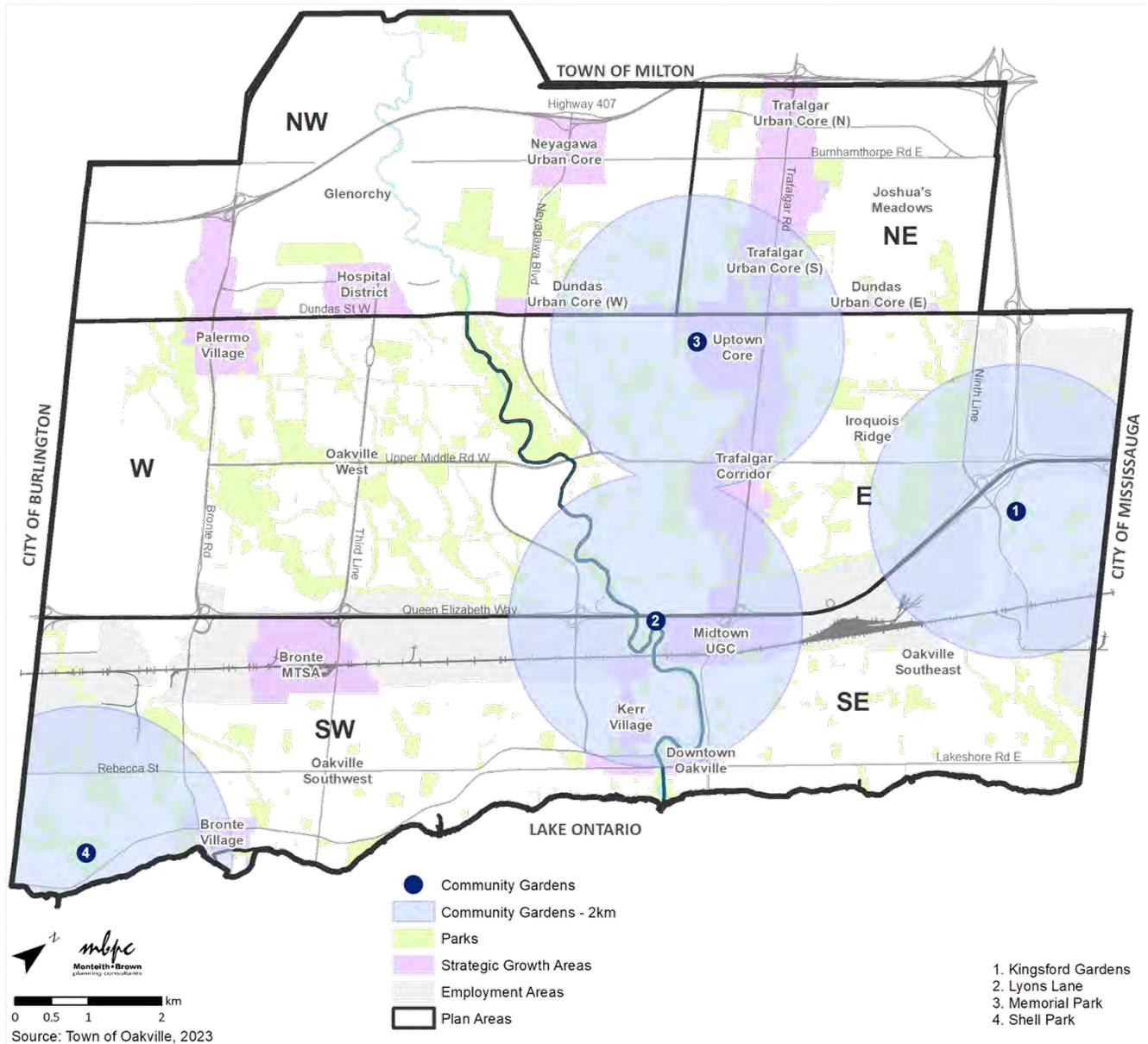
- 71.** Update the **leash-free dog area policy** to address the dynamics of providing, designing, and maintaining leash free dog areas in higher density neighbourhoods.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	This updated approach should recognize the shared responsibility of the development community in responding to the needs of pet owners and their pets.

6.14 Community Gardens

The town currently provides community garden plots at four (4) park locations in Oakville for a total of 219 plots (an average of 55 plots per site). Community gardens are allotment-style garden plots – sometimes on municipal lands – that are leased to residents for the purpose of growing seasonal plants for personal consumption.

Figure 39: Existing Community Gardens in Oakville Parks



Community gardens enhance food sustainability and affordability, offering improved food security and healthy food options for residents. They also offer educational and stewardship opportunities and bring people together. One location (Memorial Park) offers raised garden beds and accessible designs to accommodate persons with disabilities. Gardens can also be used as a teaching opportunity for those learning how to grow their own food.

With a growing, aging, and diverse population, demand for community gardens is rising. Smaller residential lots and more multi-storey buildings are also leading to fewer opportunities for backyard gardens, creating greater demand – the wait time to get a plot in a town park is currently estimated at three to four years. The survey found considerable support for community gardens, with more than two-thirds (71%) of survey respondents indicated support for additional community food gardens, one of the highest-ranking park amenity options.

Expansion of the community garden program is recommended. While some community gardens have traditionally been established on under-utilized park spaces or hydro corridors, they are increasingly being integrated into more urban park types in response to growing demand. Additional sites in proximity to areas of intensification (e.g., Midtown Core, Trafalgar Corridor, etc.) will be required; Reservoir Park may be one option.

Different municipalities use various approaches in administering a community garden program based on considerations around management, access, cost, site suitability, partnerships, etc. A policy or procedure should be established to guide the town’s role in providing and managing community gardens and orchards, with options for assigning their administration to a third-party as the program grows. Consideration should be given to suitable site dimensions and characteristics such as access to parking, water, fencing, shade, and accessible features.

Actions – Community Gardens		
<p>72. Develop a policy to support the expansion of the town’s community allotment garden program in response to local demand and opportunities. Seek partnerships to extend the reach and impact of the program, with a focus on establishing new sites in proximity to areas of intensification.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

6.15 Lawn Bowling

Lawn bowling is generally played on manicured greens (outdoors) or artificial surfaces/mats (indoors). This Canadian Heritage Sport has historically been popular among seniors, although many clubs have been working to sustain youth programs. The sport is largely provided through volunteer-run clubs and is generally not considered to be a core municipal service in most municipalities. Most lawn bowling clubs host a variety of events, including games, leagues, tournaments, clinics, socials, etc.

There is one lawn bowling green in Oakville. The Oakville Lawn Bowling Club (OLBC) is a recreational and community-based club located on town-owned lands adjacent to the Oakville Club, overlooking Oakville Harbour in Downtown Oakville. Established in 1908, the club offers a range of programs, league, and events during a season that runs from May to October. The green contains 8 rinks and is non-regulation, with no additional ability to expand. The site is also supported by a clubhouse (lounge, kitchen, washrooms, etc.) that

was renovated and expanded in 1991; the lower level provides storage for the adjacent Oakville Club. The clubhouse does not meet barrier-free guidelines and is increasingly in need of renewal.

The OLBC reports a membership of 215 players in 2024, 85% of which are Oakville residents. Most members are seniors, although the club also supports a junior program. The club also hosts seven open tournaments each year, in addition to several club tournaments. The town provides an annual operating grant (approximately \$2,500) to the OLBC to offset operational costs.

As a sport, lawn bowling has a long history in Ontario. The sport was introduced by the British in the 1800s and the Ontario Lawn Bowls Association (OLBA) was formed in 1931 – at the time, there were 91 clubs in the province.³⁷ Many greens are located within municipal parks, which offer opportunities such as shared parking and other infrastructure. Dedicated clubhouse buildings are also common, though most are only used seasonally. However, the sport has seen some facilities closed in recent years (e.g., Toronto, etc.) as clubs have experienced aging and declining membership and have folded as a result.

In 2023, the Ontario Lawn Bowls Association (OLBA) reported nearly 7,300 members across 110 affiliated clubs. This represents an average membership of 66 members per club and one club for every 145,500 Ontarians. Most clubs support one lawn bowling green; however, some have two or possibly more. Of the 110 OLBA sanctioned clubs, 47% (52) are in the GTA/Central Ontario, including 14 in Toronto.

The most recent data suggests that membership with OLBA has been growing and has surpassed pre-pandemic figures, due in part to a recent rebate program for new members. One-quarter (25%) of OLBA members are first-year bowlers, marking the second-largest annual growth in the history of Ontario lawn bowls. Membership retention and growth (including youth programming) are among the key goals of OLBA's strategic plan.³⁸

To help assess viability, according to Bowls Canada, the average maximum member capacity of a Lawn Bowling Green (of six rinks) is around 100 active players. This serves to provide a well-rounded program and sustain the operations of the club through rentals and community outreach. With OLBC reporting 215 members (some of which may be social members, thus not being regular users of the green), this guideline suggests that the existing green is used to its capacity and – should there be latent demand – a lack of facilities would be a deterrent to further growth.

A primary barrier facing most lawn bowling clubs in Ontario is a lack of financial resources. Recognizing the role that many municipalities play in the care of local clubs, Bowls Canada (national governing body) is actively promoting the importance of lawn bowling within local communities, with the aim of securing municipal support to maintain or increase the number of outdoor greens.³⁹

³⁷ www.oshawalawnbowling.ca/history-of-lawn-bowls

³⁸ Ontario Lawn Bowls Association. *Annual General Meeting (AGM)*. April 2024.

³⁹ Bowls Canada. *2023-2026 Strategic Plan*.

Aging and inaccessible facilities have also been a concern for many clubs for some time, most of which do not have the resources to undertake major capital projects on their own as they are predominantly membership-funded. Grants from outside sources (e.g., Ontario Trillium Foundation, seniors’ grants, fundraising, etc.) to support operations and capital improvements are increasingly common, as are requests for municipal funding. From our experience, most municipalities provide only minor or emergency capital assistance, but some communities (e.g., Brampton, Brantford) have assisted in the development of lawn bowling greens in tandem with seniors centres that can benefit from shared services and infrastructure. In these instances, clubhouses dedicated to lawn bowling are no longer the norm, but rather these spaces are integrated within multi-use spaces.

Conditions for club sustainability include (but may not be limited to):

- strong membership figures (at or above 100 members per green) that are steady to growing;
- an active junior program and other initiatives aimed at growing membership;
- a strong and sustainable base of volunteers;
- capable governance, quality leadership, and sustainable funding sources;
- partnerships that help to promote the sport, encourage community connections, and support the financial health of the club; and
- support buildings that are in a state of good repair, barrier-free, and ideally capable of serving broader community needs (non-dedicated use).

