



Hamilton



City of Hamilton | July 21, 2022

Recreation Master Plan





July 21, 2022

This report was prepared by

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, in association with
Tucker-Reid & Associates and The JF Group.

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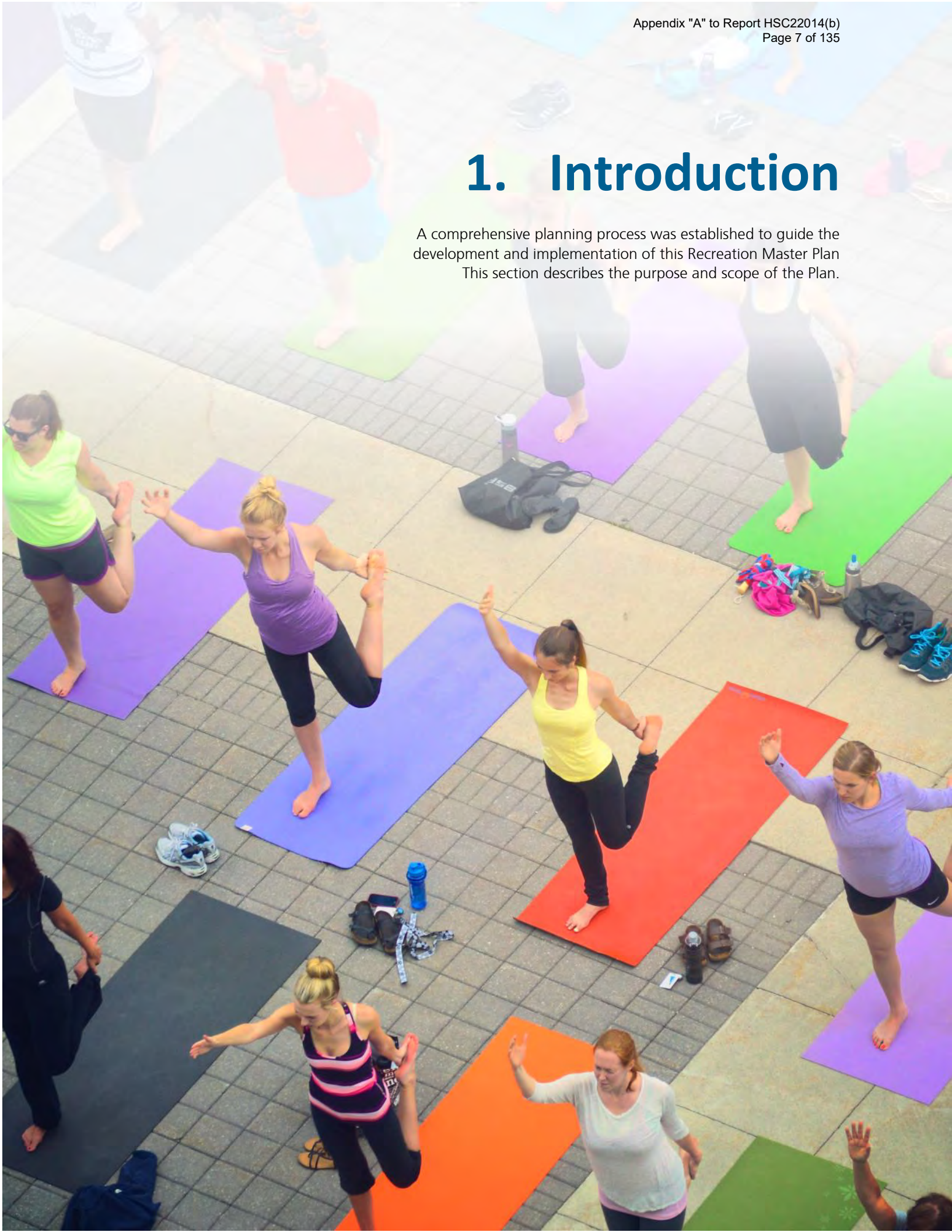
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The City of Hamilton is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Today, the City of Hamilton is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America) and we recognize that we must do more to learn about the rich history of this land so that we can better understand our roles as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers.

1. Introduction

A comprehensive planning process was established to guide the development and implementation of this Recreation Master Plan. This section describes the purpose and scope of the Plan.



1.1 A Plan for Hamilton

Recreation services and facilities are integral to quality of life for all Hamiltonians and are essential to Hamilton achieving its vision of being “the best place to raise a child and age successfully.”

Hamilton is changing – the population is growing rapidly, participation trends are shifting, and delivery models are evolving – and a strategy is needed to guide community recreation into the future.

For the last ten years, major recreation infrastructure development in the City of Hamilton has been successfully guided by indoor and outdoor recreation facility strategies. An update is required to incorporate the latest research and address the City’s existing and emerging planning and policy context, including alignment with GRIDS 2 and other City initiatives. These indoor and outdoor studies are being combined within one comprehensive Recreation Master Plan that will guide our capital plan and how we deliver services in the future.

The Recreation Master Plan provides overall vision, direction, and guidance for making decisions about a wide range of service and facility types, including recreation facilities, park facilities, and related programs and services. Needs and priorities are identified for decades to come, with a ten-year focus on service delivery practices and a longer-term perspective for major facilities to 2051 to align with growth forecasts. The full scope of the project is outlined in Section 1.3.

The overarching goal of the Master Plan is to ensure the City's recreation portfolio is responsive to current and future needs in a responsible, equitable and cost-effective manner. In doing so, the Plan will inform the City’s decisions to invest in the renewal and future growth of facilities, strengthen and build new partnerships, enhance municipal service delivery, and improve community access to recreation. Through the use of decision-making frameworks and criteria, the Master Plan is a flexible working document that can adapt to changing values, emerging trends, new opportunities and operational priorities.

The Master Plan has been informed by public and stakeholder input and considers many factors, such as demographic data and growth forecasts, facility condition and usage levels, recreation trends and best practices, ongoing planning initiatives, and more. In this way, the priorities advanced in the Plan are evidence-based and respond to dynamic needs across the entire city.

The directions in the Master Plan will inform the City’s annual budgets and long-term capital forecasts, growth planning, and related studies. The goal is to work within the City’s budget process by advancing recommendations in alignment with population growth and funding opportunities, including partnerships and other external funding sources when available. Additional work will still be required beyond the approval of this plan. For example, detailed capital, service and site-specific planning is necessary to advance many of the recommendations, including further public engagement efforts. The City anticipates updating the Recreation Master Plan every ten years.



1.2 Why Recreation Matters

The City of Hamilton offers high quality recreation, parks and sport programs and facilities that engage residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. These systems and services play a significant role in the physical and social wellbeing of residents, as well as the economic and environmental health of the city.

Recreation Improves Health and Wellbeing

Our recreation programs and spaces allow Hamiltonians to be active and learn new skills, connect with one another, share their interests, exchange ideas, and experience diversity. We offer something for everybody, regardless of age, ability, gender, race or income.

Recreation contributes to positive change in many ways, such as facilitating healthy lifestyles, creating the leaders of tomorrow, and reducing anti-social and self-destructive behaviours.

Recreation Builds Strong Communities

Our recreation programs and spaces strengthen community cohesion and pride, serving as activity hubs that bring a diversity of people together. They contribute to building strong neighbourhoods and can have a significant impact on resident interaction, community capacity and positive social outcomes.

Quality recreation services and assets improve placemaking and our community image, in turn helping to bolster our economy through retaining and attracting residents, visitors, and employers. Many also address key drivers such as beautification, environmental stewardship and poverty reduction, all of which serve to position Hamilton as a great city.

And last but not least, we should never forget that **recreation is fun!** Access to recreation and parks services is a fundamental human need in all ages and stages of life. With increasingly busy lifestyles, leisure and sport provide necessary respite that improves our mental wellbeing and keeps us connected to the things that matter most – our families, friends, and communities.

1.3 Plan Scope

The focus of the plan is on recreation and parks facilities and amenities owned and/or operated by or in partnership with the City that support participation in sport, recreation and leisure activities. This includes places and spaces that facilitate both structured and unstructured recreational experiences for the benefit of individuals and communities. The plan addresses a broad range of facilities, each with their own complex provision arrangements and dynamic usage levels. Collectively, the plan addresses thousands of unique assets.

The emphasis of the Master Plan is on facilities owned and/or operated by the City of Hamilton, although the plan also considers facilities provided by other organizations within the public, not-for-profit and private

The Framework for Recreation in Canada – a nationally and provincially adopted charter – defines Recreation as:

“The experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.”

sectors. The plan's recommendations may have applicability to a variety of sectors and providers, but are not binding on facilities that are managed by non-municipal providers, except in instances where there is a formal agreement with the City relating to facility and/or service provision.

In-scope Public Recreation and Park Facilities



Beyond the scope of the Plan are parkland policies and acquisition priorities, most non-recreational park amenities, municipal trails, cultural venues, or specialized facilities (such as First Ontario Centre, Tim Hortons Field, and Wild Waterworks) as these are examined through separate studies.

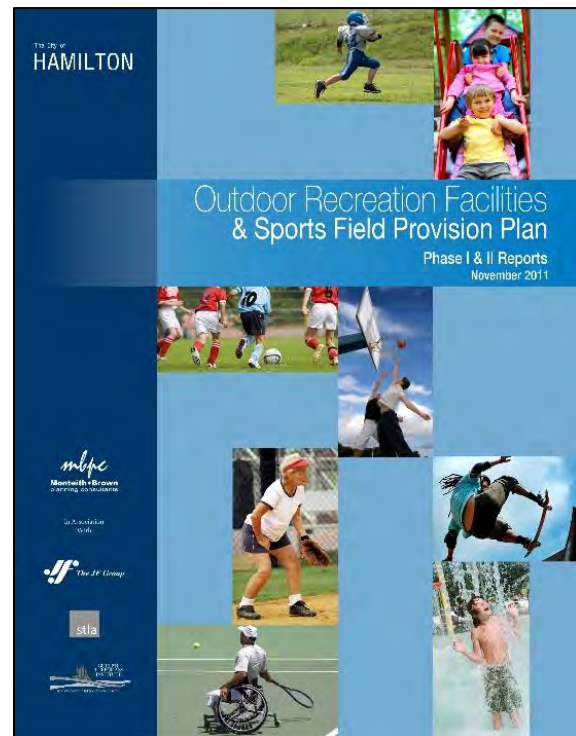
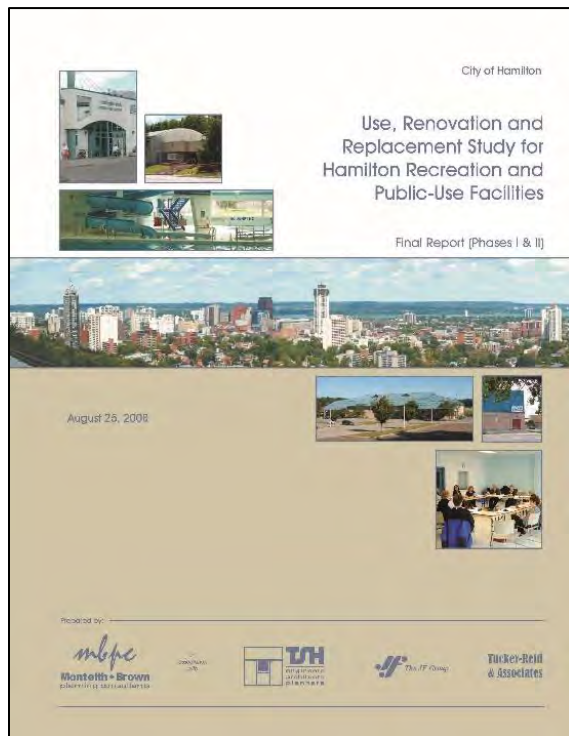
1.4 Plan Development

The Recreation Master Plan contains 85 recommendations (summarized in Appendix A), some of which refer to specific one-time projects or actions and others that provide ongoing guidance. The City of Hamilton retained a team of consultants led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. to prepare this Plan, with input and guidance from a multi-departmental project team of City staff.

Building on a Solid Foundation

The point of departure of this Master Plan is the City of Hamilton's Indoor and Outdoor Facility Studies (prepared in 2008 and 2011), which are wide-ranging documents that have guided municipal decisions for over a decade. The studies were ambitious and proposed substantial changes to a number of facility types. Despite a growing infrastructure deficit, the capital strategies were highly effective in directing park and facility investment. In addition, the analysis and recommendations contained in these studies have been used to support and inform municipal budgets, staff reports, unsolicited proposals, and several successful grant applications.

Given the effective implementation of these plans and the passage of time, there is a need to chart a new course for recreation facilities and services. The Recreation Master Plan updates the City's Indoor Facilities Study and Outdoor Facilities Study to guide decision-making for recreation services in the City of Hamilton for the next ten years and beyond.