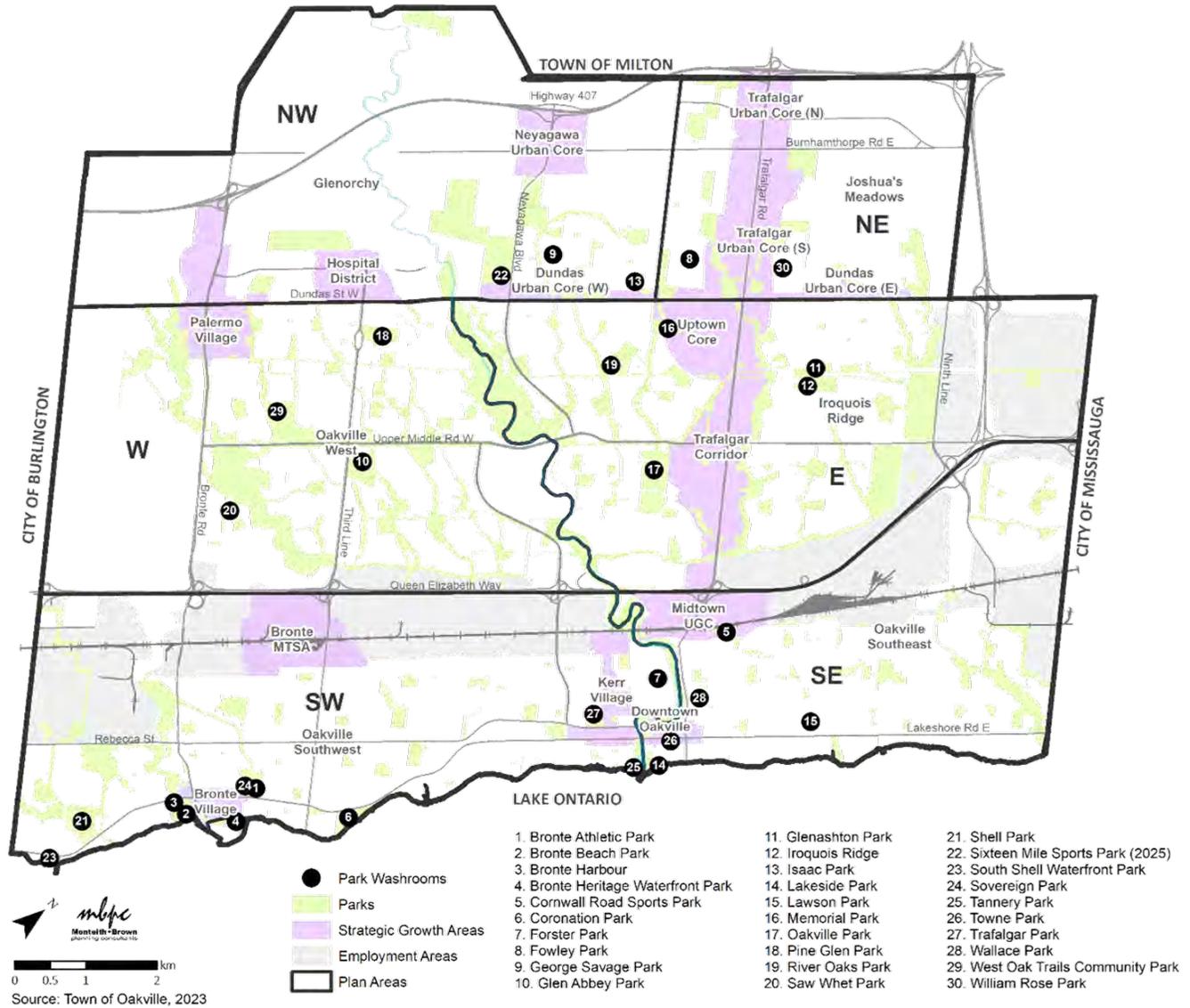
The town should revisit its agreement with the Oakville Lawn Bowling Club using the considerations for third-party program and service providers identified in section 3.7 of this master plan. This will serve to clarify roles, address requirements associated with exclusive use spaces, and allow for monitoring of membership figures and emerging needs. The OLBC is encouraged to continue its efforts to sustain its membership and to seek external funding to support cost-effective operations.

Actions – Lawn Bowling		
73. Revisit the town’s agreement with the Oakville Lawn Bowling Club to clarify roles and responsibilities and allow for monitoring of membership figures.		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

6.16 Park Washrooms

Demand is high for additional public washrooms in parks – 89% of survey respondents indicated support for more, the highest ranking of the listed facility options. However, with over 275 parks, the town cannot feasibly provide these at all locations. Further, the cost of developing washrooms is in the rise due to the need for barrier-free accessibility and a desire for them to be available year-round. At this time, the town’s winter program supports one winterizing project per year, with new washrooms being developed in Sixteen Mile Sports Park and Wallace Park.

Figure 40: Existing Park Washrooms in Oakville Parks



Additional promotion and direction are needed in this area to inform residents of their availability and to guide future park planning and redevelopment projects. The town should adopt a town-wide standard of provision for park washrooms, with an emphasis on larger neighbourhood and/or community parks, particularly those containing splash pads, skate parks, sports fields, and trailheads (i.e., “drive-to” amenities).

Actions – Park Washrooms		
<p>74. Prepare and adopt a town-wide standard of provision for park washrooms, giving consideration to their inclusion in larger neighbourhood and/or community parks. Through the town’s winter program, continue to target the winterization of one park washroom annually.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

6.17 Event Spaces

Community events contribute to Oakville’s vibrancy and livability and are important economic drivers. The town directly supports and delivers a wide range of community and special events (more than 400 annually) within its parks and public spaces, such as fairs, festivals, tournaments, and other formal and informal gatherings. Most of these events are community-based and intended to serve area residents, although some have broader tourism appeal. In recent years, there has been a surge in the number of park events, including multi-cultural events.

Direction on event hosting and related supports is provided through a Special Event Strategy that is currently being updated. Additionally, the town has created a special event service within the Recreation and Culture Department to help support and deliver events. While these structures have contributed greatly to improved internal policies, procedures, and capacity, access to appropriate venues remains a critical issue.

Many of Oakville’s sanctioned events are staged in public spaces not intentionally designed for event hosting and there is a limit to the number of events that can be hosted without being a nuisance to regular users and surrounding neighbourhoods. For this reason, events that had once been hosted in Coronation Park have recently shifted to other locations such as Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park.

Event parks require suitable adjacencies, including sufficient parking and access to transit, as well as electrical connections, water and wastewater disposal connections, public washrooms, shade, etc. Flexibility and increased functionality are critical – when not programmed with animations or community events, these spaces could be adapted for use as casual congregation and community space.

There is a growing case to be made for the development of flexible and multi-purpose outdoor community gathering areas and purpose-built event spaces in Oakville. Such spaces could host short-term and one-off events, as well as longer-term, ongoing, and larger-scale community events and activities (including cultural festivals, open-air markets, and community gatherings).

It is recommended that the town designate multiple existing parks as “event parks” and put into place a plan to install the proper support amenities and features. The greatest opportunity for large-scale purpose-designed event parks will be in North Oakville through new park development (e.g., NP9 – McDuffe, etc.). Based on the requirements identified by staff, it is expected that a minimum of two acres of useable event space would be required, with additional land for parking, which would more than double the land requirement. With the proposed reduction in long-term soccer fields needs, there is a greater potential for unprogrammed space within the North Oakville parks system.

Further, infrastructure projects capable of supporting smaller scale or pop-up events in a variety of locations should be considered. The animation of parks and public spaces helps to make these venues more accessible and enjoyable for residents of all ages, and provides an affordable outlet that connects the community. Towne Square and Bronte Market Square are local examples of such spaces. Strategies and resources are needed to activate these

spaces in a meaningful and effective manner; updates to the Special Event Strategy will provide guidance in this regard.

Actions – Event Parks		
<p>75. Designate a minimum of two parks as “event parks” (with a focus on North Oakville) and establish priorities for capital investment.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Growth-related	1 in Short-term (2024-33) 1 in Medium-term (2034-41)	n/a
<p>76. Explore opportunities to enhance community access to Bronte Provincial Park and other lands managed by public sector agencies for the hosting of major events, trail development, and passive recreation.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>77. Update the Special Event Strategy to provide additional direction for designing and resourcing localized sites for smaller scale or pop-up events.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

6.18 Other Outdoor Facilities

The demands being placed on parks are rising every year. Beyond those facility types discussed above, there may be additional activity-specific amenities (e.g., golf, disc golf, beach volleyball courts, kayak launches, etc.) and features (e.g., benches, pathways, lighting, etc.) required within the municipal parks system. These amenities and features can add variety and value to the parks system when supported by sufficient and sustained demand, effective management and maintenance, and successful partnerships.

Opportunities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with reference to the key principles and actions of this master plan. The framework for evaluating capital proposals from community organizations identified in Section 4.11 may also be applied to outdoor capital amenities.

Actions – Other Outdoor Facilities		
<p>78. Continue to monitor participation and trends in sport activities accommodated through the parks system (including those delivered in partnership with the community) to inform future capital needs and strategies.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

Actions – Other Outdoor Facilities

79. Undertake an infrastructure condition assessment at **Deerfield Golf Course** and review the operating model and potential future uses prior to the expiry of the current lease agreement. Among other options, consideration may be given to the potential of the site to host special events and passive park uses, as well as community-level golf opportunities.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	The agreement with the current golf course operator expires on December 31, 2025.

7. Parkland

This section identifies parkland needs and considerations. Recommendations from related studies and public input can be found in the Stage 1 and 2 Reports.

7.1 Overview

Oakville residents take pride in their parks system that is defined by high-quality spaces across the entirety of the town. Four-fifths (80%) of survey respondents indicated support for additional parkland acquisition in Oakville and Council has taken significant steps to maintain its per capita parkland supply as the town grows. While new parks will be needed to serve growth, the town's older parks and facilities need attention too in order to meet emerging needs. Updating existing parks and adding more accessible and passive amenities (e.g., pathways, seating, shade, open space, etc.) are among the improvements most supported by residents.

But the mechanisms behind parkland dedication, design, and usage are changing as Oakville transitions from suburban to more urban forms. New types of parks will be required in strategic growth areas, supported by different financial arrangements. Examples include POPS, encumbered lands such as strata parks, and smaller, more intensely developed parks and squares. Greater community education is required to understand these changes and how we can address the highest priorities as a collective.

New activities and requirements are also emerging, including for year-round activities and unprogrammed activities. Greater park use has been driven by new routines solidified during the pandemic. This is leading to more intensely used spaces in some areas, as the lack of both public and private open space shrinks with higher density development. Sharing of space will become increasingly important and will be enabled by multi-use and flexible designs.

Parks also intersect with many of today's most pressing challenges – from climate change and environmental conservation to community engagement and personal health and wellbeing.⁴⁰ Over time, the town will increase naturalization initiatives to support Oakville's environmental goals around climate resilience, biodiversity, native planting, and more.

Oakville's parks system is currently comprised of nearly 300 active parkland parcels totalling 565 hectares, or an average of 2.51 hectares per 1,000 residents. Active parkland accommodates most of the town's sports fields and courts, playgrounds, splash pads, and other outdoor facilities.

The town also manages an additional 1,030 hectares of passive and other parkland that is comprised largely of valleylands and woodlots.

⁴⁰ Park People. Canadian City Parks Report. 2023.

Additionally, as of March 2024, the town has secured approximately 179 hectares of active and passive parkland that is not yet publicly-accessible, but that will be developed and/or made available over time to serve growth-related needs.

Table 44: Municipal Park Supplies by Type (as of March 2024)

Park Type	Hectares	Hectares per 1,000 Residents
Active Parkland		
Community Parks	186.0	0.83
Neighbourhood Park	254.6	1.13
Community Link Parks	111.7	0.50
Buffer Blocks (active)	12.6	0.06
Total Active Parkland	564.8	2.51
Passive Parkland		
Major Valleys	251.8	1.12
Minor Valleys	564.1	2.51
Tableland Woodlots	213.5	0.95
Buffer Blocks (passive)	0.7	0.00
Total Passive Parkland	1,030.1	4.58
Undeveloped Parkland		
Active Parkland – Undeveloped	97.4	0.43
Passive Parkland – Undeveloped	81.9	0.36
Total Undeveloped Parkland	179.3	0.80
Total Parkland – Active and Passive	1,594.9	7.09
Total Parkland – Developed and Undeveloped	1,774.2	7.89

Note: Totals exclude Deerfield Golf Course, which is not yet categorized within the parkland classification system.