An Evidence-based Plan with "Made in Hamilton" Solutions

The Master Plan is supported by the most current information on:

- public opinion and stakeholder input;
- demographic data and growth forecasts;
- asset inventories (municipal and non-municipal) ;
- usage data and trends;
- municipal benchmarking;
- facility condition and accessibility data;
- existing policies and financial information; and
- supporting studies and reports.



The Plan is the Product of Extensive Research and Consultation

Creating this plan required significant input from Hamilton residents and recreation and sport stakeholders. The comments and ideas of those who participated in the consultation process is directly reflected in the Master Plan's guiding principles and were a foundational input into the Plan's recommendations.

An integrated, coordinated and multi-phase process has been applied to develop the Recreation Master Plan. Tasks were divided into four phases, with distinct deliverables for each stage.



Phase 1 resulted in a report that describes the current state of recreation services and facilities in Hamilton by examining the policy and planning context, demographics and growth forecasts, facility inventories, and relevant trends.

Phase 2 documented the public and stakeholder input that informs the Master Plan. This phase of consultation included a community-wide survey and input from local stakeholders.

Phase 3 established the Plan's guiding principles and a needs assessment methodology to determine facility and service priorities. The report also examined financial implications and implementation considerations.

Phase 4 represents the draft and final Recreation Master Plan and included additional public engagement.

2. Recreation Context in Hamilton

This section provides an overview of the key building blocks – such as demographic, growth and recreation trends – that inform the Recreation Master Plan.



Summarized below are a variety of Master Plan inputs that place the plan in context of other municipal priorities and initiatives while contributing to a thorough understanding of key challenges and opportunities based on relevant trends and demographic considerations. Please refer to the Phase 1 Report (found under separate cover) for the detailed findings.

2.1 Our Recreation System

Corporate Organization and Service Delivery

There are several divisions and departments involved in the delivery of recreation and parks services in the City of Hamilton. For example, the responsibility for parks and facilities rests in the Public Works Department and recreation operations and programming is aligned within the Healthy and Safe Communities Department. Both departments have strong and continued intersections with most of the City's corporate and operating departments to deliver quality services.

The City of Hamilton delivers programs and services through a variety of means, such as:

- a) The "direct" delivery of service – through registered and casual/drop-in opportunities – employs municipal staff to offer programs and services in every aspect from the development through to the evaluation stage. The City has shown significant leadership in ensuring that residents experiencing low income and those with disabilities can participate in activities of their choice. Policies and proactive strategies have increased participation to a significant extent in these populations.
- b) The "indirect" provision of services entails that municipal staff are involved to ensure that community groups continue to be sustainable and that work with community partners increases service levels in Hamilton. In doing so, the City rents space to aligned partners (sometimes through agreement), affiliated organizations, residents, and other space users. Much of the sports delivery system is predicated on the City providing the facilities and community organizations managing the programs.

See Section 7 of this Plan for more on how the City delivers services, as well as future directions.



Recent Accomplishments

In part guided by the 2008 and 2011 facility studies, the City has completed a significant number of projects and initiatives in recent years that have advanced community access to quality recreation services. The City should be proud of the scale and scope of the work that has been completed. Notable accomplishments across Hamilton include (but are not limited to):

Recreation Facilities:

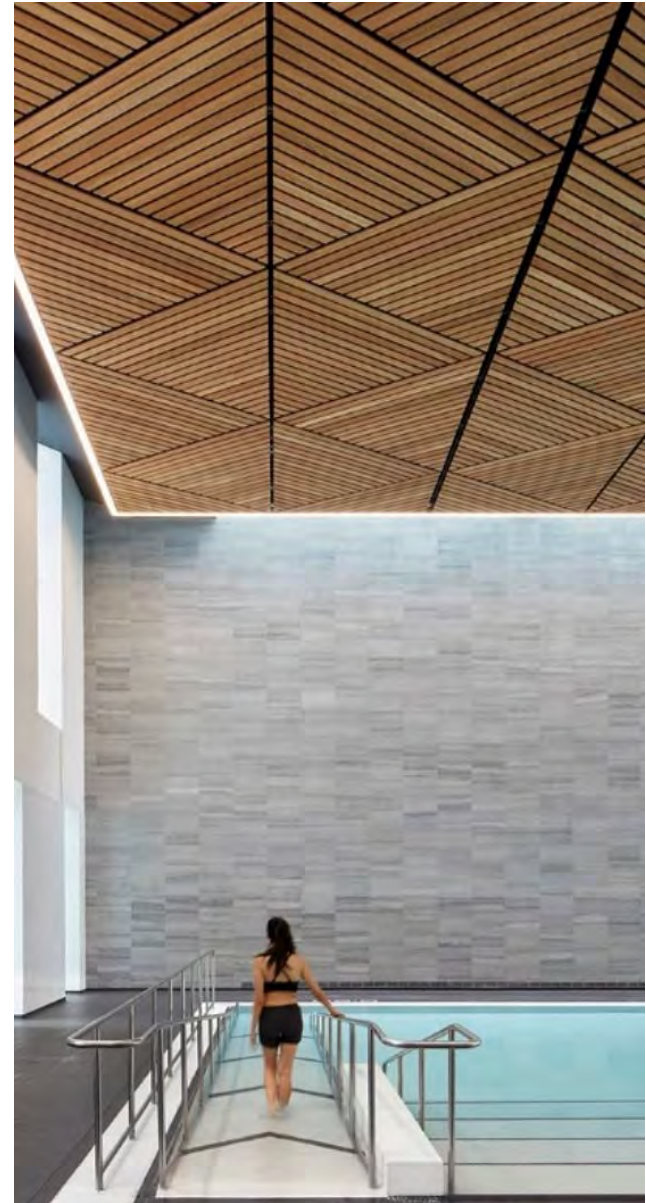
- Opened Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre & Senior's Centre within the Stadium Precinct
- Retrofitted and expanded Valley Park Community Centre
- Established Beverly School & Community Hub and Greensville School & Community Hub
- Purchased the former Creek Community Church and Winona Public School for use as a temporary community facilities
- Rebuilt Westmount Recreation Centre
- Significantly upgraded J.L. Grightmire Arena
- Built the Stoney Creek Recreation Centre
- Added a new ice pad at Morgan Firestone Arena
- Opened Harry Howell Twin Pad Arena to replace the former North Wentworth Arena
- Built the Flamborough Seniors' Centre, a joint project completed with the Hamilton Public Library
- Completed a variety of capital improvements focused on accessibility, energy efficiency, lifecycle upgrades, etc.

Park Facilities:

- Redesigned and redeveloped several outdoor pools (Parkdale, Inch Park, Coronation, Green Acres, Rosedale, Walker, and Birge)
- Completed several sport field and sport court improvement projects, including an artificial turf field at Heritage Green Sports Park, city-wide cricket ground in Confederation Park, and substantial development of Joe Sams Leisure Park
- Installed several new spray pads, skateboard parks, and basketball/multi-use courts to address gaps in distribution and growing communities
- Introduced new levels of service for emerging park amenities, such as pickleball courts, outdoor skating loops, and outdoor fitness stations in parks and along trails

Programs and Services

- Launched several initiatives to provide safe options during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as Older Adult Outreach, Rec At Home, and more
- Partnered with school boards and Hamilton Public Library on a number of community integrated projects
- Completed and contributed to several topic-specific planning studies and new policy development (such as updates to allocation policies)
- Provided support to Hamilton's bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games



Asset Inventory

Hamilton's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities have long been a defining feature and strength of the city. They provide the places and spaces through which many Hamiltonians realize their physical activity and wellness goals, connect with others, learn new skills, and participate in sports and leisure activities.

Current City of Hamilton Inventory, Indoor Recreation Facilities (2022)

Facility Type	Municipal Supply	Notes
Community Recreation Centres	23	Includes YMCAs and Boys & Girls Club (4).
Indoor Pools	23	Includes YMCAs and Boys & Girls Club (4).
Outdoor Pools	10	
Gymnasiums	16	Includes school gymnasiums operated under agreement.
Seniors Recreation Spaces	12	Includes stand-alone centres and dedicated space within CRCs
Arenas (ice pads)	25	Excludes non-municipal supply (9 ice pads); First Ontario Centre is excluded.
Community Halls	27	
Soccer and Multi-use Fields	190 (204 ULE)	Fields with lights are equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields (ULE) and each artificial field is equivalent to 3.0.
Football Fields	18 (21.5 ULE)	These are a subset of multi-use fields. Fields with lights are equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields (ULE).
Baseball Diamonds	195 (223 ULE)	Diamonds with lights are deemed equivalent to 2.0 unlit diamonds (ULE).
Cricket Fields	2	
Playground Locations	256 sites	Includes nearly 1,000 individual pieces of equipment.
Outdoor Fitness Stations	9	
Tennis Courts	79	Includes club courts
Pickleball Courts	36	Includes 24 dedicated courts and 12 shared with tennis.
Basketball and Multi-use Courts	106.5 FCE	Each half basketball court is considered equivalent to 0.5 full courts.
Beach Volleyball Courts	2	Excludes 12 courts managed by Conservation Authority.
Bocce Courts	39	15 locations.
Lawn Bowling Greens	4	3 locations.
Spray Pads	69	
Wading Pools	8	
Skateboard Parks	8	
Bike Parks and Pump Tracks	1	
Leash Free Dog Zones	12	Includes both dog parks and free running areas.
Outdoor Ice Rinks and Trails	71	Includes both natural and artificial ice surfaces.
Community Gardens	14	Includes gardens on City lands only.
Golf Courses	2 (54 holes)	
Outdoor Running Tracks	5	Excludes school facilities.
Support Buildings in Parks	not itemized	
Washroom Buildings in Parks	not itemized	

2.2 Recreation Helps the City Achieve its Goals – Policy Review

The Master Plan is guided by and has regard to a wide range of municipal and senior government strategies, policies, and reports. Many of these reports position recreation and parks facilities and services as important contributors in addressing key social, environmental, and economic issues. This Master Plan will serve as a point of reference to these and other municipal documents as they are updated over time.

Key Municipal Studies Supporting the Recreation Master Plan



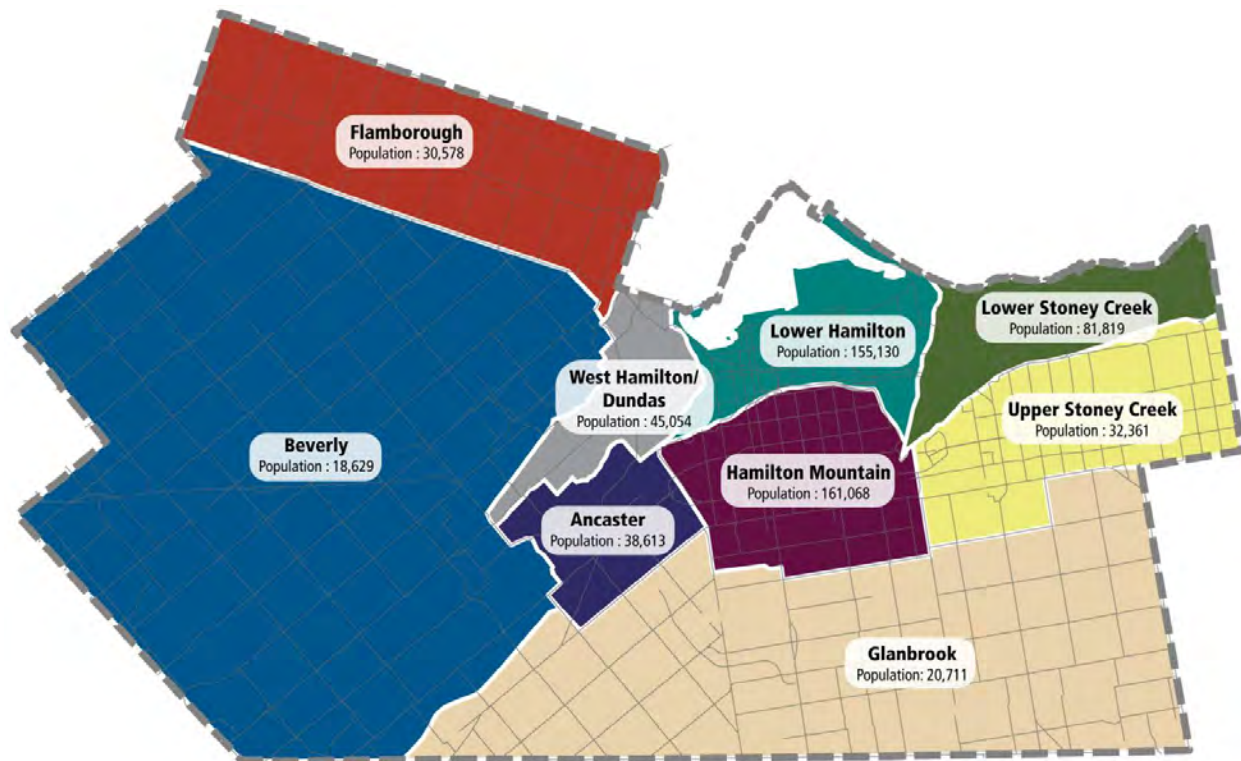
2.3 Community Context and Demographic Profile

Recreation Planning Areas

Past planning studies have divided Hamilton into nine sub-areas to allow for more detailed analysis. These planning communities were chosen based on a combination of factors, including major physical barriers (e.g., escarpment, highways) that can restrict accessibility to recreation areas.

These nine Recreation Planning Areas (RPA) have been maintained within this Recreation Master Plan, with minor adjustments to reflect updates to Hamilton's built boundary over the years. The RPAs are not intended to reflect approved growth boundaries, but rather they represent geographic points of reference and areas that may share general catchment areas for some recreation services. This approach allows for comparisons and assists in understanding both city-wide and more localized service and facility provision levels and needs.

Recreation Planning Areas and 2021 Population Estimates



Population Source: City of Hamilton (GRIDS 2), 2022

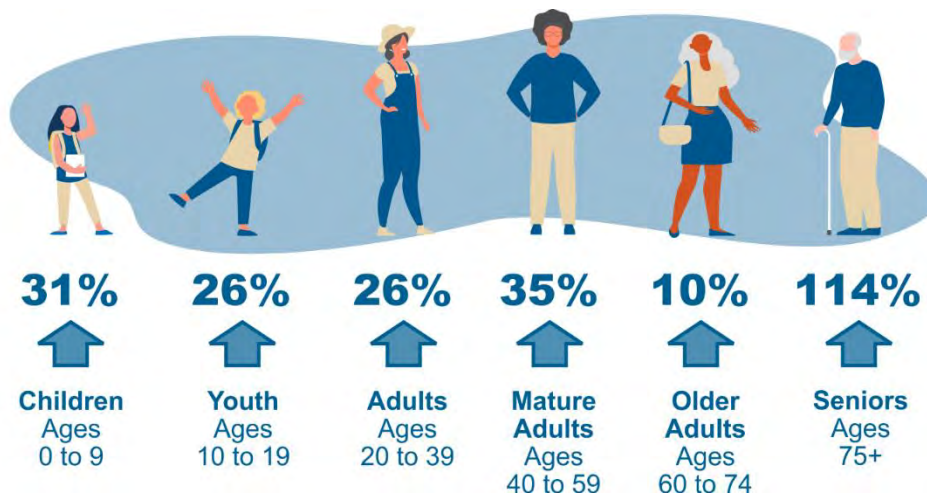
Population Characteristics

With a 2021 population of 584,000 persons¹, Hamilton is one of Ontario’s largest cities. The city has seen strong growth over the past few decades; however, development is experienced differently throughout the city, reflecting the differences between rural areas, mature communities, and areas designated for growth.

Like most communities, Hamilton’s population has also been aging. In 2021, however, the median age of the city’s population declined to 40.8 years. This may be influenced by recent migration trends, which has seen more younger residents moving to the city. Age is an important factor in the planning of recreation services. For example, younger populations tend to use recreation facilities at a higher rate and prioritize programs for children and youth, while older populations may favour more passive forms of recreational activities and daytime schedules.

Looking to the future, residents aged 75 years and over area anticipated to increase by 43% by 2031 and 114% by 2046. All other age groups – including children, youth, young adults and adults – are forecasted to grow by 26% to 35% between 2021 and 2046.

Projections by Age Group, Proportion of City of Hamilton Population (2021 to 2046)



Source: Ontario Ministry of Finance, Ontario Population Projections (Reference Scenario), 2020.

Hamilton is also a diverse community. Different cultures value recreation differently, or may be interested in non-traditional recreational activities. As of 2016, 25% of residents were born outside of Canada. As the city grows, it is possible that it will become a destination for new immigrants and more ethnically diverse residents.

Research shows that higher levels of income are associated with higher levels of participation in recreational activities. For lower-income households, costs associated with transportation, user fees, and equipment may pose barriers to participation. In 2015, Hamilton’s median income was lower than the provincial median income, suggesting that costs may be a barrier to participation for many. The greatest concentrations of people experiencing income-related marginalization are situated in Lower Hamilton, parts of Hamilton Mountain, and parts of Lower Stoney Creek. The City has affordable access policies and many low-cost programs in place to mitigate these concerns.

¹ City of Hamilton. GRIDS 2 and Municipal Comprehensive Review – Final Land Needs Assessment (PED17010(i)). March 29, 2021

2.4 Planning for Tomorrow – Projected Population Growth

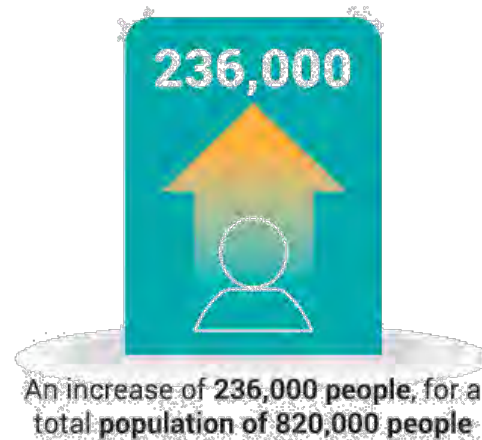
The Provincial Growth Plan provides the forecasts which municipalities must plan to accommodate, as well as the minimum intensification and density targets the City must plan to achieve. On this basis, Hamilton will play an expanded economic and demographic role within the regional metropolitan area over the planning horizon to 2051. The provincial forecast is that Hamilton will achieve a **2051 population of 820,000** (including the Census net undercount). This forecast calls for a significant amount of growth relative to the past – twice as much over the next 20 years than the last 20 years, and beyond to 2051.

City of Hamilton Historical and Forecasted Population

Year	Population*
2001	510,140
2011	535,000
2021	584,000
2031	652,000
2041	733,000
2051	820,000

* Figures include Census undercount

Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census data and Growth Plan Schedule 3 forecasts for 2051.



In 2017, the City launched an update of the Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy (GRIDS 2) and the Municipal Comprehensive Review to determine urban land needs and growth policies for the period to 2051. In November 2021, City Council endorsed the ‘No Urban Boundary Expansion’ growth option which accommodates the city’s growth to 2051 within the existing urban area through intensification and development of existing designated greenfield lands, and a limited amount of infill development within rural Hamilton.

Population forecasts to 2051 for the approved growth option are shown below, organized by the nine Recreation Planning Areas.

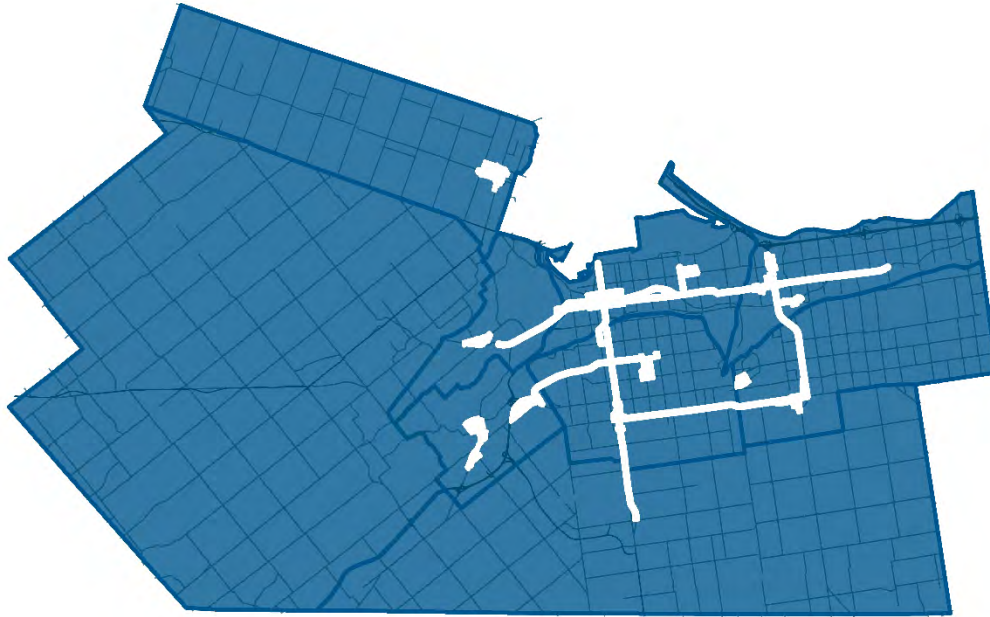
GRIDS 2 Population Forecasts by Recreation Planning Area – ‘No Urban Boundary’ Expansion Forecast

RPA	2021	2031	2041	2051	Change 2021 - 2051	
Ancaster	38,613	41,448	43,725	45,444	6,831	18%
Beverly	18,629	18,493	18,311	18,084	-545	-3%
Flamborough	30,578	36,767	41,435	44,580	14,002	46%
Glanbrook	20,711	24,653	27,209	28,379	7,668	37%
Hamilton Mountain	161,068	176,419	188,635	197,717	36,649	23%
Lower Hamilton	155,130	182,555	219,121	264,828	109,698	71%
Lower Stoney Creek	81,819	97,271	111,067	123,205	41,386	52%
Upper Stoney Creek	32,361	39,275	44,036	46,642	14,281	44%
West Hamilton/Dundas	45,054	46,729	48,961	51,752	6,698	15%
Total	583,963	663,610	742,499	820,631	236,408	40%

Source:: City of Hamilton (GRIDS 2), 2022

As directed by the Urban Official Plan, the City's primary strategic growth areas include the Downtown Urban Growth Centre, urban nodes and corridors (typically structured around the public transportation system, including Major Transit Station Areas) and residential intensification within existing neighbourhoods.

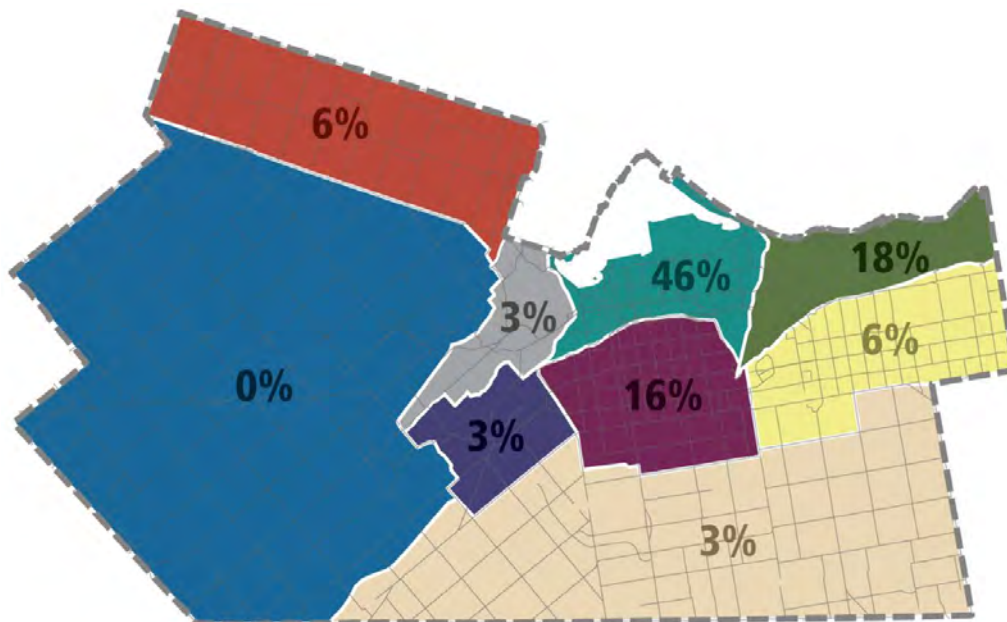
Primary Growth Nodes and Corridors



Source: City of Hamilton, 2022

Eight of the nine RPAs are expected to increase in population by 2051 (with the rural area of Beverley being the exception). Nearly one-half (46%) of new residents are anticipated to be housed in Lower Hamilton.

GRIDS 2 – 'No Urban Boundary' Expansion Forecast – Allocation of City-wide Population Growth to 2051



Source: City of Hamilton (GRIDS 2), 2022. 'No Urban Boundary Expansion' growth scenario.

2.5 Trends and Leading Practices

The way in which we design and provide recreation services and facilities is constantly evolving in response to socio-demographic and activity trends within the community. A variety of trends and leading practices from the recreational sector are highlighted below and have been given specific emphasis throughout this Master Plan.

Rising User Expectations

Hamilton's changing urban structure and community composition have a significant influence on recreation needs and participation. For example, locally-accessible spaces and services will be needed to address increasingly busy lifestyles and growth areas, including new ways of delivering services in higher density areas. An aging population may mean demand for activities that support social connections and healthy active aging, including more daytime services. Greater ethnic diversity will introduce new sports and leisure activities into the community, as well as adjusting norms around design and operations. Further, rising income disparities are creating greater interest in both low-to-no cost alternatives, as well as higher-cost and more advanced recreational training opportunities. Regular planning and trend tracking will help the City to remain nimble in responding to changing needs.