The following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

- A. **Mitigate Impacts of Reduced Parkland Dedication:** The impacts of Bill 23 will significantly reduce the amount of parkland conveyed through development. The town's Official Plan and Parkland Dedication By-law are being updated to reflect these changes. Parkland targets and definitions should continue to evolve to reflect changes in park use and design. A focus should also be placed on policies and practices that support the "quality" of parkland and public spaces. The town should also continue to be proactive in using its parkland reserve fund and, where possible, using alternative funding sources for securing parkland, including consideration of land-banking. The Fogolar's property is a good example of a space that can be leveraged for casual use, family activities, nature education, special events, and more.
- B. **Activate the Waterfront:** The waterfront is part of Oakville's identity and public access to the water's edge should be encouraged. Special events, activities, and spaces that attract people to waterfront parks and help them feel welcome and connected must continue to be supported and expanded. This can be achieved through strategic investment in destination parks and waterfront trails, including implementation of the Harbour Master Plan.
- C. **Reinvest in Older Parks:** Develop and implement a park revitalization strategy that focuses on re-imagining and re-investing in older parks, particularly those areas of high need such as waterfront parks and parks within or near strategic growth areas. A greater emphasis should be placed on casual, informal, unstructured use amenities (parks as "outdoor living rooms"), supported by trails and active transportation networks, seating areas, interpretation, community gardens, washrooms, shade, natural areas, year-round use, etc.
- D. **Maximize the Impact of Smaller Parks:** The town's future parks system will include more urban squares and urban parks. These spaces are more intensely developed and programmed, costing more to build and operate on a square foot basis. Animating these spaces and securing adequate funding from traditional and non-traditional sources will be keys to their success.
- E. **Enhance Trails and Outdoor Activities:** Trail development and maintenance will continue to be a focus, guided by the Transportation Master Plan (on and off-road networks). Improvement to wayfinding signage and education will be important to help orient new trail users.

7.2 Parks Planning and Future Needs

In 2022 (and again in 2024), Council approved Parks Plan 2031, a foundational document intended to guide the planning and delivery of town parkland. This plan and the parkland dedication by-law were subsequently updated in 2024 to reflect the changes brought about by Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022). This plan serves as a guiding document for parkland dedication and includes policies and recommendations for the dedication, payment, and use of cash-in-lieu. The plan was a requirement under the Planning Act to support the town's continued use of its Parkland Dedication By-law. This master plan builds on the land needs and recommendations identified in the Council-approved Parks Plan 2031.

Measuring parkland per capita is a common and useful tool for monitoring how a municipality is achieving its goals in comparison to both historical standards of supply and future projections. Since 1999, the Town of Oakville has used a provision target of 2.2 hectares of "active parkland" per 1,000 residents when planning new development. This target was never intended to be rigid and there have been significant changes to planning frameworks and land economics in the 25-years since this target was established. Although the town's Parks

Plan 2031 suggests that Oakville may be able to meet this until around 2031, there are many reasons for the town to consider expediting its review of this target.

Among the changes introduced by Bill 23 included rules around maximum parkland dedication caps and eligibility of privately-owned parkland (stratified and encumbered lands) for parkland credit. The town has addressed these matters through an updated Parks Plan 2031 and related by-laws and procedures. However, as noted in Parks Plan 2031: “The recent changes to the Planning Act (Bill 23) implemented by the Province ... ensure that the Town-wide Active Parkland Target will be extremely difficult for the Town to maintain in the long-term.” Depending on densities and the number of persons per unit, the Planning Act could generate as little as 0.2 to 0.5 hectares of parkland per 1000 residents within strategic growth areas.

Furthermore, the research and consultation undertaken for this master plan finds that park use is changing. Demand is growing for casual, unstructured park uses such as trail use, picnicking, events, and nature enjoyment. Conversely, demand for some team sports (such as soccer) has largely stabilized. Residents expressed strong interest in securing additional parkland for the aesthetic, environmental, and general recreational value of the land, not necessarily because the current park system is unable to accommodate the amenities that they are seeking.

This is notable as activity and societal trends have a direct bearing on parkland needs, including its quantity, quality, and location. For example, this master plan has recommended that future needs for sports fields be partially addressed through the installation of lighting that helps to expand capacity without requiring an equivalent expansion to land needs. While a sports field strategy is needed to determine the degree to which this can be achieved, the intent is to accommodate future needs in a manner that uses land more efficiently.

Further, rising demand for passive outdoor recreation activities such as hiking and nature appreciation means that wooded properties and unencumbered natural lands may be able to play a more meaningful role within the parks and recreation system going forward. While parklands must still be in a condition satisfactory to the town and in accordance with the requirements of the town’s Official Plan policies, there may be merit in broadening the definition of “active parkland” to include parcels that meet a wider range of criteria.

The ratio of parkland to population is declining in Oakville, as it is in most urbanized communities in the province. Although the town may be able to maintain the 2.2 ha/1000 parkland target to 2031, this is not a sustainable long-term measure given the dwindling supply of land and current regulatory frameworks. As a result, it is recommended that the town reconsider the definition of “active parkland” (including considerations of accepting unconstrained and publicly-accessible lands within the natural heritage system as parkland) and undertake a review of the 2.2 ha/1000 active parkland target through the land acquisition strategy.

Through this review, the town may consider approaches used in other communities. While per capita measures are in common use – a review of area municipalities shows an average

target of 1.8 ha/1000⁴¹ – these measures have not kept pace with changing legislation and are becoming further disconnected from current land economics and policy directions. Some municipalities are also expanding their methodologies to consider distribution and access measures, as well as including a broader categorization of park types (e.g., Vaughan’s target includes allowances for certain types of undevelopable/passive lands). With increasing intensification, more municipalities are adopting variable (sliding scale) parkland targets within different urban contexts (e.g., Markham, Burlington, Mississauga, etc.) and trying to avoid over-reliance on a single measure. More nuanced (and less prescriptive) measures are also emerging that are focused on equity/access and park quality (e.g., Toronto).

As a general principle, the town should continue its approach of maximizing parkland dedication amounts and supplementing this through acquisition or other arrangements – the recommendations of the Parks Plan 2031 provide direction in this regard. Additional lands are expected to be conveyed by way of development, particularly in North Oakville. Other strategic growth areas (e.g., Uptown Core, Midtown Oakville, etc.) may provide some opportunity for parkland conveyance, though the parcels are likely to be much smaller than those afforded by traditional suburban development models. Going forward, the town will need to use its parkland and resources more efficiently, focusing on expanding the park system and creating new spaces to accommodate emerging and future needs.

The town’s Official Plan establishes a **classification system** for parkland that includes the traditional suburban parks including neighbourhood parks and community parks, as well as parkettes and squares. Additional parkland typologies were introduced through Parks Plan 2031 (and reflected through the Midtown Oakville Secondary Plan), including public commons, urban squares, promenades, and other urban parks (connecting links, pocket parks, sliver parks). Notably, Parks Plan 2031 also recommended consideration of an “eco park” typology to augment the town’s campus of parks concept and assist in meeting its parkland targets. As noted above, it is recommended that the town expand its definition of “active parkland” to include unconstrained and publicly-accessible lands within the natural heritage system. This may include (but not be limited to) lands owned by the province, conservation authorities, or other lands that can be used for trails and the enjoyment of nature.

As supported by the Parks Plan 2031, it is understood that the town has initiated the preparation of a **parkland acquisition strategy** that examines options for meeting parkland needs across strategic growth areas and throughout Oakville. The review of parkland provision targets and definitions should be considered through this strategy.

The following criteria may be used to assess the suitability of potential park sites on a case-by-case basis, building on criteria already established in the town’s Official Plan and parkland dedication procedure.

⁴¹ Current parkland provision targets: Mississauga (1.2ha/1000), Markham (1.2ha/1000), Richmond Hill (1.37ha/1000), Brampton (1.6ha/1000), Vaughan (2.0ha/1000), Hamilton (2.1 ha/1000), Burlington (3.0 ha/1000)

Table 45: Potential Park Site Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Description
Site Conditions	Consider topography (tableland is strongly preferred), parcel configuration (square or rectangular), drainage, and soil conditions (e.g., free of environmental contaminants).
Size	Should meet or exceed minimum standards established for park classification.
Centrality	Proximity to the population to be served, in keeping with the service radius and population targets of the park type.
Land Use Impacts	Compatibility of adjacent land uses; conformity with Official Plan or Secondary Plan (if applicable).
Connectivity	Integration of trail and open space linkages or corridors (where applicable).
Accessibility	Site has adequate frontage on a public road, reasonable access to public transit and/or sidewalks (in urban areas), etc.
Partnerships	Potential joint use with school sites or other municipal assets.
Visibility	Ability to create a local or town-wide focus.
Natural Features	Park site is not encumbered by features of cultural or natural significance.
Added Value	Access to the waterfront, viewpoints, or vistas (where applicable).
Constructability	Active parks should generally not be built in floodplains, stormwater overflow areas, valleylands, easements, encumbered lands, etc.
Services	Active park sites have full municipal services (or the potential for full services, including water, storm sewers, and electrical services; sanitary servicing may be required for some higher-order parks) to the property line.
Availability	Timing of parcel availability should coincide with preferred timing of park development.
Cost	Reasonable land valuation (if applicable); publicly-owned lands offer the greatest potential.

Actions – Parks Planning

80. Review and **update the 2.2 ha/1000 population active parkland target** through the town’s land acquisition strategy, with the goal of establishing an achievable and realistic framework for future parkland acquisition. This review should also consider expanding the definition of “active parkland” to include unconstrained and publicly-accessible lands within the natural heritage system.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-2033)	This may be completed as part of the town’s land acquisition strategy. Additional related directions are identified in the Parks Plan 2031.

Actions – Parks Planning

81. Secure parkland at the maximum applicable rate as permitted by the Planning Act, via the town’s implementing documents (e.g., Livable Oakville, Parks Plan 2031, Parkland Dedication By-law). Explore acquisition and non-acquisition-based options on a case-by-case basis to enhance community accessibility to parkland.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Additional related directions are identified in the Parks Plan 2031.

82. Fully implement Parks Plan 2031, including but not limited to recommendations involving parkland dedication, cash-in-lieu, park typologies and design guidelines, encumbered lands, administration, etc.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-2033)	At the time of writing, some Planning Act regulations for parkland acceptability are not yet in effect.

7.3 Parks and Trails Design

Design Considerations

Access to quality parks is an important aspect of complete communities and allows people to spend more time in their neighbourhoods. While there will continue to be demand for traditional forms of parkland for recreation and sport, public spaces are increasingly being recognized for their contributions toward healthy communities, community greening, urban renewal, placemaking, public art and expression, and more. The town understands that a wide range of public spaces are needed to fill a variety of community roles and has responded to this through a robust parkland classification system and greater diversity in park designs and amenities.

Parks Plan 2031 established the following key principles and general design considerations for parks:

- convenience and coherence;
- context, heritage, and placemaking;
- accessibility;
- safety;
- comfort; and
- sustainability and resilience.

The public consultation program for this master plan found support for many of these principles. It also identified a growing need to incorporate more amenities (e.g., seating, shade, washrooms, pathways, picnic areas, community gardens, etc.) that increase the usability of parks for older adults and residents of different cultural backgrounds. Relatively modest investments can have dramatic improvements on parks and encourage participation and physical activity for everyone, regardless of age, gender, or income. For example,

walking is the most popular activity and looped trails and pathways draw people of all ages into parks – including women and men, children, and older adults – which help to increase a sense of safety and community.