Health and Wellness Focus

Physical inactivity rates remain alarmingly high in North America and levels of physical activity declined during the COVID-19 pandemic as more sedentary activities took hold. For many, municipal recreation services provide critical supports to maintain personal health and physical literacy, including combating inactivity levels, social isolation, stress and anxiety. Access to outdoor spaces, physical literacy in schools, and affordable, accessible leisure activities are key determinants in engaging children and youth in active recreation. The downstream health care costs are significantly higher than the upfront preventative costs associated with active living.

Barrier-Free Accessibility and Inclusion

Older facilities were designed to the standards of the day and many lack full barrier-free accessibility, which creates challenges for some users. The City of Hamilton is committed to promoting inclusion and removing accessibility barriers from public spaces and services for all users. From customer service training, to offering safe spaces for residents, to providing gender-neutral washrooms and more, all new and redeveloped facilities will be designed with accessibility at the forefront. This includes addressing not only physical barriers, but also economic, attitudinal, organizational, informational and technological barriers. A key focus of this Master Plan has been placed on increasing participation amongst underserved populations.



Aging Infrastructure

The 2019 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card found that approximately one-third of Canada's sports and recreation facilities were considered to be in "fair" condition or worse. This suggests that municipal sports and recreation facilities require attention as they are showing notable signs of deterioration up to and including failure. Many municipalities are pursuing renewal and reinvestment projects, sometimes using non-tax-based funding approaches such as senior government grants, naming rights, operating partnerships, land swaps, etc. The infrastructure deficit also provides an opportunity to rethink provision and consider facility conversion or adaptive re-use options that accommodate emerging activities.

High Quality, Multi-functional and Flexible Facilities

Modern recreation facilities provide a convenient "one-stop-shop" experience that offer something for everyone, rather than being designed solely for singular uses. The new Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre is a great example of this, as is the recently expanded Valley Park Community Centre. The community hub model has also emerged in Hamilton's rural areas through the development of joint municipal/school facilities in Beverly and Greensville. Co-location of complementary spaces creates convenient activity centres and generates financial efficiencies through centralized operations. The provision of high quality, multi-use facilities encourages physical and social activity among all age groups, while also creating opportunities for sport tourism at a regional scale. Best practices in facility design consider safety, comfort, placemaking and opportunities for community gathering, socialization, and inclusive experiences.

Post-Pandemic Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a broad range of impacts on the recreation sector, some short-term and others that may take longer to fully understand. From 2020 until the beginning of 2022, all recreation services were impacted and public participation in organized activities plummeted. Impacts have also been felt by the City as the pandemic caused delays in planned capital works, led to rising costs for materials and labour, and restricted training opportunities that – in part – are now contributing to staffing shortages and decreased opportunities in areas such as aquatics.

With public health restrictions now lifted, the City and other providers are working hard to return to pre-pandemic resource and participation levels. The recovery is likely to be quicker for certain programs (such as outdoor sport and arena activities) due to the established volunteer network and a lower reliance on municipal program staff; though it is worth noting that many community organizations are dealing with a loss of volunteers, underscoring the need to engage the younger generation to sustain these services moving forward. For other services that rely on the City's leadership and certification programs (most notably aquatics, camps and specialized programs) it will take longer to regain past registration levels. The City will continue to explore a variety of approaches to expand and enhance programming in the years to come.



Unstructured, Self-Directed Recreation

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

Emerging Activities

The popularity of recreation activities and sports changes with time and can be affected by several factors, most notably socio-economic characteristics, lifestyle trends, and the exposure and accessibility of the activity. National registration figures indicate that, where once ice hockey and baseball were dominant, soccer has taken rise since the 1990s. The once popular sports of curling, racquetball, and aerobics – though still popular in some areas – have generally given way to new and emerging activities such as pickleball, skateboarding and BMX biking, outdoor fitness and new forms of body weight training, cricket, year-round indoor athletic training, challenge courses and risky play, plus other sports that are established but growing such as basketball and tennis. The rise of online gaming and eSports is also being noticed by many recreation departments as it becomes more of a mainstream activity that engages and connects with older youth.

Outdoor Park Use and Recreation

Hamilton, like all communities, witnessed increased demand for unstructured outdoor recreation activities within parks and trails during the COVID-19 pandemic as residents found or rediscovered new ways to remain active and connected. Although this has created some operational challenges, it has largely been viewed positively as it has strengthened residents' connections with their community and nature, and introduced many people to new activities – often within their local neighbourhood. Even prior to the pandemic, there was a movement citing the benefits associated with “challenging or risky play” and encouraging opportunities for children to explore creative play, often in outdoor settings.



Gender Equity in Sport

A substantially higher percentage of boys and men participate in sport compared to girls and women. Starting in late adolescence, one-in three women leave sport as compared to one-in-ten boys². Common barriers include low levels of confidence, low body image, lack of skills and feeling unwelcomed in a sport environment. To bolster participation among women, the Federal government established a goal of achieving equity in sport participation by the year 2035.

Sport-Friendly Facilities

Increasingly, athletes and organizations serving the competitive sport market are seeking recreation infrastructure that is built to be "competition-ready" in order to accommodate elevated training and sport tourism opportunities. There are many ways for recreation facilities to support the needs of all users along the sport spectrum. This process can be informed by a comprehensive sport plan that identifies opportunities and priorities and further informs the facility design and partnership work that is critical in serving the sport tourism community. Hamilton is proud to offer many high quality facilities that serve a wide range of recreational and competitive needs, and also benefits from convenient access to specialized venues offered by other sectors and regional providers.

Technological Innovations

Technological advances are enabling service providers and users to be more aware of recreation opportunities in their communities. From online services and virtual programming (which was vital for many during the pandemic) to mobile and wearable technologies, the integrated application of technology in recreation service delivery can assist in enhancing client experiences, engaging a wider segment of the population, and enabling staff to make better, informed decisions on the current needs and demands of the community.

Environmental Design and Climate Change

The way in which we design and operate our recreation and parks facilities and services is also being affected by our environmental objectives, such as Hamilton's 2019 declaration of a climate emergency. The increased focus on facility sustainability and resiliency – such as net zero greenhouse gas emissions, carbon-neutrality and low impact design – is creating new opportunities for facility and park design, though often at a higher initial capital cost (sometimes balanced against longer term operational savings). Fortunately, the many environmental benefits of parks and public spaces – such as reducing the urban heat island effect, mitigating flooding, and improving air quality – illustrate the critical importance of their role as public infrastructure and lend support for further investment.

The Necessity of Partnerships

Collaborations with private and non-profit organizations are becoming increasingly common (and necessary) in Ontario municipalities. Partnerships can offer a number of benefits such as the sharing of costs and responsibilities, as well as economies of scale and shared expertise. The City of Hamilton has a long history of working with public libraries, school boards, service clubs, or other providers to maximize resources.

² Canadian Women & Sport. *The Rally Report*. 2020. https://womenandsport.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Canadian-Women-Sport_The-Rally-Report.pdf

2.6 Challenges and Opportunities

The contextual information presented herein supports a series of observations relating to the City of Hamilton’s recreation system. These issues and others identified through community engagement (see Section 3) and research have been addressed as part of the Master Plan’s recommendations.

1. **Hamilton is growing.** Forecasts call for 236,000 new residents over the next 30 years – as a point of reference, this is slightly more than the current populations of the cities of Kitchener or Windsor. New and improved facilities and expanded services will be needed to meet growth-related requirements.
2. **Hamilton’s urban structure is evolving.** Greater residential intensification is occurring within built-up areas (focusing on Lower Hamilton), while growth will continue in the near term within designated greenfield areas (Upper Stoney Creek and Hamilton Mountain). Through recent updates to Hamilton’s Official Plans, City Council has endorsed the “No Urban Boundary Expansion” growth scenario to accommodate forecasted population and employment growth to the year 2051.
3. **Recreation services are people services.** Concepts of equity, inclusion, community wellbeing, environmental responsibility, and fiscal accountability are embedded in the City’s corporate culture. The Master Plan reflects these values in its decision-making frameworks and implementation strategies.
4. **Investing in existing assets remains a priority.** The City must stay focussed on reinvesting in its aging recreation infrastructure to ensure that places and spaces are accessible and responsive to today’s needs. Greater residential intensification will place additional pressure on existing facilities and parks. Strategies for facility renewal, expansion and redevelopment are an important part of the Recreation Master Plan.
5. **The range of recreation services is growing and new priorities are emerging.** Pickleball, off-road biking, and outdoor fitness are just some of the new activities that residents are looking for within the City’s recreation and parks system. Monitoring of trends in sports and activities allows the City to look toward a balanced range of amenities in the right place and at the right time. Flexibility in park and facility design and ongoing engagement also helps the City respond to changing participation patterns.
6. **The pandemic will have a lasting impact on parks, recreation facilities and programs.** Unstructured park use increased during the pandemic, helping people stay active and connected. Recreation and parks are increasingly being viewed as essential not only to physical health, but also mental wellbeing. However, many departments, community providers and volunteers experienced financial and human resource challenges during the pandemic. Long-term planning and strategic investment are vital to support the significant role that our spaces and community organizations play in our personal, social, and economic recovery and revitalization.
7. **The City cannot meet the full range of needs alone.** Working with the community and partners can add value and leverage resources. Hamilton has many examples of grassroots initiatives that have animated parks and engaged communities. On a larger scale, there are several planned and proposed community recreation centre projects that may present opportunities to partner with aligned providers, such as the Hamilton Public Library. Criteria for municipal participation in new or expanded lines of business can help to guide difficult decisions around levels of service.
8. **Strategies are needed for the sustainable funding of recreation facility development, maintenance, and operation.** The Master Plan supports accessible and high quality recreation and parks services that enable residents of all ages to lead healthy, active lives. To achieve this, the City will employ evidence-based frameworks, policies and practices, and alternative funding models that allow for transparent decision-making and sound financial planning that keeps pace with needs. Together with guiding documents such as the Our Future Hamilton, the Master Plan will help the City support the ongoing delivery of recreation services in a fiscally responsible manner

3. Community Perspectives

Community input was vital to the Master Plan process and will continue through its implementation phase. This section summarizes the Master Plan's public and stakeholder engagement process and key findings.



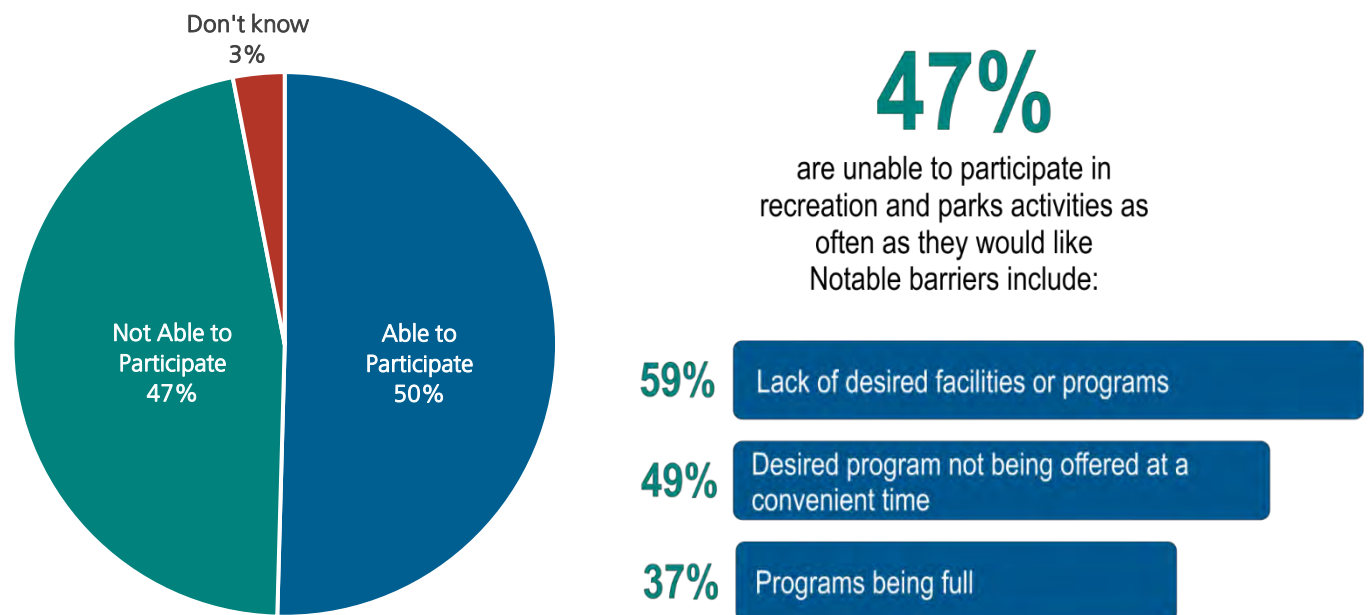
3.2 Community Survey

The community survey gathered information from residents regarding participation rates and potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, barriers to participation, types of facilities used and frequency of use, travel time, levels of satisfaction, support for investment, and more. A total of 2,095 unique survey responses were received, representing an estimated 6,000 to 7,000 residents.