Design Considerations for Parks and Public Spaces

With legislative changes reducing the amount of parkland available to be conveyed through the development process, a focus should be placed on approaches that enhance the quality and resiliency of parkland and public spaces.

Parks Plan 2031 includes a comprehensive set of design guidelines for the parkland system and each park type. These guidelines speak to items such as (but not limited to):

- a) incorporating a blend of active and passive spaces and amenities for people of all ages and backgrounds;
- b) following accessibility legislation (AODA) and guidelines to accommodate persons with disabilities;
- c) applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles for enhanced safety and security;
- d) considering the needs of a diverse and aging population through washrooms and access to potable water, seating, shade (trees, shelters, shade sails, etc.), pathways, picnic areas and pavilions, and bicycle racks (note: some amenities may not be appropriate for all park types);
- e) preserving and emphasizing cultural and heritage environments, including interpretive content;
- f) considering four-season programming and applying “winter city” design principles to encourage usage throughout the year;
- g) promoting designs that encourage sustainable maintenance practices and climate resilience;
- h) incorporating native and drought resistant vegetative features that are biologically robust;
- i) recognizing, consulting with, and considering the needs of Indigenous Peoples in park design and programming;
- j) utilizing materials that are robust, durable, and mindful of future maintenance requirements;
- k) applying consistent signage and information about park contents, accessibility, etc.;
- l) seeking innovative and engaging initiatives that encourage naturalization and environmental stewardship, including opportunities for public education and access;
- m) recognizing the space surrounding stormwater management (SWM) ponds as community assets through the use of perimeter trails and rest areas, where appropriate;
- n) encouraging public art and spaces for cultural expression; and,
- o) promoting active transportation connections and a linked open space system.

Furthermore, the town must be creative with existing spaces and seek new ways of doing things in the face of higher density urban structures. Some **future opportunities** may include (but will not be limited to):

- promoting innovation and excellence in design;
- enhancing or renewing existing parks, public spaces, and streetscapes (e.g., complete streets);
- developing parks with urban qualities (civic parks, squares, etc.) that are built to higher design standards and that integrate multi-functional spaces;
- improving connections (e.g., linear parks) and access to parks and facilities in nearby neighbourhoods;
- making use of unconventional spaces (e.g., streets, cemeteries, greyfield sites, etc.) such as through partnerships, strata parks, shared streets, etc.;
- integrating privately-owned publicly accessible spaces (POPS); and,
- considering other forms of credits through negotiation with developers, such as land swaps or public realm improvements.

Park Revitalization

Residents expect equitable access to high-quality parks and park amenities. New parks are delivered as communities are built, but parks in older areas require reinvestment as well. The town witnessed this through its recent College Park “Campus of Parks” project that supported strategic park enhancements within a defined community. By optimizing the spaces that we maintain, capacity can be created within the parks system to enhance the town’s ability to respond to community needs and growth.

It is recommended that the town undertake a park revitalization strategy to establish a decision-making framework and priorities, with consideration of aging and outdated infrastructure, high needs areas, and coordinated capital works. As high use areas, waterfront parks should receive special emphasis through this study, as well as amenities that promote usage by people of all ages (e.g., barrier-free accessibility, trees, shade, seating, pathways, upgraded play areas, unprogrammed space, etc.). As the demand for park renewal will become greater over time, the allocation of resources should be examined in this light.

Strategic parkland renewal and redevelopment projects should be accompanied by public consultation, park-specific master plans, facility fit diagrams, and business plans to obtain accurate costing associated with any capital works. The timing of these projects will be based on the town’s discretion, and influenced by needs determined through consultation, demand indicators, and the availability of funding.

Waterfront and Harbours

Oakville’s extensive Lake Ontario shoreline includes three harbours: Oakville Harbour, Bronte Outer Harbour, and Bronte Inner Harbour. All locations offer boat slips, public space, and opportunities for the public to access the water. The town has prepared a Harbours Master Plan focused on improving public access, creating better connections to surrounding neighbourhoods, expanding recreational amenities, and identifying priorities for each harbour.

Implementation will take many years but should be made a priority in collaboration with aligned partners (Visit Oakville, Economic Development, business improvement and resident associations, user groups, etc.).

Further, many of Oakville's destination parks are situated on the Lake Ontario shoreline or along Sixteen Mile Creek. Sites such as Coronation Park, Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park, and South Shell Park – to name only a few – offer picturesque locations for picnics, trail use, gatherings, beach access, and casual recreation and reflection. All of these parks experience strong levels of use from residents and visitors alike.

Through the consultation program, residents expressed how important these waterfront spaces are to them and the broader community as they not only bring people together, but play an important role in preserving greenspace and habitat. Waterfront parks received extremely high levels of use during the pandemic and are a key area of focus in the town's Special Events Strategy. Continued investment in the development and maintenance of key waterfront sites (e.g., recreational amenities, trail connections, conservation initiatives, public art, support buildings, wayfinding, etc.) is a public priority.

Environmental Sustainability

Aside from the key recreational and social benefits to residents, Oakville's parks and open spaces also help the town achieve its goals and requirements relating to environmental sustainability, including greenspace preservation, climate change mitigation (flooding, warming, air quality, etc.), urban biodiversity, and environmental stewardship.

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.

The town has both an obligation and an opportunity to be a leader in environmental sustainability. There are many things Oakville can do to become a greener community. While this master plan is not intended to provide detailed direction on environmental management, many ideas were raised through the consultation program, such as the use of interpretive signage and community education, community gardens, solar energy, shade, naturalization projects, green technologies, low impact development approaches, and urban wildlife and invasive species management. The town will continue to support the protection and enhancement of the natural environment through appropriate means, including stewardship initiatives and community partnerships. Many relevant directions and policies relating to these topics are contained in guiding documents such as Council's Strategic Plan and the Climate Emergency Progress Report.

Trail Development

As of 2023, the town maintains approximately 246 kilometres of trails in Oakville. Existing and proposed trail networks are identified through the Livable Oakville Plan, area-specific secondary plans, transportation master plans, and the North Oakville Trails Plan completed in

2013. The active transportation network includes multi-use trails, major trails and minor trails, as well as a network of on-road cycle lanes and bike routes and controlled access to the town's natural heritage system.

Design and development guidelines and opportunities for pedestrian and cycling routes (including recreational trails) are considered through the towns' transportation master plans (currently being updated). However, high-level input around priorities for trail development was solicited through this Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan recognizing the important role that these active transportation corridors play in optimizing the use of Oakville's park sites. Residents have placed a high priority on the expansion of the town's system of trails and pathways – passive parks with open space and trails are amongst the most used public spaces. Additionally, requests were received for improved wayfinding and trail signage, particularly with more users on the trails since the pandemic. A unified trail signage system is one of the recommendations from the town's 2019 Recreational Trail Accessibility Audit and Strategy, which is in the early stages of implementation along with related trail improvements and replacements.

Actions – Parks and Trails Design		
<p>83. Adopt a comprehensive set of park and trail design guidelines that are informed by Parks Plan 2031 and the town's construction standards.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	This is an ongoing initiative being developed under separate cover from this master plan.
<p>84. Maintain a commitment to universal accessibility and safety within the town's parks and trails system and emphasize the provision of amenities such as benches/seating areas, bike racks, and shade in appropriate park types and along trails.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>85. Prepare a park revitalization strategy to establish a decision-making framework and priorities (i.e., key park sites requiring reinvestment, with an emphasis on waterfront parks, barrier-free accessibility, and year-round activities).</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
<p>86. Prepare a condition audit and opportunities plan for the Fogolar's property to create a baseline understanding of current conditions and potential options for management and programming of the site as an "Eco Park".</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

Actions – Parks and Trails Design

87. Prioritize implementation of the **Harbours Master Plan** and strategic investments in **waterfront parks and trails**.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	Costs to be determined through site-specific design initiatives.

88. Continue to encourage community stakeholders and partners to invest in “**value-added**” improvements within the parks system.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Lower	Ongoing (best practice)	Projects must support municipal priorities and conform to town standards.

89. Continue to support initiatives that **strengthen residents’ connections with their neighbourhoods and nature**. This includes but is not limited to public awareness, neighbourhood-driven activities and decision-making, and opportunities to animate and enjoy Oakville’s outdoor spaces and places.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
Medium	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

90. Advance strategies to enhance **environmental sustainability** in parks, including initiatives that support climate action such as greenspace preservation, climate change mitigation, urban biodiversity, and stewardship.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

91. Continue to improve, upgrade, and expand the **off-road recreational trails system** through implementation of the 2019 Recreational Trail Accessibility Audit and Strategy and Transportation Master Plan update.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

92. 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.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

7.4 North Oakville Parks Distribution Plan

Since 2009, parkland development in North Oakville has been guided by a Parks Facility Distribution Plan and informed by subsequent system-wide master plan updates in 2011 and 2017. As community needs have evolved, so too has the type and number of park amenities proposed in North Oakville. In conjunction with the updating of the outdoor recreation facility needs, park facility allocations have also been updated for North Oakville. A general trend has been noted through a reduction in lands allocated for soccer fields in favour of amenities such as cricket fields, event space, open space areas, off-street parking lots, etc.

The following table summarizes the planned major facility distribution for the North Oakville based on the actions identified in this master plan. The assignment of park facilities to specific parks is preliminary only and should be confirmed through future facility fit and needs studies prior to detailed design. In some cases, additional park sites may have the potential to accommodate more park facilities, and other park sites might emerge as options for facility development (e.g., Lower Baseline Park, etc.).

Table 46: Summary of North Oakville Outdoor Facility Needs (2024)

Facility Type	Existing Supply	Future Needs	Planned Projects	Outstanding Needs	Possible Strategies and Locations to address Outstanding Needs	2051 Target Supply
Soccer Fields and Multi-use Fields (football, etc.)	12*	Up to 33 fields*, including 1 lit football field (town-wide need)	18 soccer fields*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WOSP (4 major lit, including 2 turf) • NPN (4 major lit, including 2 turf) 8.5 multi-use fields*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WOSP (2 lit, including one turf) • NP5 • NP6 • NP7 • NP10 	Up to 6.5*	Options to be determined through Sports Field Strategy, but may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding lights and converting grass to artificial turf on selected fields south of Dundas St. • Shared use of new or improved school fields • Replanning of some planned event sites • Consideration of rugby • Field development on new properties (e.g., Lower Baseline, Ninth Line, etc.) 	45*
Cricket	1	1 to 2 (town-wide need)	1 cricket field: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WOSP (1) 	Up to 1	Future community park site (e.g., Lower Baseline, Ninth Line, etc.).	2 to 3
Ball Diamonds	6*	Up to 22.5 diamonds* (town-wide need)	17 diamonds*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palermo Park (1 lit) • WOSP (4 major lit softball) • JMCP (2-3 major lit softball, 1 major lit hardball) • NP8 (1 major softball) 	Up to 5.5*	Options to be determined through Sports Field Strategy, but may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding lights and improving existing fields south of Dundas St. • Fitting in one more diamond at JMCP • Field development on new properties (e.g., Lower Baseline, Ninth Line, etc.) • Consideration of accommodating baseball on artificial turf multi-use field(s) 	28.5*
Informal Play Spaces/ Event Spaces	0	2	Up to 4 spaces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NP6 • NP7 (tbd) • NP9 • NP10 (tbd) 	0	Additional event spaces are not a priority at this time. Note: there may be the potential to replan for some planned event sites as soccer fields.	2

Facility Type	Existing Supply	Future Needs	Planned Projects	Outstanding Needs	Possible Strategies and Locations to address Outstanding Needs	2051 Target Supply
Tennis Courts	6	Up to 25 courts	21 courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMSP (4) • NP6 (2) • NP7 (3) • NP9 (2) • NP10 (2) • NPN (6, club) • JMCP (2) 	Up to 4	Consideration may be given to additional court development within community parks. Additional options may be determined through the Racquet Sports Strategy, such as expansion of existing sites and court conversion (mainly south of Dundas St.).	31
Pickleball Courts	9	6 to 21 courts (town-wide need), to be confirmed through future study	20 courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMSP (10) • NP6 (2) • NP7 (2) • NP9 (2) • JMCP (4) 	Up to 1	Consideration may be given to court development within community parks and appropriate neighbourhood parks. Additional options may be determined through the Racquet Sports Strategy, such as expansion of existing sites and court conversion (mainly south of Dundas St.).	tbd (15-30)
Basketball Courts	2.5	7	3 courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMSP – 2 half, 2 full • NP6 – half/full tbd • NP9 – half/full tbd • NP10 – half/full tbd 	4	Consideration may be given to court development within appropriate community parks (e.g., WOSP, NPN, JMCP, Fogolar's, etc.).	9.5
Splash Pads	5	8	6 splash pads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NP5 • NP6 • NP8 • NP10 • JMCP • Palermo Park 	2	Sites to be determined through park planning process (e.g., Fogolar's) and consideration of distribution (1-km radius).	13
Bike Parks	1	1	1 bike park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JMCP 	0	Additional bike parks are not a priority at this time.	2

Facility Type	Existing Supply	Future Needs	Planned Projects	Outstanding Needs	Possible Strategies and Locations to address Outstanding Needs	2051 Target Supply
All Wheels Parks	3	3	3 all wheels parks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WOSP (community) • JMCP (community) • NP9 (neighbourhood) 	0	Additional all wheels parks are not a priority at this time.	6
Outdoor Fitness	1	2	None	2	Sites to be determined within the Joshua Meadows and Palermo areas.	3
Outdoor Skating (refrigerated)	0	2	None	2	Sites to be determined for a refrigerated covered rink in Northeast (possibly at JMCP) and a skating trail in Northwest (possibly at Fogolar's).	2
Dog Parks	2	1	None	1	Site to be determined in Northeast, plus an additional location for the replacement of the Palermo dog park.	3

Note: Nothing in this table is intended to restrict the consideration of other recreation and park facilities (e.g., community gardens, etc.) within appropriate park types.

* Unlit equivalents

JMCP = Joshua Meadows Community Park

NPN = North Park North

SMSP = Sixteen Mile Sports Park

WOSP = West Oakville Sports Park

A map showing existing and planned parks in North Oakville and the proposed facility allocations for planned and future parks is shown on the following page.

Figure 41: North Oakville Parks Facilities Distribution Plan (2024)



Parks		Status (2024)	Park Size (ha)	Rectangular Fields	Informal Play Field/Event Spaces	Ball Diamonds	Cricket	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Basketball Courts	Splash Pads	All Wheels Parks	Bike Parks	Outdoor Fitness	Outdoor Skating	Dog Parks	Other	
Neighbourhood Parks	NP5 (Wheat Boom)	Future	4.44	1 major multi-use						tbd	1							
	NP6	Planned	4.40	1 major multi-use	1			2	2	1 half/full	1							
	NP7	Future	4.34	1 major multi-use	tbd			3	2									
	NP8	Future	4.42				1 major SB				1							
	NP9 (McDuffe)	Planned	4.26		1			2	2	1 half/full		1 neigh						
	NP10	Future	4.14	1 major multi-use	tbd			2		1 half/full	1							
Community Parks	North Park North	Future	15.34	4 major soccer (2 lit, 2 unlit)				6 (club)		tbd								
	Sixteen Mile Sports Park	Partially Complete	33.47	4 major soccer (3 lit, 1 lit turf)			1	4	10	2 half, 2 full	1	1 comm	1	1		1	beach volleyball (4)	
	Joshua Meadows Community Park	Future	10.18				2-3 major SB, 1 major HB (lit)	2	4	tbd	1	1 comm	1	tbd	tbd			
	West Oakville Sports Park	Planned	31.65	4 major lit soccer (2 turf, 2 grass), 2 lit multi-use (1 turf, 1 grass)			4 major SB (lit)	1			tbd		1 comm					
	Palermo Park	Planned	7.46				3 major SB (lit)				1						1 (may be removed)	
Other Parks: Lower Baseline, Fogolar's, Ninth Line (south of Dundas)		Future	-	potential for multiple sports fields in response to demonstrated needs							tbd	tbd			tbd	tbd		

Notes: All proposed amenities are subject to site fit and concept plan analysis, including those identified as "tbd". Fields and courts may be replanned for alternate activities based on demand. Playgrounds proposed for all park sites. Source: Town of Oakville, 2017 & 2023, Neighbourhood Parks based off of North Oakville Lot Fabric provided in CAD format from: (2017 02(Feb) 17 - PARK - North Oakville.dwg)

8. Plan Implementation

Activation of this master plan is critical to its success. This requires coordinated efforts and a commitment from Council, staff, stakeholders, and the public. A variety of funding sources and approaches will be needed to implement the plan. This section provides guidance on the master plan's implementation and high-level financial considerations.

The following **objectives** have emerged from the research and consultation phases:

- A. **Ensure Financial Sustainability:** Additional work is needed to create a sustainable funding model that includes consideration of growth and non-growth-related funding sources, including government transfers, donors, etc.
- B. **Define Priorities:** The town requires a decision-making framework that outlines the process for evaluating and responding to special requests received from the community (e.g., rugby, saunas, etc.).

8.1 Priority Setting

All of the projects recommended in this plan have been identified through a comprehensive needs assessment and can be supported on their own merits, but limited financial resources require that capital projects be prioritized in order to provide the greatest degree of public benefit.

The Finance and Asset Management Departments are responsible for facilitating the development of the capital and operating budgets at the town. This involves facilitating discussions on the selection of proposed capital investment projects over the long-term planning period. The town's Asset Management Strategy⁴² (AMS) outlines the criteria used to assess the different types of capital projects based on associated drivers and relative weightings which are used to guide the prioritization discussions. This framework categorizes project needs into four driver categories: health and safety; maintaining existing service levels; sustainability (environmental and financial); and growth and service enhancements. The AMS project prioritization framework is used in conjunction with the asset risk priority matrix which considers both the likelihood of asset failure and the consequences of failure. This project priority framework is the corporate-wide tool that is used for long-term capital planning as part of the overall budget process.

The following criteria may also be considered by the Community Services Commission to supplement the AMS prioritization framework in order to guide capital decisions, maximize public benefit, and prioritize the needs identified in this plan. As appropriate, the existing AMS framework may be amended to consider other factors such as social impact and alignment with Council priorities and master plans.

⁴² <https://www.oakville.ca/getmedia/2fe77151-83b6-4954-abc9-fdadb6d4d95e/town-hall-finance-asset-management-strategy.pdf>

Table 47: Examples of Prioritization Criteria to support Evidence-based Decision-making

Category	Criteria
Risk and Liability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety and legislative compliance
Quality Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifecycle requirements - Barrier-free accessibility upgrades - Functionality improvements, adaptability (multi-use) - Aesthetic improvements - Ease of implementation
Demonstrated Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing gap in service (alignment with provision targets) - Anticipated level of use (population, growth) - Emerging demand (waitlists) - Consistent with trends and leading practices - Public support - Core service, existence of alternate providers
Social Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity and inclusion (service to priority populations) - Broad community benefits (scale of impact) - Land use compatibility
Financial Viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial improvement, efficiency - Full life cycle costing - Cost of implementation, efficient use of resources - Leverage outside funding, cost-sharing potential
Environmental Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy efficiency - Contribution toward greenhouse gas and carbon neutral goals - Resiliency from future weather events and climate change
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported by master plan vision and goals - Corporate priority supported by Council - Sport tourism / economic impact - Leverage community partnerships - Historic relevance, preservation - Coordination of works

Data needs to be collected to sufficiently support the evaluation process. This includes but is not limited to information on lifecycle requirements, public demand, capital and operational costs, and more.

Weights and measures can then be applied to the above criteria to guide the evaluation process, with the caveat that additional investigation and considerations may still be required to validate the results of the scoring exercise. For example, facilities and services operate at different scales, serving unique catchment areas and priority populations. Sometimes these scales and factors are difficult to define. It is best to use the criteria to evaluate projects with similar characteristics and implementation windows, including those being considered within

the annual budget process or a four-year term of Council. Context is also important, but challenging to account for, such as comparing the development of new facilities and renewal of existing ones in different areas of the town.

Projects that advance necessary safety improvements and legislative compliance will always take priority over all other discretionary projects. Readiness also comes into play as projects with defined sites and funding sources may proceed more quickly than projects without these necessary pre-conditions. Inserting facilities into existing parks (where appropriate) may expedite implementation if funding is available. In other instances, new land will be needed to accommodate the facilities. As the master plan identified facility needs to 2051, some lands may not yet be ready to accept the facilities; thus, appropriate phasing that aligns with the growth and development process is essential. Successful implementation requires that the town’s land use and park planning processes be aligned with the priorities emerging from this master plan.

Due to their site-specific nature, some facilities examined in the master plan – such as park washrooms – will require further analysis to manage future investment and establish specific priorities. Where required, asset-specific studies should examine need and provision options, with consideration given to: existing supplies and distribution; demonstrated demand; partnership and alignment opportunities; site impacts; and relevant policy frameworks.

Prioritization of investments will be ongoing as part of the plan’s implementation.

Actions – Priority Setting		
<p>93. Complete a capital renovation and replacement strategy for recreation and cultural facilities that assesses the cost/benefit of renovating, upgrading, or repurposing and and/or underperforming assets.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	Criteria to support this analysis have been identified within this master plan and supported through asset management practices.
<p>94. Ensure that planning for major capital projects includes meaningful community engagement, feasibility studies that validate building program and service requirements, and consideration of potential partnerships.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

8.2 Financial Considerations

A note about Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022)

Passed on November 28, 2022 by the Provincial Legislature, Bill 23 resulted in extensive changes⁴³ to Acts and regulations including the Development Charges Act, Planning Act, Municipal Act, and others. Bill 23 will have a significant and direct impact on the town's ability to create and fund complete communities.

While the town unanimously approved the Housing Pledge as part of its commitment to achieving the province's goal of building 1.5 million homes, there remain significant concerns about the impact of Bill 23 on municipal finance and revenue models, particularly the potential for shortfalls for growth-related infrastructure through development charges as well as parkland dedication. Should these funding sources be reduced, this will result in more pressure on taxpayers to cover the cost of growth and maintain service levels. Currently, much is still yet to be confirmed about the longer-term impacts on the town's capital forecast and the ability to deliver infrastructure to meet the growth expectations.

The town will lean on its creativity and leadership to enable full implementation of this plan. It is vital that external and growth-related funding sources are maximized. Financial processes and practices will support the maximization of available funds and be supplemented by other approaches, where possible.