Recreation Participation

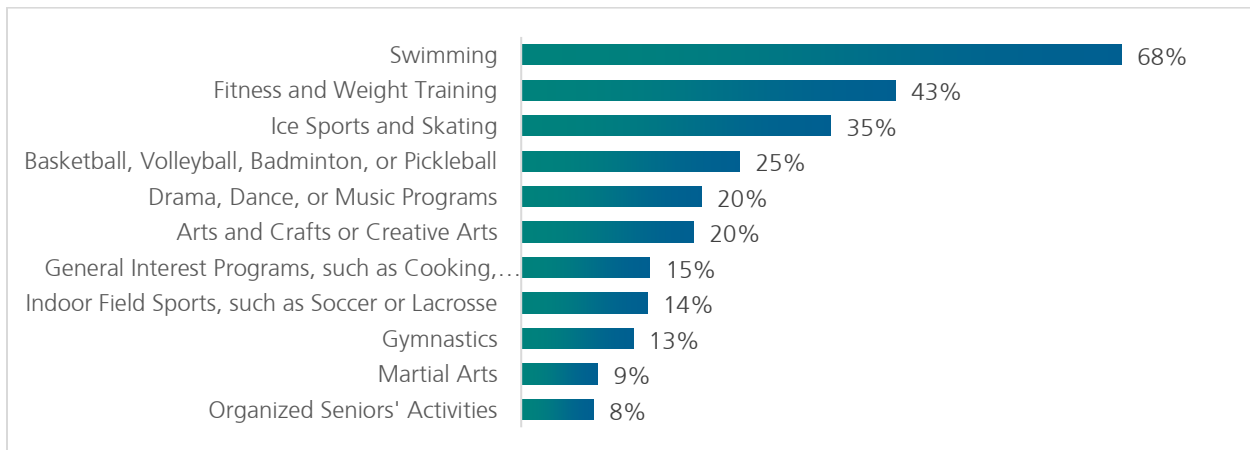
Nearly half (47%) of respondents were unable to participate in recreation and parks activities as often as they would like, with a “lack of desired facilities or programs”. Past survey findings noted “a lack of time” as the primary barrier; however, this is found to be lower on the list this time around suggesting that community expectations around facility and program provision are rising.

Ability to Participate in Recreation and Parks Activities (prior to the pandemic) and Barriers to Participation

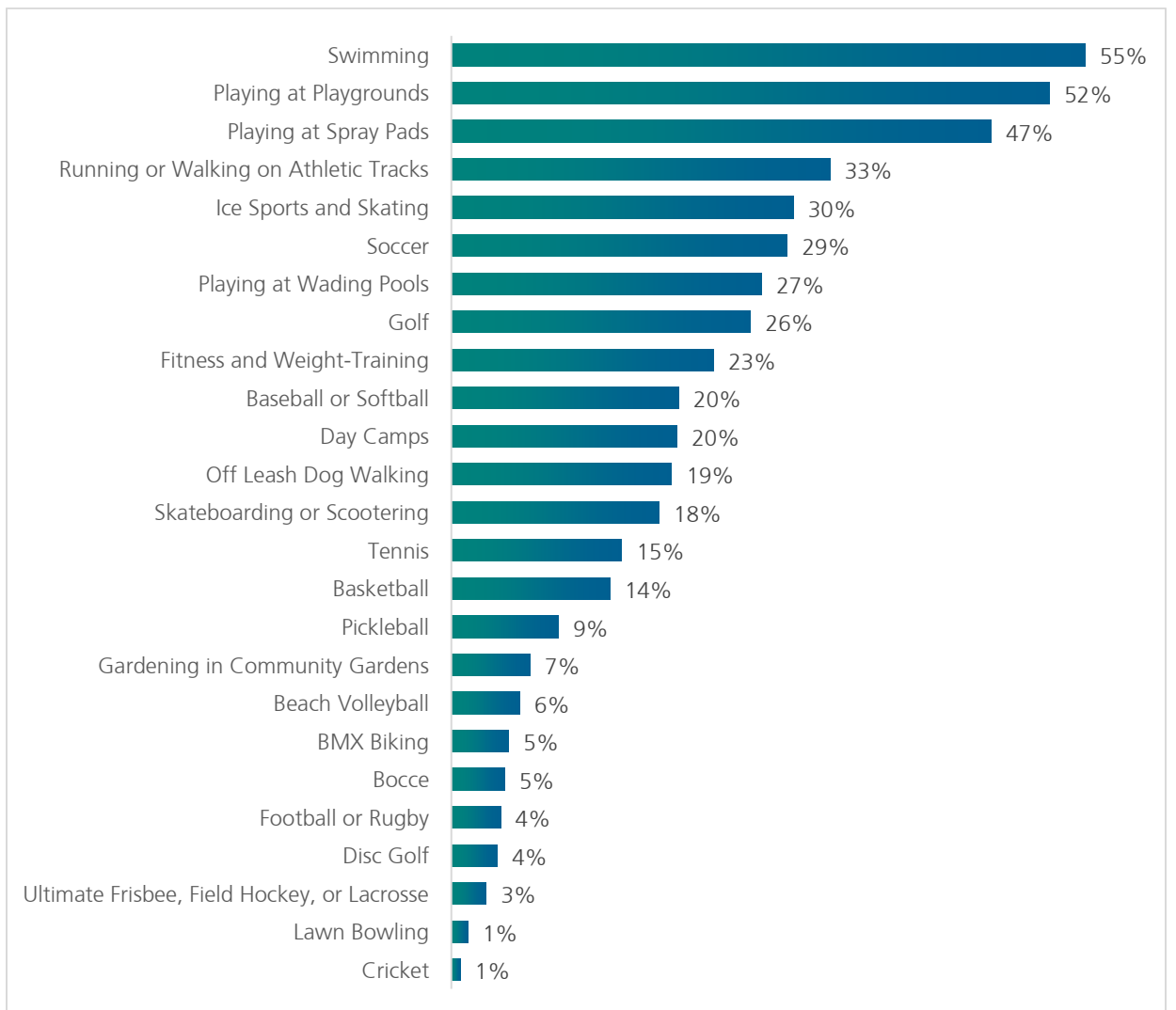


As for participation, the most common indoor and outdoor sports and activities in Hamilton include swimming (indoor and outdoor), use of playgrounds, use of spray pads, and fitness and weight training, with 43% to 68% of all households participating. Compared to past surveys, it appears that the use of spray pads and skateboard parks is on the rise, potentially reflecting the growing number of opportunities for these activities in Hamilton.

Household Participation in Indoor Sports and Activities (since 2019) (n=2095)



Household Participation in Outdoor Sports and Activities (since 2019) (n=2095)



Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents have utilized City of Hamilton indoor recreation facilities since 2019, while 60% have visited City of Hamilton parks, civic spaces, or golf courses.



The typical household visits Hamilton recreation facilities between 20 and 52 times per year (on average travelling 11 to 16 minutes), indicating that these are critical pieces of community infrastructure with essential programming.

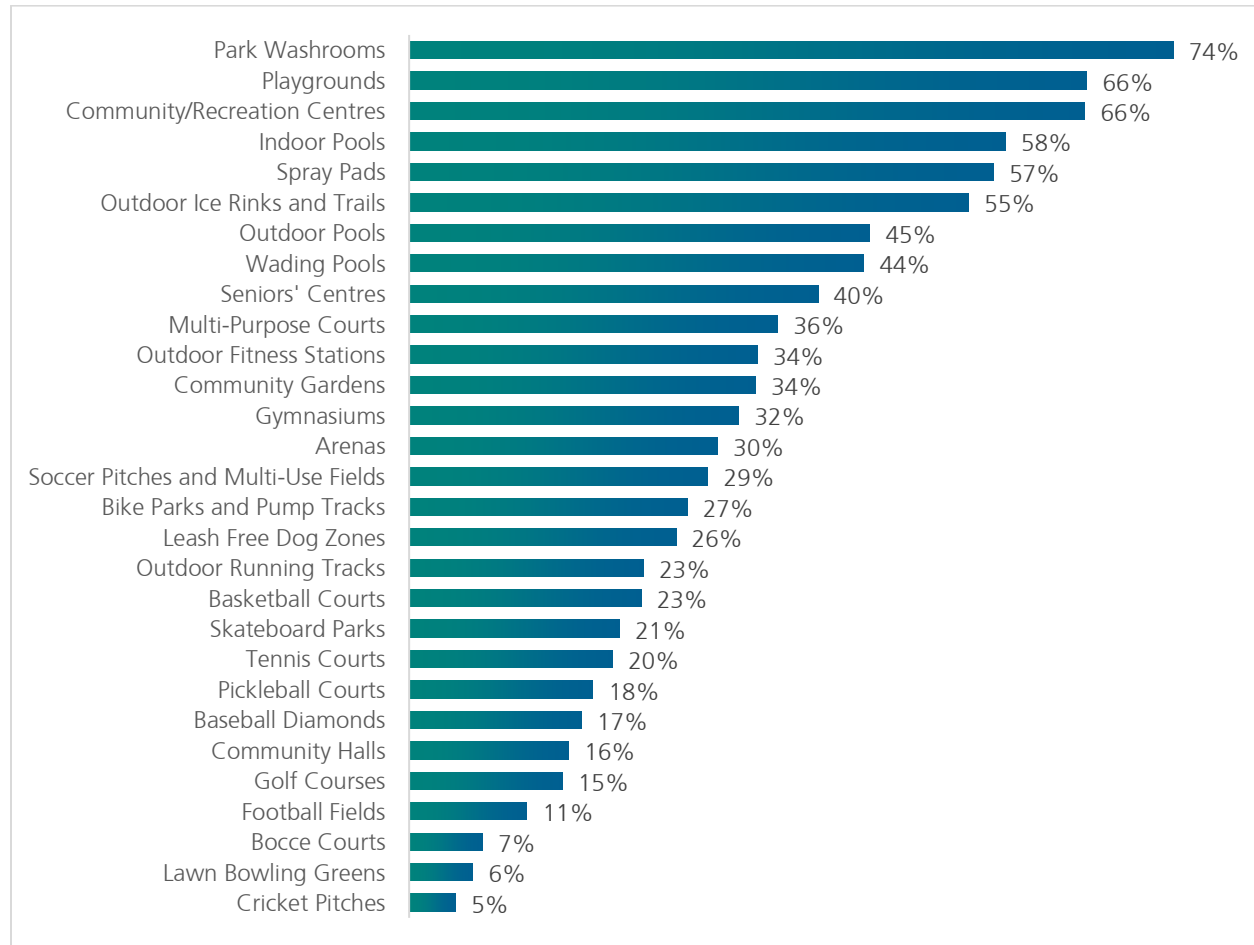


Facility Investment

Priorities for improving or developing recreation and park facilities are listed below – the highest priorities were placed on amenities that service all ages and abilities, including those focused on children. Compared to previous surveys, the desire for new or improved arenas, senior’s centres, and sports fields (soccer, baseball, football) appears to be declining, while the demand for spray pads is increasing.



Percentage indicating that Facility Types are a High Priority for Investment (new or improved facilities)



3.3 Stakeholder Input

In 2021, we reached out to over 550 user groups, community organizations, service providers, and partners that are involved in the delivery of recreation services across Hamilton. Nearly one-quarter (123 organizations) took the time to tell us more about participation trends, facility utilization, satisfaction levels, current and future facility and programming needs, opportunities to partner, and more. In total, the groups that responded represent more than 60,000 members, the majority of which are Hamilton residents.

These groups represent both youth and adults, as well as recreational and competitive levels of play. They rely heavily on City of Hamilton sports fields, arenas and community recreation centres for their activities. Three-quarters (74%) rated City facilities as good or excellent at meeting their needs. Digging a bit deeper, on average, groups characterized "facility locations" as excellent, but noted that opportunities for "year-round use and sport development" were only fair. In particular, several sport field groups are seeking access to indoor spaces in the winter to extend their training.



Responses to additional statements of interest are shown below. Most notably, there is optimism as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, with nearly one-half of groups anticipating additional facility needs to accommodate anticipated future participation increases.



3.4 Public Sessions

In June 2022, virtual Public Information Centres were held across three separate evenings to gather input on the Recreation Master Plan as it was being developed. The sessions allowed us to report on emerging findings and to hear the community's comments on the Plan as it takes shape. A total of 37 people – many representing community and sport organizations in the city – participated in the sessions. The following points provide a summary of the input.

- a) **The Guiding Principles are Hitting the Mark** – Support was expressed for the Master Plan's guiding principles, particularly those addressing equity, accessibility for all (including persons with sensory disabilities), working together, and diversity of introductory-level choices.
- b) **After-School and Youth Programming is Needed Now More than Ever** – As we emerge from the pandemic, there was concern that younger teens need more opportunities to engage in safe, inclusive, and affordable social and physical activities.
- c) **Partnerships will help the City Address Gaps** – There are many capable volunteers and service providers in Hamilton that may be eager to assist the City in meeting its goals; some groups expressed interest in assisting the City with implementing the Master Plan.
- d) **Demand for Year-round and High Quality Facilities** – There were suggestions for facilities that are multi-use, competition-ready, sport-friendly facilities, and that can be used in all seasons (e.g., indoor pools, artificial turf fields, arena conversions, etc.), as well as excitement over a planned community centre in the Waterdown area.
- e) **Unstructured Outdoor Activities are on the Rise:** Interest was expressed for more trails and opportunities for cycling, mountain biking, and passive park use – many of these items are being examined through separate master plan processes.

3.5 Summary of What we Heard

The following themes were consistently expressed through the public and stakeholder engagement program and represent some of the key findings requiring action through this Recreation Master Plan.

1. Recreation and parks are essential services.

More than nine-out-of-ten (93%) survey respondents feel that recreation and parks facilities are important to their quality of life.

2. Residents support continued investment in park amenities and community recreation centres.

The majority of residents support additional public spending on washrooms (74%), playgrounds (66%), community recreation centres (66%), indoor pools (58%), spray pads (57%), and outdoor ice rinks and trails (55%). Compared to previous surveys, the desire for new or improved arenas, senior's centres, and sports fields (soccer, baseball, football) appears to be declining, while the demand for spray pads is rising.

3. Participation profiles and needs differ across the city.

Demographic and economic factors would appear to have an influence on the interests of citizens in different areas of Hamilton. For instance, growing suburban areas are more likely to be seeking services for children and youth. The Glanbrook area (including Binbrook) were very well represented in the survey and expressed particularly strong views around the need for more facilities and services, including community / recreation centres, indoor pools, gymnasiums and arenas.

4. Convenience plays a large role in influencing participation levels.

Nearly one-half (47%) of survey respondents indicated that they are not able to participate in recreational activities as often as they would like, commonly citing a lack of desired facilities or convenient program times. On average, residents are willing to travel 11 to 16 minutes to access the facilities and parks they use the most and there is evidence that this may be declining.

5. Residents generally prefer upgrading existing recreation and parks facilities before building new.

More survey respondents (85%) prioritized "upgrades to existing facilities" over those (77%) that prioritized "the development of new recreation and parks facilities". Respondents in areas with less convenient access to existing parks and facilities (e.g., Glanbrook) were more likely to identify a need for new recreation and parks facilities.

6. Accessible locations and barrier-free spaces are important to Hamiltonians.

The community survey yielded several comments about the need for safe active transportation routes to facilities and parks, as well as spaces and amenities that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

7. Before the pandemic started, City of Hamilton recreation and parks amenities were well used.

Amongst those that used them before and since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the typical household visits City facilities between 20 times per year (outdoor pools) and 52 times per year (community/recreation centres).

8. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on the recreation sector, but Hamiltonians are ready to re-engage and participate more than before.

Three-out-of-five (59%) indicated that they anticipate being more active overall as we begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of residents (75%) expect to spend more time outside in parks and trails and many (44%) anticipate participating more in individual and small group activities. Many also indicated that they will have more concerns surrounding the sanitization and cleanliness of facilities (53%) and physical distancing and large groups (44%).

9. Community organizations generally find City facilities to be affordable and conveniently located, but the opinions of the general population are mixed.

The location and cost of use were seldom identified as barriers to participation by organizations that rent City facilities. Many also make use of non-municipal facilities, which can often charge higher rents if they are privately-operated. Conversely, 64% of residents indicated that "Recreation and parks facilities are conveniently located to them and members of their household", while only 27% feel that "Recreation and parks facilities are distributed equitably across the entire City". Some survey respondents indicated that costs for recreation and parks services are not always affordable to lower-income families and seniors.



10. Participation is greatest for activities and sports that support unstructured play.

One-third or more of households indicate that they swim, use playgrounds and spray pads, run or walk on tracks, participate in fitness activities, play ice sports, and go skating outdoors. Aside from ice sports, all of these are self-scheduled activities and most appeal to all age groups and abilities.

11. Demand is growing for many sports.

The majority of organizations that completed the stakeholder survey anticipate more participants in the future than they had prior to the start of the pandemic. This includes field sports (soccer, baseball, cricket, football, etc.), basketball, volleyball, pickleball, and tennis. Conversely, the outlook is less optimistic for ice sports, with less than one-quarter anticipating a growth in participation.

12. The City leads the way in providing recreation services and facilities, but other providers help to fill the gaps.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of survey respondents have recently used City of Hamilton indoor facilities, while 60% have visited City of Hamilton parks, civic spaces, or golf courses. Others such as Conservation Areas (63%), Hamilton Public Libraries (51%), private facilities and clubs (38%), and schools / post-secondary (24%) are also important service providers. The community is very supportive of the City working with other service providers (e.g., schools, libraries, and non-profit agencies) to provide recreation facilities (88%), more so than working with the private sector (54%).

13. Adult sports and activities are becoming more prominent.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of organizations responding to the stakeholder questionnaire serve adult and older adult demographics (compared to 61% for children and youth). This may lead to more requests for full-size fields and facilities that are centrally located for convenient access from broader markets.

14. Support amenities are not always meeting expectations.

Many stakeholders indicated a need for more or better support amenities, such as washrooms, lighting, parking, and clubhouse facilities. Some organizations also expressed a need for greater accessibility and barrier-free spaces.

15. Several sports are seeking opportunities for year-round training.

The ability to train and play indoors in the winter was a common request from many sport groups. This would require greater access to sport-friendly gymnasiums, indoor turf fields, summer ice time, etc. Some groups are willing to provide financial contributions or fundraising toward new facilities or facility improvements.

16. There are requests for facilities that can support competitive programs and tournaments.

Multi-court and field complexes are in high demand as they support league operations and tournament potential. Among sports associations, baseball and multi-use field users expressed the lowest degree of satisfaction with existing amenities, suggested a need for more and higher quality facilities. Ice users, on the other hand, were generally satisfied with the current supply of arenas.

17. Many groups are concerned about a lack of volunteers.

Volunteer resources have long been a challenge for community recreation providers; however, the COVID-19 pandemic has also narrowed the pool of willing volunteers. Broader research indicates that this is one factor that has led to an increasing number of organizations ceasing operations and folding.

4. Guiding Principles and Planning Framework

Recreation services help to improve personal health and wellbeing for people of all ages and are a key pillar in the City's strategic planning. The strategic framework outlined in this section has guided the Master Plan's development and will help the City achieve its community vision.



4.1 Guiding Principles and Strategic Directions

A series of guiding principles and strategic directions have been developed to inform recommendations made in the Recreation Master Plan, as well as future decisions related to its implementation. These principles reflect City of Hamilton values and express fundamentally how the City will approach investment and set priorities in recreation facilities and services over the long-term.

Collectively, the principles establish a vision and direction for the City's recreation system that is supported by consultation and relevant research, including the City's Strategic Plan, Our Future Hamilton, and previous Indoor and Outdoor Facilities Studies. The strategic directions represent priority areas for the City of Hamilton in the provision of recreation.

The Plan's guiding principles represent a set of service provision requirements that provide central themes influencing all elements of service. They speak to overarching priorities and provide a common language for all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders. These principles provide a lens for staff as they go about developing and or refining services within their purview. They are not actions within themselves but must be considered as services are developed or refined. These core beliefs must guide all staff in all instances. Guiding principles may change as social mores and values shift and should be reviewed to determine if they continue to be relevant from time to time. They are complementary and should be read and interpreted as a set.



The following guiding principles have been approved by Council³ as the foundation for recommendations in this Recreation Master Plan, and to inform future decisions related to its implementation.

1. Equity and Inclusion
2. A Spectrum of Recreation Service Choices
3. High Quality Facilities and Services
4. Partnerships and Collective Impact
5. Financial Sustainability

These are defined on the following pages, with strategic directions identified for each principle. Every recommendation and proposed project advanced within this Recreation Master Plan should contribute in some way toward one or more of these guiding principles and their associated strategic directions.



³ Report to Emergency & Community Services Committee. [Recreation Master Plan Guiding Principles \(HSC22014\) \(City Wide\)](#). March 24, 2022.



Strategic Directions;

- a. Implement intentional approaches (policies, programs and outreach, etc.) that define what the City will do to include under-represented populations in the design and delivery of recreation services.
- b. Include members of the community who are under-served through means such as representation on committees, staff and volunteer teams.
- c. Strengthen the equitable distribution of services and facilities by addressing service and facility gaps and growth-related needs, taking into account the uniqueness of Hamilton's communities.
- d. Create accessible and inclusive activities and safe gathering spaces that help residents maintain active, healthy, and connected lifestyles.
- e. Provide exemplary customer service and welcome all members of the community into public spaces and programs.

Strategic Directions;

- a. Support and promote unstructured and structured experiences that encourage physical activity, learning, creativity, self-proficiency, community building, healthy aging, and fun.
- b. Design appealing facilities that accommodate a broad range of organized and self-directed activities, including amenities that can be used year-round and for multiple purposes.
- c. Optimize the utilization and improve the operational efficiency of existing facilities and programs.
- d. Work with all groups and organizations to identify the range of choices and establish strategies to address gaps in service.

Strategic Directions;

- a. Foster recreation places, spaces, and programs that are welcoming, safe, and promote a sense of belonging for all residents.
- b. Invest more in renewing and upgrading existing facilities, including accessibility improvements.
- c. Ensure that public spaces are safe, barrier-free and maintained in a state of good repair by employing proactive asset management practices.
- d. Support Hamilton's growth through proactive planning and innovative models that reflect an increasingly urbanized city.
- e. Consider the possible environmental and social impacts of recreation and parks infrastructure projects and services.
- f. Build and adapt recreational infrastructure to meet or exceed environmental standards, including reducing energy use, withstanding extreme weather events, and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.

Strategic Directions;

- a. Work with others to share information, explore new opportunities and address identified community issues.
- b. Prioritize co-location and shared space with other City services and viable community partners.
- c. Support volunteerism and community engagement in the planning and delivery of services and events.
- d. Work with community partners to create a sustainable sport development model.
- e. Celebrate the physical, social, economic, and environmental benefits of recreation on both individual and community wellbeing.

Strategic Directions;

- a. Advocate for sustainable funding approaches to support the delivery and maintenance of a high quality recreation system.
- b. Bolster long-term financial accountability through the cost-effective and efficient management of available resources.
- c. Adopt continuous improvement and quality assurance models in the delivery of service and use evidence to support decisions.
- d. Coordinate and align common objectives with cross-departmental and City-wide objectives and initiatives.
- e. Regularly measure the effectiveness and efficiency of services and facilities with the goal of maximizing participation, utilization, and user satisfaction.

4.2 Our Big Moves

To help the City put the guiding principles and strategic directions into action, a series of “Big Moves” have been identified. These items were developed based on the input and research undertaken in support of this Master Plan, and reflect both the current state assessment and analysis of future needs and long-term provision models.

The “Big Moves” within this Recreation Master Plan include:



1. **Developing strategies to strengthen resident participation, including accessible and affordable services and facilities.**



2. **Aligning our capital needs with the City’s new growth plan, such as community facilities in areas of higher density and updated design standards.**



3. **Making the case for capital renewal and upgrades to existing facilities, recognizing that sufficient funding is needed to take care of the assets the community values the most.**



4. **Identifying long-term capital projects for major facilities, which will inform our financial forecasts and partnership discussions.**



5. **Creating tools to reinforce the effective delivery of services, such as pandemic recovery, inclusion, community sport, partnership evaluation, and cross-sector collaboration.**



6. **Maximizing our impact through accessible, multi-use and high quality amenities that can address many needs across the age, ability, and activity spectrums.**

4.3 Facility Provision Decision-Making Framework

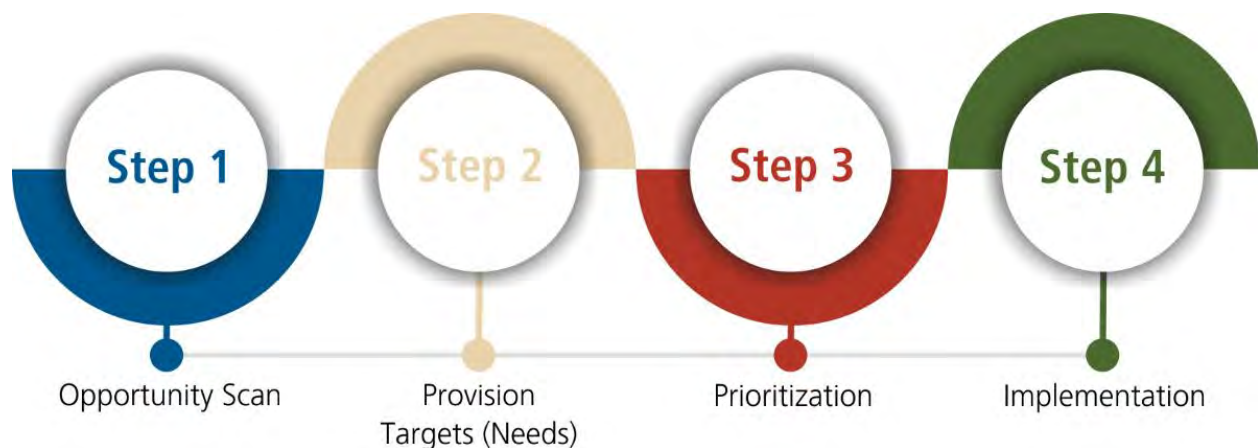
A key aspect of the Recreation Master Plan is that it identifies of short and long-term facility requirements, such as community recreation centres, aquatic facilities, sports fields, and courts. Many of these amenities are needed to address growth-related needs, while others respond to emerging demands and make it easier for residents to access the services they require.