Approaches that are financially sustainable will be encouraged. For example, when assessing opportunities to address emerging needs supported in this plan, the town will typically employ a decision-making framework that examines the following responses in priority order:

1. first, examine existing assets for their ability to accommodate new demands through changes in programming or optimization initiatives (e.g., adjustments to scheduling, hours, staff deployment, etc.);
2. second, consider potential partnerships with other providers that may be able to leverage outside resources in meeting the emerging needs at little to no cost to the taxpayer;
3. third, consider the potential to expand an existing asset to enhance capacity;
4. then, only if none of the above options are suitable, the town will examine the viability of new facility construction to address demonstrated needs.

In all cases, a priority should be placed on partnerships that leverage assets and resources to provide the best value to residents, building cost-effective multi-use facilities rather than those designed for a single use, and pursuing senior government grants and outside funding.

The town's annual budget and long-term forecast contains considerable detail regarding capital projects to be undertaken during the next 10-year period (subject to change based on

⁴³ Note: Not all changes proposed in Bill 23 are in force; some are still to be confirmed by the Provincial government.

needs/priorities, funding availability, etc.). Oakville’s parks, recreation, and library capital projects are primarily funded from development charges, community benefit charges, tax levy, capital reserves, debt, and outside sources such as senior government grants.

This master plan will have an influence on the projects that are included in the town’s long-term capital forecast. To assist the town and OPL in its future budgeting, below is a table identifying the major capital projects recommended within this master plan for the short-term (2024-2033). These estimates and recommended sequencing of capital works should be revisited annually through the budget process.

Table 48: Capital Cost Estimates for Selected Recreation/Culture and Oakville Public Library Master Plan Projects, 2024-2033 (order of magnitude)

Recommended Capital Project	Capital Cost Estimate	General Timing	Classification	Status
Recreation and Culture				
Palermo Village Community Centre – land	Identified in budget	Identified in budget	Growth	Funded (construction forecasted 2032-34)
Trafalgar Urban Core South Community Centre – land	\$35 M to \$45 M (assume up to 3ha site)	2025/26	Growth	Partially funded in long-term capital forecast (\$25.1 M for 2031/32)
Glen Abbey Community Centre expansion/ revitalization	\$50 M to \$70 M	Detailed planning to begin 2027	Growth/ Infrastructure Renewal	Unfunded
Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors Expansion	\$8 M to \$12 M	2028/29 (275,000 pop.)	Growth/ Infrastructure Renewal	Unfunded
New South Oakville Outdoor Pool (plus pool decommissioning)	\$8 M to \$10 M (assuming owned site)	2032 (300,000 pop.)	Infrastructure Renewal	Infrastructure Renewal In long-term capital forecast
Kinoak Arena Repurposing	To be determined through further study	To be determined through further study	Growth/ Infrastructure Renewal	Unfunded (renewal projects in capital forecast)
New North Oakville Twin Pad Arena - Land	\$25 M to \$45 M (assume 3-ha site)	2031/32	Growth/ Infrastructure Renewal	Unfunded
Oakville Public Library				
Palermo Village Branch - land	Identified in budget	Identified in budget	Growth	Funded (construction forecasted 2032-34)
Central Branch Replacement	Refer to Downtown Cultural Hub	2024-26	Infrastructure Renewal	Ongoing project – in capital budget and forecast

Recommended Capital Project	Capital Cost Estimate	General Timing	Classification	Status
Trafalgar Urban Core South Branch – land and construction	\$35 M to \$45 M	2028/29 (275,000 pop.)	Growth	Partially funded in long term capital forecast (\$22 M in 2024, 2027-2029)
Bronte/QEPCCC Branch (tbd) – construction/renovation	\$3 M to \$6 M (renovations and collections)	2032 (300,000 pop.)	Growth/ Infrastructure Renewal	Unfunded

Notes: Estimated capital costs are shown in current year dollars and are subject to change based on further study, project scoping, prevailing market conditions (land, construction costs, etc.), etc.

Additionally, this master plan has recommended the preparation of several topic-specific strategies, studies, policies, etc. to guide future service delivery and/or capital projects. Some studies may require the retention of consultants, while others may be completed by town/library staff. Examples include (but may not be limited to):

- capital renovation and replacement strategy
- community garden policy
- Deerfield Golf Course infrastructure condition assessment and future use options study
- Kinoak and Maplegrove Arena repurposing studies
- leash-free dog area policy
- outdoor pool modernization strategy
- park and trail design guidelines (update)
- park revitalization strategy
- public art master plan
- racquet sports strategy
- site-specific feasibility studies for new and expanded/revitalized community centres and libraries (e.g., GACC, SJC, ROCC, etc.)
- special event strategy (update)
- sport tourism strategy
- sports field strategy
- technology strategy (OPL)
- TPCC fitness centre viability study
- White Oaks Pool viability study

Operating funds for programs, services, and facilities (existing or recommended under this plan) are derived from several sources, including (but not limited to) municipal taxation and user fees. Recreation and culture user fees represent Oakville’s second largest source of funding. An analysis of operating budget implications and partnership options should be undertaken prior to approving major capital projects and that sufficient annual operating funds would be allocated to any approved project.

This master plan identifies the parks, recreation, and library facilities and land (capital) needs of the Town of Oakville until the year 2051; updates can be expected to ensure that future directions remain responsive to changing needs. The master plan should be used as a resource in developing the town’s annual and long-term budget documents, secondary plans,

and related studies. Through implementation of the plan, the town will take into consideration available capital and operating funding via available sources to identify potential budget shortfalls or overruns and areas for adjustment. On an annual basis, the town should reconcile the recommendations with its fiscal capacity and focus on the highest priority items.

Over time, infrastructure will age and service expectations will evolve, resulting in changing pressures on available funding. The town has readied itself to respond to a large portion of its renovation and renewal needs by establishing proactive measures such as a disciplined reinvestment strategy that is further supported by a robust asset management program and application of reserves. However, inflation is at its highest level in decades, putting strain on the town’s finances. Council has shown leadership through its commitment to fund necessary parks, recreation, and library services and infrastructure projects that will help to provide affordable opportunities for all residents.

Actions – Financial Considerations		
<p>95. Use this master plan as a resource in developing the town’s annual budget and capital forecasts, strategic plans, secondary plans, and related studies. Prioritization of projects will be ongoing as part of the plan’s implementation.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>96. Maximize funding sources through effective financial processes and practices, including alternative growth-related funding tools to minimize the impact on existing taxpayers.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>97. Where appropriate and consistent with municipal policies and priorities, consider alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches to achieve capital and operating cost recovery targets.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a
<p>98. Assess operating budget implications and partnership options prior to approving major capital projects.</p>		
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Ongoing (best practice)	n/a

8.3 Plan Evaluation and Monitoring

The town should regularly review and assess the recommended actions of this Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan to ensure that they remain reflective of local conditions and responsive to the changing needs of the community. This will require monitoring of activity patterns, tracking user satisfaction levels, regular dialogue with community

organizations, annual reporting on implementation and short-term work plans, and undertaking a detailed 10-year update to the plan. Through these mechanisms – or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustment of resource allocations and priorities may be required.

Reviewing the master plan requires a commitment from all staff, officials, organizations and residents involved in the planning, financing, and delivery of parks, recreation, and library services. An appropriate time for this is prior to the annual budget process.

The following steps may be used to conduct an annual review of the master plan:

- a) review of the past year (recommendations implemented, capital projects undertaken, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, issues arising from the public and community groups, etc.);
- b) identification of issues impacting the coming year (anticipated financial and operational constraints, emerging opportunities, etc.);
- c) cursory review of the plan for direction regarding its recommendations;
- d) preparation of a staff report to indicate prioritization of short-term projects and determination of which projects should be implemented in the coming year based upon criteria established by staff (e.g., financial limitations, community input, partnership/funding potential, etc.);
- e) communication to staff and officials regarding the status of projects, criteria used to prioritize projects and projects to be implemented in the coming year; and
- f) budget requests/revisions as necessary.

Lastly, additional data collection and evaluation has been recommended to inform performance measures and targets. Monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and facility management will be an important part of this plan moving forward, as will regular reports to the public on master plan progress and implementation priorities.

Actions – Plan Evaluation and Monitoring								
<p>99. Implement a system for the regular monitoring of the master plan, including the use of evidence-based assessment tools and guidelines to improve performance measurement and business intelligence.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>Opportunities to link the master plan to Council’s Strategic Plan should also be sought.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	High	Short-term (2024-33)	Opportunities to link the master plan to Council’s Strategic Plan should also be sought.
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes						
High	Short-term (2024-33)	Opportunities to link the master plan to Council’s Strategic Plan should also be sought.						
<p>100. Develop a communications plan following approval of the master plan to create awareness about its key messages and recommendations amongst residents and stakeholders. Implement a system for the regular reporting of the master plan, including an annual update to the community (e.g., report card).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>Proposed Timing</th> <th>Implementation Notes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>Short-term (2024-33)</td> <td>n/a</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes	High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a
Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes						
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a						

Actions – Plan Evaluation and Monitoring

101. Update the accomplishments, priorities, and actions of the master plan in **five to 10-years** to inform growth-related planning and funding strategies.

Priority	Proposed Timing	Implementation Notes
High	Short-term (2024-33)	n/a

Appendix: Summary of Feedback on Draft Master Plan

1. Introduction

In May and June 2024, the draft Town of Oakville Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan underwent a comprehensive feedback phase to ensure the proposed directions were thoroughly tested and refined before finalization. Engagement tactics consisted of an online survey and sessions with community stakeholders. Community feedback was also solicited through the project website where the draft plan was posted for review.

The results of these initiatives are summarized below.

2. Online Survey

The online survey – chosen for its accessibility and capacity to engage a broad audience – played a key role as the primary means of collecting feedback on the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan. The survey launched on May 28 and closed on June 30, 2024. It was promoted through several marketing channels to ensure a high response rate.

The survey sought to gauge the level of agreement to selected high priority and shorter-term actions within the draft master plan. Respondents were asked if they agreed, disagreed or were neutral on these selected actions and could provide additional feedback in a comment box if desired.

The survey garnered a total of **1,579 responses**. Results are summarized below, with statements ordered by level of agreement.

Recreation – Selected Actions

Nine of 10 (**90%**) respondents agreed that the town should continue to foster **partnerships** with schools, libraries, and others to expand the reach and accessibility of recreation and cultural services (1% disagreed and 8% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included exploring partnerships for additional gymnasium space, new indoor pool facility opportunities, and increasing programming in less-served areas of Oakville such as Clearview.

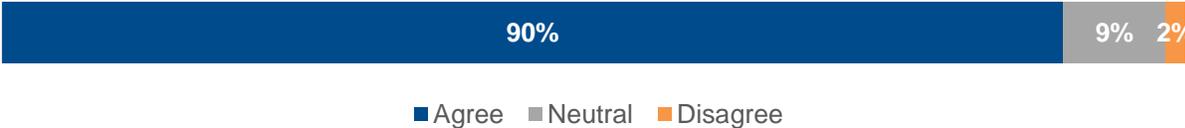
- 1. Continue to foster partnerships with schools, libraries, and others to expand the reach and accessibility of recreation and cultural services. (n=1571)**



■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Nine of 10 (**90%**) respondents agreed that the town should expand **recreation programming** through community centre sites and support initiatives that remove barriers and increase participation for all (2% disagreed and 9% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included adding more drop-in programming (e.g., art classes, pickleball, yoga, indoor playgrounds, etc.), expanded aquatic and arena program times and options, and more inclusive programming opportunities for children with disabilities. Suggestions were also received for improving the registration process.

2. Expand recreation programming through community centre sites and support initiatives that remove barriers and increase participation for all. (n=1570)



Over four of five (**84%**) respondents agreed that the town should increase **community access to indoor pools** through alternate programming strategies, new pools such as the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and future multi-use centres, and strategic enhancements to existing pools (2% disagreed and 14% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included expanding and improving the flexibility of aquafit classes and improving booking practices for drop-in programs. Suggested enhancements included improving accessibility and changerooms within existing pools and designing new pools for competitive swimming (e.g., 50-metre pool serving Oakville and the broader region).

3. Increase community access to indoor pools through alternate programming strategies, new pools such as the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and future multi-use centres, and strategic enhancements to existing pools. (n=1567)



Over four of five (**83%**) respondents agreed that the town should investigate the potential to **expand and revitalize existing community centres** to address emerging needs, such as Glen Abbey Community Centre and Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre for Seniors (3% disagreed and 14% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included adding a family changeroom to the Glen Abbey Community Centre and expanding the existing pool.

4. Investigate the potential to expand and revitalize existing community centres to address emerging needs, such as Glen Abbey Recreation Centre and Sir John Colborne Recreation Centre. (n=1568)



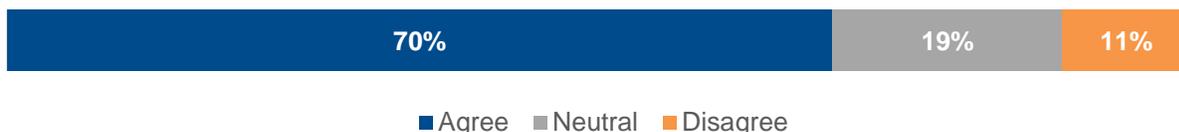
Over three of four (**77%**) respondents agreed that the town should include **gymnasiums** within all new community centres and explore opportunities to add them to existing facilities where needed (3% disagreed and 20% were neutral). Gymnasiums can support a range of activities such as indoor pickleball, which was a popular open-ended comment.

5. Include gymnasiums within all new community centres and explore opportunities to add them to existing facilities where needed. (n=1571)



Over two of three (**70%**) respondents agreed that the town should prepare a strategy to modernize the town's **outdoor pools** and right-size the supply (in consultation with the community), including replacing up to four older pools with two new outdoor destination pools and other park amenities such as splash pads (11% disagreed and 19% were neutral). Open-ended comments on outdoor pools provided a range of opinions, such as there being an overdue need to revitalize the pools, a desire to maintain existing locations to improve local accessibility, and requests for new pools in growing areas.

6. In consultation with the community, prepare a strategy to modernize the town's outdoor pools and right-size the supply, including replacing up to four older pools with two new outdoor destination pools and other park amenities such as splash pads. (n=1565)



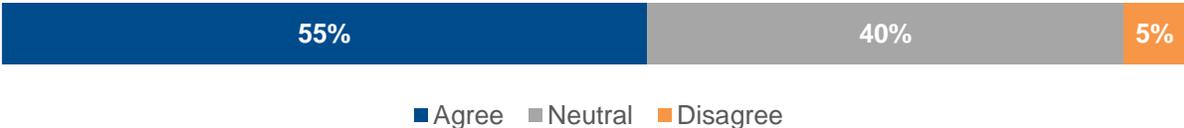
Three of five (**61%**) respondents agreed that the town should explore options for increasing year-round programming and community access to **indoor turf fields** (5% disagreed and 34% were neutral). Some open-ended comments also included suggestions for indoor walking tracks.

7. Explore options for increasing year-round programming and community access to the indoor turf fields. (n=1563)



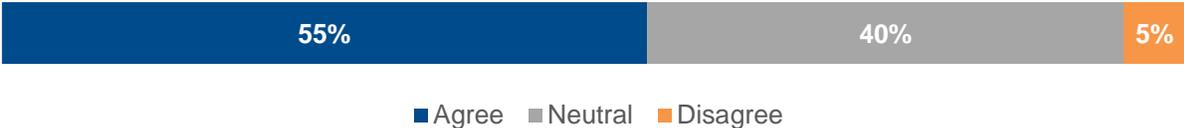
Over half (**55%**) of respondents agreed that the town should begin development of a local **community centre in the Palermo area** within the next 10 years (5% disagreed and 40% were neutral).

8. Begin development of a local community centre in the Palermo area within the next 10 years. (n=1563)



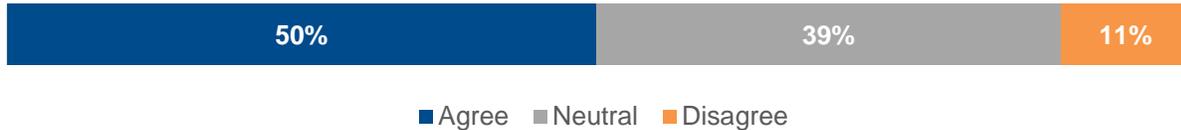
Over half (**55%**) of respondents agreed that the town should evaluate opportunities to remove the ice from one **single pad arena** (in consultation with the community) and repurpose the site into year-round community activity/sport hubs or parks within the next five to 10 years, while addressing longer-term needs through new multi-pad arena facility development (5% disagreed and 40% were neutral). Some open-ended comments indicated a desire for more arenas (especially in growing areas) and expanded town ice programs.

9. In consultation with the community, evaluate opportunities to remove the ice from one single pad arena and repurpose the site into year-round community activity/sport hubs or parks within the next five to 10 years. Address longer-term needs through new multi-pad arena facility development. (n=1563)



Half (**50%**) of respondents agreed that the town should develop a **Sport Tourism Strategy** to address sport-specific priorities, in consultation with local and regional partners (11% disagreed and 39% were neutral). Some open-ended comments indicated that swim meets are an opportunity to draw a large number of people to the town.

10. Develop a Sport Tourism Strategy to address sport-specific priorities, in consultation with local and regional partners. (n=1544)



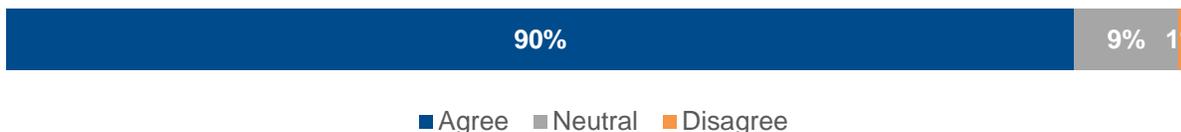
Top open-ended suggestions for Oakville’s recreation services and facilities (41% of surveys provided comments)

- Maintain or expand indoor pool service levels
- Build a 50-m indoor pool
- Expand indoor pickleball facilities
- Invest in outdoor pools/do not reduce supply
- Enhance and expand recreation/arena programming
- Develop a community centre in Clearview
- Enhance and expand aquatic programming
- Offer affordable programs
- Address accessibility and inclusion
- Build more arenas

Parks – Selected Actions

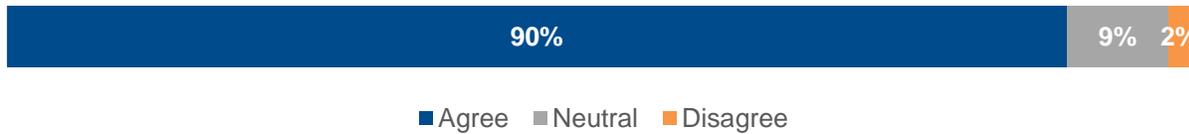
Nine of 10 (**90%**) respondents agreed that the town should continue to **maximize parkland amounts** through land development approvals and to enhance community accessibility to parkland (1% disagreed and 9% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included a need for additional parkland in areas such as North Oakville, College Park, and strategic growth areas. A variety of opinions were received as to whether new parkland should be left in a natural state (passive activities) or developed for sports and community amenities (active activities).

1. Continue to maximize parkland amounts through land development approvals and to enhance community accessibility to parkland. (n=1422)



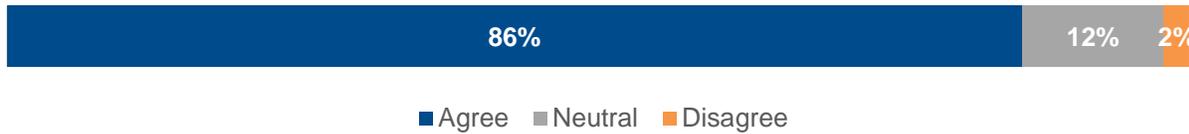
Nine of 10 (**90%**) respondents agreed that the town should continue to install **park amenities** such as playgrounds, splash pads, basketball courts, skate parks ("all wheels" parks), leash-free dog areas, and community gardens in new growth areas and priority communities (2% disagreed and 9% were neutral). Specifically, open-ended suggestions highlighted a desire for more playgrounds (with rubber surfacing), leash-free areas in neighbourhoods without them, and community gardens.

2. Continue to install park amenities such as playgrounds, splash pads, basketball courts, skate parks ("all wheels" parks), leash-free dog areas, and community gardens in new growth areas and priority communities. (n=1424)



Over eight of 10 (**86%**) respondents agreed that the town should prepare a **Park Revitalization Strategy** to guide reinvestment in key sites (e.g., older parks, waterfront parks) and improvements to barrier-free (e.g., accessibility, seating, shade, etc.) that will promote year-round usage (2% disagreed and 12% were neutral). A desire for more washrooms (with year-round access), seating, and shade was prominent in the open-ended comments.

3. Prepare a Park Revitalization Strategy to guide reinvestment in key sites (e.g., older parks, waterfront parks) and improvements to barrier-free (e.g., accessibility, seating, shade, etc.) that will promote year-round usage. (n=1420)



Eight of 10 (**80%**) respondents agreed that the town should enhance **environmental sustainability** in parks, including initiatives that support climate action such as greenspace preservation and urban biodiversity (4% disagreed and 16% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included engaging the community through sustainability initiatives (e.g., invasive species removal, pollinator gardens, workshops, tree planting, etc.).

4. Enhance environmental sustainability in parks, including initiatives that support climate action such as greenspace preservation and urban biodiversity. (n=1416)



Three of four (**75%**) respondents agreed that the town should continue to improve accessibility, upgrade, and expand the **off-road recreational trails system**, including wayfinding signage (4% disagreed and 21% were neutral). Open-ended suggestions spoke to a desire for improved connectivity and signage relating to the trails system.

5. Continue to improve accessibility, upgrade, and expand the off-road recreational trails system, including wayfinding signage. (n=1424)



Nearly three of four (**72%**) respondents agreed that the town should develop a **Sports Field Strategy** to examine opportunities (such as lighting and improvements to selected fields) to enhance the capacity of fields for soccer, baseball, cricket, rugby, football, lacrosse, etc. (4% disagreed and 24% were neutral). Open-ended comments expressed a desire for additional sports field capacity, while being mindful of impacts on neighbouring properties.

6. Develop a Sports Field Strategy to examine opportunities (such as lighting and improvements to selected fields) to enhance the capacity of fields for soccer, baseball, cricket, rugby, football, lacrosse, etc. (n=1423)



Nearly two of three (**64%**) respondents agreed that the town should prepare a **Racquet Sports Strategy** to guide the sustainable long-term provision of outdoor tennis and pickleball courts and consider the potential for a year-round community-based court complex, informed by stakeholder and public input (6% disagreed and 30% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions mentioned how demand has grown for both pickleball and tennis, that many existing tennis courts are in deteriorating condition, and that the placement of courts needs to be considered due to potential noise impacts on nearby properties.