An evidence-based decision framework based on demonstrated needs and projected future requirements has been used to guide the identification and prioritization of capital projects. The framework uses provision targets (population-based and/or service-based) that allow for long-term predictability. It also prioritizes equity and access across the entire city to ensure that areas of highest need are prioritized.

For most facility types, the model involves four steps (shown below):

1. The needs assessment process starts with the examination of the current state of facility assets to establish a basis for identifying facility renewal or repurposing opportunities ("Opportunity Scan").
2. This is followed by the creation of provision targets to determine geographic gaps (across and within each of the nine Recreation Planning Areas), growth-related needs (to 2051), and opportunities to improve and optimize existing facilities.
3. Strategies and priorities are then examined to determine the preferred approach for delivering on needs.
4. And finally, a fluid implementation stage begins as the City puts the Master Plan into action. In some cases, project-specific feasibility studies may be required prior to significant facility expansion, re-purposing, or development projects.

Recreation Master Plan: Facility Provision Decision-Making Framework



The framework considers a range of factors and is aligned with the Master Plan's guiding principles. Specific inputs considered throughout include:

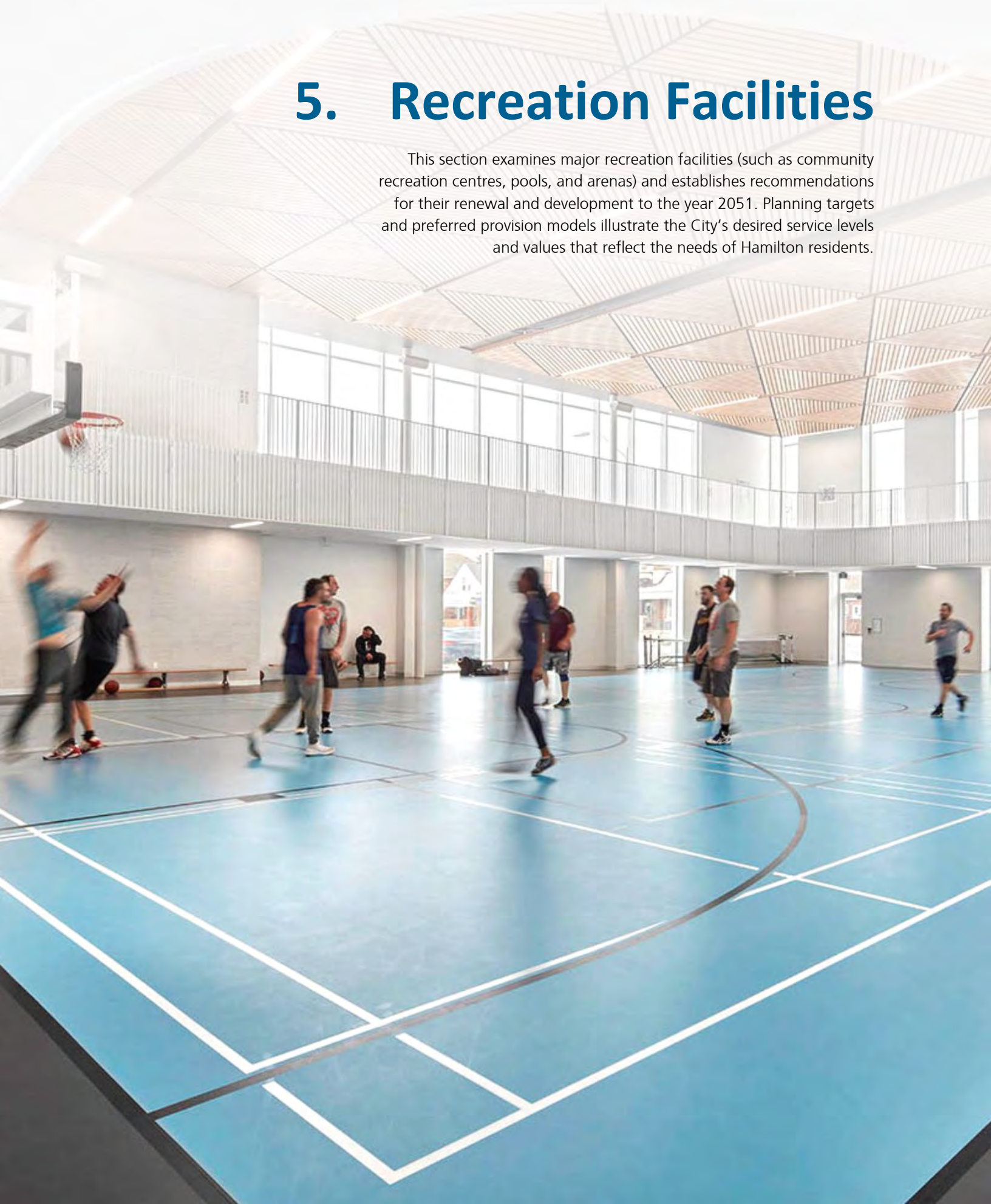
- a. current supplies and levels of provision;
- b. facility size, capacity, condition, accessibility, level of amenity, utilization;
- c. public and stakeholder input (facility demand, willingness to travel, etc.);
- d. geographic distribution;
- e. areas and timing of future growth;
- f. recreation participation trends;
- g. socio-demographic trends and under-served populations;
- h. availability of other notable facility and service providers;
- i. targets and recommendations from previous facility studies;
- j. benchmarking against large urban communities in Ontario;
- k. alignment with complementary strategies and initiatives; and
- l. financial viability and partnership potential.

Recommended facilities will be assigned a general priority and timeframe. Timing may be influenced by the project's status, population growth, and alignment with other civic initiatives or partnerships. Projects in advanced stages of planning, such as those that have initiated their design process, will proceed as planned.



5. Recreation Facilities

This section examines major recreation facilities (such as community recreation centres, pools, and arenas) and establishes recommendations for their renewal and development to the year 2051. Planning targets and preferred provision models illustrate the City's desired service levels and values that reflect the needs of Hamilton residents.



Summarized below are the recreation facility needs assessments. A summary of all recommendations is contained in Appendix A, while facility provision benchmarking and mapping of current inventories are illustrated in Appendix B and C. Please refer to the Phase 3 Report (found under separate cover) for the detailed supporting information and findings.

5.1 Community Recreation Centres

Community recreation centres (CRCs) are the foundation of Hamilton’s public recreation system. They are prominent community destinations that accommodate a wide variety of registered and drop-in City programming, casual use, rentals, community partnerships, and events that reflect the specific needs of area residents. In addition, these facilities play a vital role as a “third place” that provides a safe and inclusive space for people of all backgrounds.

Most of Hamilton’s CRCs facilities offer some degree of aquatic, gymnasium, and community recreation programming for persons of all ages. Many are co-located with schools, while others are associated with arenas or other spaces. Collectively, these facilities combine with more localized service options (such as community halls, schools, service clubs, cultural centres, private business, etc.) to create an extensive network of community-based facilities that offer a broad range of opportunities to residents and communities.

CURRENT INVENTORY

23

Community Recreation Centres

This includes YMCAs and Boys & Girls Club (4) that offer a high-degree of public access.

The City’s newest facilities include Bernie Morelli and Stoney Creek Recreation Centres.

Renewed and Expanded Community Recreation Centres

The average age of the City’s CRCs is 39 years (built 1983), the point at which major renewal or reconstruction often starts to be considered, as is the case with facilities such as (but not limited to) Bennetto RC (1970), Sir Winston Churchill RC (1970), and Ryerson RC (1975). Many of the City’s older CRCs are co-located with public elementary and secondary schools, making large-scale renewal more challenging as the City has less control over building systems and capital projects. In certain cases, schools have closed or reconstituted, creating opportunities for modernization and/or expansion. Many of these older, shared centres are located in Lower Hamilton and are increasingly in need of reinvestment.

Further, some of the City’s CRCs lack the spaces and technical specifications required in modern facilities. Examples include a growing need for full-size gymnasiums, walking tracks, barrier-free spaces, and specialized and multi-use rooms for community programming. Community facility design principles have changed substantially since older CRCs were built; for example, there is now a greater focus on natural light, inclusive design and universal accessibility, non-programmed community spaces, energy-efficient systems, public realm and connection to outdoor space, etc. This Master Plan supports projects that enhance the range of activities, spaces and community connections within each CRC.

The City has been gradually moving away from shared CRC/school buildings, while ensuring that the public has convenient access to community facilities – Westmount and Bernie Morelli CRCs are recent examples. While partnerships with schools may still be considered moving forward, the preferred model is one where the City has full autonomy over the space, operations and programming.

The community is supportive of maintaining and upgrading existing CRCs and the City should continue to reinvest in strategic renewal and expansion projects. A Renewal and Redevelopment Strategy is recommended in the short-term to guide major reinvestment in existing CRCs. Based on the assessment of other facility needs (e.g., indoor pools, gymnasiums, etc.), certain CRCs have been identified as candidates for expansion. In some cases, additional due diligence may be required to confirm project viability. For example, the ability to expand existing facilities may be restricted by site constraints, building/land ownership, functional design considerations, or other factors.

Capital Renewal Criteria for Community Recreation Centres

The following criteria should be used as a starting point in prioritizing CRC renewal projects:

- a) the facility is approximately 40+ years old (without a substantial renovation in 20+ years), with rising lifecycle costs and deteriorating condition;
- b) there is sustained demand for existing and/or expanded programs;
- c) there is a lack of suitable alternatives in the vicinity;
- d) the overall user experience is negatively affected by shortcomings in the facility's design (including lack of barrier-free access), functionality and/or quality of space;
- e) the facility serves one or more high needs areas and can be supported by the current and projected future population;
- f) the project is logistically and financially viable, including environmental constraints, space availability and temporary closure;
- g) the project has the potential to leverage value-added opportunities (e.g., operational efficiencies, partnerships, funding, alignment with other civic initiatives, etc.); and
- h) there is community support for revitalization or replacement.

The only existing CRC that is recommended for closure is the Winona Community Centre, which is temporary and will be replaced by a new facility in the Fruitland-Winona area through new construction.

New Community Recreation Centres

New space and facilities should keep pace with growth to ensure that residents will be served by new, improved, and expanded community facilities and resilient physical infrastructure. The City's ability to grow depends on responding in a timely and coordinated way to the demand for new or additional services.

It is recommended that the City provide community recreation centres (municipal or not-for-profit) based on provision target of one location per 27,500 residents. This is slightly lower than the existing service level of one per 25,400 persons, but reflects the City's evolving urban structure, available capacity, and the trend toward fewer, but larger facilities. To achieve this, a total of 30 CRCs will be required by 2051 – 7 more than are currently provided.

The latest era of facility design has trended toward the development of larger, multi-use CRCs (Class B or greater) that are owned and operated by the City. These facilities offer enhanced user convenience, operational efficiency, integrated service delivery approaches, and opportunities for cross-programming for all ages. This model will be most viable in lower density areas (e.g., greenfield areas) where land is more widely available and should continue to be pursued in areas such as Flamborough (Waterdown), Glanbrook (Binbrook), Lower Stoney Creek (Fruitland-Winona) and the southwestern portion of Hamilton Mountain. In these areas, options should be examined for developing municipally-owned and operated Class A or B CRCs, which can serve as a "one-stop shop" for families and area residents.

The model for CRC provision and design must also adapt to the City's evolving urban structure, which is gradually moving away from suburban growth to more compact urban built forms. Higher growth rates within the built-up area will have a number of impacts on CRC planning, design and delivery, necessitating renewal, expansion, and new forms of facility provision.

Planning for Intensification

CRCs located in areas of higher density will be an important part of the City'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 CRCs within denser areas faces unique challenges and opportunities that are not shared by developments in older or emerging suburbs.