7. Prepare a Racquet Sports Strategy to guide the sustainable long-term provision of outdoor tennis and pickleball courts and consider the potential for a year-round community-based court complex, informed by stakeholder and public input. (n=1425)



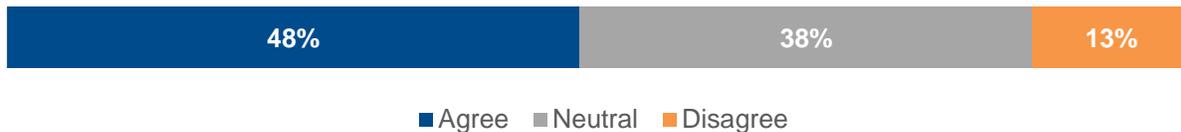
Nearly three of five (**57%**) respondents agreed that the town should prioritize the enhancement of park spaces that can support community-driven **special events** (8% disagreed and 35% were neutral). Some open-ended comments indicated that greater by-law enforcement would help to improve the experience at local events (parking, trash, crowding, and overuse of park space were noted concerns).

8. Prioritize the enhancement of park spaces that can support community-driven special events. (n=1421)



Nearly half (**48%**) of respondents agreed that the town should undertake an infrastructure assessment at **Deerfield Golf Course** to inform potential alternative future uses, including opportunities for community-level golf, special events, and passive park uses (13% disagreed and 38% were neutral). Open-ended comments relating to this statement were mixed, with some being concerned that this would result in the loss of local golf opportunities and others supporting the need for a broader range of parks and recreational activities that the site could provide.

9. Undertake an infrastructure assessment at Deerfield Golf Course to inform potential alternative future uses, including opportunities for community-level golf, special events, and passive park uses. (n=1425)



Top open-ended suggestions for Oakville’s parks services and facilities (21% of surveys provided comments)

- Preserve natural spaces
- Improve more playgrounds (including rubber surfacing)
- Add more pickleball courts
- Develop more trails and bike paths
- Provide more washrooms (year-round)
- Enhance park amenities (benches, trash cans, etc.)
- Provide more shade
- Improve and develop more tennis courts
- Develop more off-leash dog areas
- Improve enforcement of park rules

Libraries – Selected Actions

Nearly four of five (**79%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should ensure that libraries offer **flexible spaces** that can support evolving needs, services, and programming (3% disagreed and 18% were neutral).

- 1. Ensure that libraries offer flexible spaces that can support evolving needs, services, and programming. (n=1377)**



Nearly four of five (**78%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should where possible, coordinate and **integrate new libraries with other community and/or recreation facilities** (3% disagreed and 18% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included the Clearview neighbourhood as a possible location for a new or expanded library co-located with a community centre and nature reserve.

- 2. Where possible, coordinate and integrate new libraries with other community and/or recreation facilities. (n=1382)**



Nearly four of five (**78%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should continue to **expand technologies** within the library to support persons requiring access and to foster experimentation and innovation (4% disagreed and 18% were neutral). Some open-ended suggestions included to continue adapting new technologies (e.g., creation zones with 3D printing, offering workshops for seniors, etc.) and for offering more eBooks on easy-to-use platforms.

- 3. Continue to expand technologies within the library to support persons requiring access and to foster experimentation and innovation. (n=1369)**



Two of three (**67%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should develop a **Future Operating Hours Plan** to consider extending hours at selected locations (5% disagreed and 27% were neutral). It was noted through some open-ended comments that extended hours are offered in other communities and would be particularly useful to students (evenings) and families (weekends).

4. Develop a Future Operating Hours Plan to consider extending hours at selected locations. (n=1376)



Two of three (**67%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should respond to population growth by developing **new library branches** in the Trafalgar Urban Core area (north of Dundas Street) and the Palermo area within the next 10 years (6% disagreed and 27% were neutral).

5. Respond to population growth by developing new library branches in the Trafalgar Urban Core area (north of Dundas Street) and the Palermo area within the next 10 years. (n=1375)



Three of five (**62%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should explore the potential to offer additional **social services** within libraries (in partnership with others) to better support at risk and marginalized populations (11% disagreed and 27% were neutral). Open-ended comments on this topic were mixed, with many agreeing that there is a need for more social supports but questioning the best approach for providing these.

6. Explore the potential to offer additional social services within libraries (in partnership with others) to better support at risk and marginalized populations. (n=1376)



Three of five (**61%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should continue to expand **outreach and alternative delivery models** to emerging communities and gap areas (e.g., OPL Express locations, etc.) (5% disagreed and 34% were neutral). Different opinions were expressed through the open-ended comments, with some being unclear as to what these models would mean for their area, and others indicating a preference for full-time staffed libraries.

7. Continue to expand outreach and alternative delivery models to emerging communities and gap areas (e.g., OPL Express locations, etc.). (n=1378)



Nearly three of five (**58%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should review options and locations for enhanced library services within the **Bronte area** (6% disagreed and 35% were neutral). Open-ended suggestions included looking for a space in Bronte Village or establishing a library branch at QEPCCC.

8. Review options and locations for enhanced library services within the Bronte area. (n=1373)



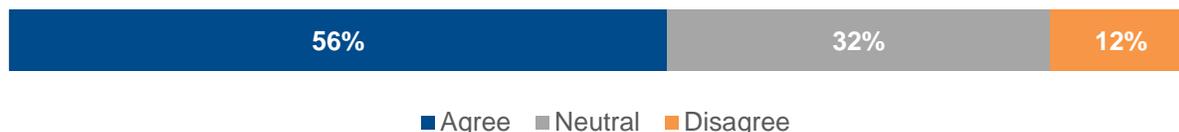
Nearly three of five (**58%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should include a library branch in the planning for **Midtown Oakville** (8% disagreed and 34% were neutral).

9. Include a library branch in the planning for Midtown Oakville. (n=1373)



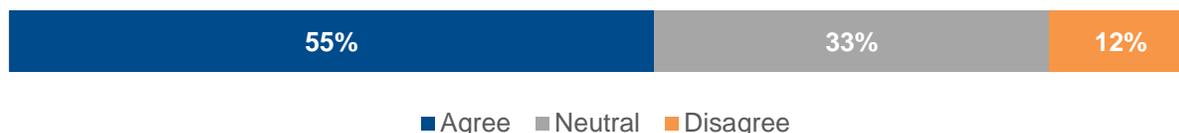
Nearly three of five (**56%**) respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should support Oakville's growing diversity by enhancing **multi-lingual collections and programming** (e.g., English as a Second Language, etc.) (12% disagreed and 32% were neutral). Open-ended comments and opinions on this topic were more mixed, with some being concerned that this would lead to fewer English and French resources (our two official languages).

10. Support Oakville's growing diversity by enhancing multi-lingual collections and programming (e.g., English as a Second Language, etc.). (n=1378)



Over half (**55%**) of respondents agreed that Oakville Public Library should prioritize the redevelopment of the **Central Library** as part of the Downtown Cultural Hub Initiative (12% disagreed and 33% were neutral). Mixed opinions were evident through the open-ended comments, which identified paid parking as a barrier to using the Central Library and a desire to prioritize library branches in developing communities.

11. Prioritize the redevelopment of the Central Library as part of the Downtown Cultural Hub Initiative. (n=1383)



Top open-ended suggestions for Oakville's Public Library's services and facilities (16% of surveys provided comments)

- Retain or expand library services in Clearview
- Enhance and expand library programming
- Extend library hours
- Expand quiet spaces and meeting rooms
- Develop a library branch in Bronte or at QEPCCC
- Improve access to eBooks/new platform
- More technology support/programs
- Offer more activities for children
- More physical books
- Improve/free parking at central library

Demographic Analysis

The following is a high-level summary of the demographic profile of responding households from the master plan survey.

- 98% of respondents indicated they live in the Town of Oakville. This was followed by 33% and 26% of respondents indicating they have a L6H or L6M postal code.
- Responding households in the L6H, L6K, and L6L postal code areas were appropriately represented according to Canada Post household data. L6J (Southeast Oakville) responding households were slightly over-represented, L6M (West/Northwest Oakville) were slightly under-represented, and 3% of respondents were non-residents or did not know their postal code.

Distribution of Responding Households by Postal Code

Postal Code	# of Respondents	% of Respondents	Canada Post Postal Code FSA
L6H (East/Northeast)	460	33%	35%
L6J (Southeast)	224	16%	10%
L6K (South Central)	94	7%	8%
L6L (Southwest)	220	16%	14%
L6M (West/Northwest)	356	26%	32%
Don't Know / Other	31	3%	n/a
answered question	1,385	100%	100%

- There were a total of 4,547 people living in responding households, for an average of 3.3 persons per household. Extrapolated to include the entire sample, this represents approximately 2.3% of Oakville's population.
- Compared to the Census, responding households were slightly over-represented by children (under 10 years) and adults (35-54 years). Conversely, responding households were slightly under-represented in young adults (20-34 years), older adults (55-69 years), and seniors (70 years and over). This is common as family households are generally more likely to complete a survey of this type.

Age Group Distribution of Responding Households

	# of Households	# of People	% of People	2021 Census (Pop)
Under 10 years	536	881	19%	10%
10-19 years	402	623	14%	13%
20-34 years	298	440	10%	15%
35-54 years	834	1509	33%	26%
55-69 years	417	665	15%	23%
70 years and over	266	429	9%	13%
answered question	1,366	4,547	100%	100%

- 98% of survey respondents indicated speaking English at home. Other common languages amongst the sample included French (14%), Mandarin (6%), Hindi (4%), Spanish (3%), and Yue (Cantonese) (3%).
- 11% of respondents identified as a person with a disability, whereas 85% did not identify. 4% preferred not to answer.

3. Website and Written Submissions

To boost engagement with the Master Plan survey, the town launched a social media campaign during the public feedback collection period in June 2024, inviting residents to share their feedback on the draft plan and recommendations via email and/or phone. Emails were sent to over 22,000 subscribers, achieving a 61% open rate. Additionally, the town placed posters and digital screens in all community centres and set up mobile signs in all wards throughout the survey period.

The campaign generated over 46,000 social media impressions and prompted several emails regarding recommendations for outdoor pool facilities and splash pad service provisions. Another email suggested exploring new methods to engage with newcomers.

Staff responded to all email inquiries, thanking residents for their feedback, and providing appropriate responses regarding recommendations and additional background information as needed.

4. Stakeholder Groups

Staff hosted two stakeholder group consultation sessions to gather feedback on the draft recommendations of the Parks, Recreation, and Library Master Plan, which were presented to Town Council in May 2024. The sessions were held on the evening of June 11, 2024 and during the day on June 19, 2024. Invitations were sent to over 100 organizations, including all groups previously invited to the consultation sessions in May 2023.

Participating groups included:

- Bandology
- Food for Life
- Oakville Aquatics Club
- Oakville Arts Council
- Oakville Crusaders Rugby Club
- Oakville Gymnastics
- Oakville Pickleball Association
- Oakville Soccer Club
- Skate Oakville

Overall, feedback from the sessions was positive and supportive of the proposed Master Plan recommendations. Participants raised questions about the planned actions for various strategies, particularly those involving racquet sports and sport tourism. There were also discussions about the future process for repurposing the single-pad arena facilities. Additionally, the Oakville Aquatics Club requested further clarification on the service provision calculations for aquatic facilities.

5. Conclusion

Strong support was expressed for the selected master plan actions across all engagement activities. This input has been used to clarify and refine the master plan that will be presented to Council for approval. By seeking input from the public and stakeholders, there is a high level of confidence in the directions of the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan as a guiding document for the Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library.