Most notably, land costs will be greater, resulting in a smaller footprint and likelihood of a multi-storey CRC 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. Space and program design should reflect the needs of the community, which may be more diverse than greenfield areas. Urbanized areas also tend to have a range of alternate providers (e.g., fitness) that do not need to be duplicated within the CRC. Conversely, the need for non-programmed space and meeting rooms may increase.

With nearly one-half of the City's future growth allocated to Lower Hamilton (and another one-quarter allocated along major city corridors), large land-intensive CRCs will not be feasible. Further, these established areas also have a number of existing service points that will need to be enhanced and supplemented through new opportunities. Mobility in areas of residential intensification looks much different than in more suburban areas, with an emphasis on active transportation (walking, cycling, etc.) and public transit.

Based on these considerations, a CRC provision model that includes both vertical and horizontal centres is recommended:

- **"Vertical CRCs"** are multi-storey centres that are incorporated within the podium of mixed-use or high-rise residential buildings; they will be more common along key growth nodes and corridors where land is at a premium and may be part of a condominium or leased ownership structure.
- **"Horizontal CRCs"** refer to the City'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.

The programming of each new CRC will be tailored to the needs of the area and will be subject to a design and consultation process. More detail on these CRC models can be found in the Phase 3 Report.



Community Recreation Centre Provision Strategy and Recommendations

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 community recreation centre per 25,400 residents</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: 1 community recreation centre (municipal or not-for-profit) for every 27,500 residents; consideration may also be given to service radius of up to 2.5 km.</p> <p>To achieve this target, a total of 30 CRCs will be required by 2051 – 7 more than are currently provided. Several existing facilities should also be retrofitted and/or expanded.</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) We will prioritize the sustainability of existing CRCs through renewal and strategic investment, where warranted.</p> <p>b) We will continue to evolve our CRC operational model to optimize public access, flexible program spaces, and operational efficiencies.</p> <p>c) New CRCs will be developed (and existing ones expanded, where feasible) to improve equity and serve growth. Satellite facilities may be used as interim program sites to bridge the gap.</p> <p>d) A new model for CRC provision will be created that reflects the evolving urban structure in intensifying built-up areas.</p> <p>e) We will consider and evaluate partnership opportunities (e.g., public library, schools, community housing, etc.) that enhance the City’s ability to deliver exceptional and cost-effective services.</p> <p>f) Facility designs that are inclusive, multi-use, accessible, and resilient will be promoted. Each CRC should be anchored by a public indoor pool and/or gymnasium and contain multiple spaces for programs, activities and gatherings.</p>	<p>1. Prepare a CRC Renewal and Redevelopment Strategy in the short-term to guide major reinvestment in existing facilities. Key components include site specific needs and opportunities audits to determine the potential to renew and/or expand aging CRCs on-site or nearby. Many of these facilities may be co-located with schools and/or are constrained, such as Ryerson, Sir Winston Churchill, Dominic Agostino Riverdale, Hill Park, Sir Allan MacNab, Dalewood, and Central Recreation Centres and others. Criteria to assess need and priority are advanced in this Master Plan.</p> <p>2. Establish new growth-related CRCs (7) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waterdown (short-term) – pool, gym, program space, etc. (Harry Howell Arena) - Binbrook (short-term) – gym, program space (Glanbrook Arena) - Fruitland-Winona (short-term) – gym, program space to replace temporary CC (secondary plan site) - South Mountain (medium-term) – pool, gym, program space, etc. (site required) - Saltfleet (medium-term) – pool, gym, program space (Saltfleet Arena site - repurpose) - Growth-related needs in Lower Hamilton (medium to longer-term) – vertical CRCs; specific components to be evaluated (Eastwood Arena and 2 sites tbd)

Note: Population growth and availability of funding, land and partner will influence overall project timing. Demand for additional CRCs may emerge over the course of the planning period due to changing growth/market conditions or partnership opportunities. The criteria contained in this report should be used to evaluate future need.

5.2 Indoor Pools

The City is known for its strong supply of indoor pools, many of which are embedded within neighbourhoods across Hamilton. Over time, population growth will help to bolster usage levels at pools that currently have capacity for greater use. Traditionally, there are waitlists at many of the City's newer pool locations, as many users are seeking modern pool designs with contemporary amenities. Premier pools with multiple tanks, different water temperatures, and modern design standards respond to a wide variety of user groups and aquatic programming options, including parallel and multi-generational programming.

Looking ahead, pool capacity will need to be increased over time to address growth in Lower Hamilton through municipal redevelopment and new development projects. The provision model is linked to that of CRCs as indoor pools will be a major component of some – but not all – future centres. For example, projected populations are insufficient in Binbrook and Winona to support indoor pools; however, new CRC and pool development has been recommended in surrounding urban areas to improve access to these communities. New and updated indoor pools must be properly justified as they are expensive to operate and users are seeking a wide variety of features and services.

The provision target (one indoor pool location per 30,000 residents) has been established to reflect available capacity, resulting in a long-term need for four new indoor pool locations by 2051. One indoor pool project is recommended in the short-term – developing a municipal pool in Waterdown. New and replacement indoor pools should emphasize venues with multiple tanks, different water temperatures, and modern design standards such as universal change rooms and barrier-free accessibility.

CURRENT INVENTORY

23

Indoor Pool Locations

This includes YMCAs and Boys & Girls Club (4) that offer a high-degree of public access.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 indoor pool (municipal or not-for-profit) per 25,400 residents

Future Planning Target: 1 indoor pool (municipal or not-for-profit) for every 30,000 residents; consideration may also be given to a service radius of up to 2.5 km.

To achieve this target, a total of 27 indoor pool locations will be required by 2051 – 4 more than are currently provided.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) High quality indoor pools are responsive to needs and will be considered as part of many future CRC development and revitalization projects.</p> <p>b) Modern pool designs include multiple tanks with different water temperatures, universal change rooms, and barrier-free accessibility. 50-metre pools are not currently a service level that is supported by the City.</p> <p>c) Usage and modernization strategies will help to make the most of our existing indoor pool facilities.</p>	<p>3. Modernize indoor pools as part of CRC renewal projects, where feasible. Undertake a feasibility study in the short-term to consider options for renewing or replacing Dundas Community Pool.</p> <p>4. Develop indoor pools as part of the following growth-related CRCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waterdown (short-term) – Harry Howell Arena - South Mountain (medium-term) – site required - Saltfleet (medium-term) – replace H.G. Brewster Pool through redevelopment of Saltfleet Arena site - Growth-related needs in Lower Hamilton (medium to longer-term) – 2 sites tbd

5.3 Outdoor Pools

The previous indoor facility study called for a significant outdoor pool renewal program that has largely been completed, with the Victoria Park Outdoor Pool being the last one still to be redeveloped. Reconstruction of the City’s older municipal outdoor pools has led to increased usage, improved accessibility, and greater equity amongst Hamilton’s highest needs areas. Along with spray pads and wading pools, outdoor pools offer an important opportunity for cooling during heat alerts and should continue to be supported in areas that need them most. This renewal program should continue.

The current provision of outdoor pools is meeting needs, though there are gaps in distribution that may be exacerbated by growth in areas of residential intensification. In order to maintain the current level of service (approximately one outdoor pool location per 10,000 youth aged 5 to 19 years), two additional outdoor pool locations are recommended by 2051. Potential candidates for new outdoor pools are Hamilton Mountain and Lower Hamilton; these areas have higher needs, higher residential densities, fewer backyard pools, and emerging service gaps. Further investigation is required to determine appropriate sites; consideration may



be given to community-level parks that have shared infrastructure, sites that may support conversion of wading pools, and areas that are not otherwise well served by municipal indoor or outdoor swimming pools.

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 outdoor pool per 58,400 residents; 1 per 9,500 children and youth aged 5-19 years

Future Planning Target: 1 outdoor pool for every 10,000 children and youth aged 5-19 years; consideration may also be given to service radius of up to 2 km

To achieve this target, a total of 12 pools will be required by 2051, an increase of 2 pools over current levels.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Maintain existing outdoor pools to support affordable and accessible summer aquatic experiences to high needs areas.</p> <p>b) Consider targeted investment in new outdoor pool locations in higher needs areas that are under-served, have growing child/youth populations and few backyard pool opportunities.</p>	<p>5. Redevelop existing outdoor pools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victoria Park (short-term) - Chedoke Pool (medium-term) - Ancaster (longer-term) <p>6. Develop new outdoor pools to address growth-related needs in the following areas as opportunities allow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Mountain (medium-term) - Lower Hamilton (longer-term)



5.4 Gymnasiums

Gymnasiums are well-used spaces that offer extensive flexibility in use for sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, etc.), a wide variety of registered and drop-in programs, special events, community meetings and more. The City currently provides access to 16 gymnasiums, accounting for most City-operated CRCs (including several shared with schools) for an average provision of one gymnasium per 36,500 persons. The most notable CRCs currently lacking gymnasiums are Norman Pinky Lewis RC and Stoney Creek RC.

Demand for gymnasium space is expected to grow in pace with Hamilton’s population. The City should invest in full-size gymnasiums that can accommodate multiple sports and events through new and expanded CRCs, where possible and appropriate. In particular, additional gymnasiums will be required to serve population growth in Lower Hamilton, Lower Stoney Creek, and Hamilton Mountain.

CURRENT INVENTORY

16

Gymnasiums

This includes five gymnasiums shared with schools. Community access to shared gymnasiums is more limited.

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 gymnasium per 36,500 residents; note: includes school gymnasiums that are operated under agreement

Future Planning Target: 1 gymnasium within each new CRC

Provision Model

- a) Gymnasiums are viewed as a core component of most CRCs and will be included in most planned and expanded centres. A focus will be placed on ensuring that new and revitalized gymnasiums have appropriate dimensions and ancillary spaces (e.g., change rooms, storage, etc.).
- b) Multi-purpose rooms should be included with each CRC and should be designed to meet a broad variety of uses to support the intended programming.
- c) Indoor walking tracks will also be included in most CRCs, encircling gymnasiums, ice pads, or other features.

Recommendations

7. Develop gymnasiums as part of all new and expanded CRCs, where feasible. Notable gymnasium additions to existing CRCs in the short-term include:

- Norman Pinky Lewis RC
- Stoney Creek RC

See CRC recommendations for more detail.



5.5 Seniors Recreation Spaces

The City delivers programming for residents aged 55+ years through: (1) strategically-placed board-operated seniors recreation centres; and (2) dedicated and multi-purpose spaces, some of which are located in community recreation centres. The three Class A centres are membership-based, offering a wide range of registered and drop-in programming. Class B locations are club-based (some are coordinated by the City, others by volunteers) and provide more limited programming as some spaces are shared and/or rely in volunteers. Partnerships are critical to most locations.

Baby boomers (roughly 60 to 75 years old at present) are driving trends around more active and social forms of recreation such as pickleball, fitness, walking groups, and multi-generational activities. Many are not yet prime candidates to join a "traditional" seniors recreation centre, but they soon will be. Looking ahead, the City can anticipate greater demand for programs targeted to older seniors, such as lower-intensity fitness, dancing, crafts, special interests, etc. As a result, program offerings (especially daytime programs) will evolve and locations offering enhanced spaces and activity hubs could see increased demand.

The current "hub and spoke" model is well positioned to respond to this demand. Strategic expansions to the Sackville Hill Seniors Recreation Centre and Ancaster Seniors Activity Centre will help to address growing demand for space in the short-term. At a more local level, there are gaps in West Hamilton/Dundas, Lower Stoney Creek, Hamilton Mountain and Upper Stoney Creek. Many of these may be addressed through proposed CRCs and community hubs. Addressing these needs will support the City's Age-Friendly Plan by improving access to recreation within local communities.

CURRENT INVENTORY

12

Seniors Recreation Spaces

This includes three stand-alone seniors' facilities and club-based spaces within six other facilities (e.g., CRCS, leased space, etc.).

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 seniors recreation space per 48,670 residents

Future Planning Target: A service radius of up to 2 km will be used to evaluate new Class B seniors' spaces. To achieve this target, four to five new Class B seniors recreation space locations will be required by 2051.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) A mixed model of space provision will continue to be supported, with programming (and dedicated space, where appropriate) within CRCs complementing the offerings at exclusive use seniors recreation centres.</p> <p>b) The City will fill gaps through seniors' programming in multi-use community facilities and by working with aligned partners. New exclusive use seniors recreation centres are discouraged.</p>	<p>8. Expand existing seniors' recreation centres (e.g., Sackville Hill Seniors Centre, Ancaster Seniors Activity Centre) to meet growing program needs.</p> <p>9. Consider enhanced seniors' programming space at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alexander Park Community Hub project (short-term) – in partnership with local club if warranted/supported at this location - Proposed Fruitland-Winona CRC (short-term) – replacement for Winona Senior Citizen Centre - Proposed South Mountain CRC (medium-term) - Proposed Saltfleet CRC (medium-term) - Work with community partners to address potential needs in Hamilton Mountain and Upper Stoney Creek (longer-term)

5.6 Arenas

The proportion of children and youth participating in organized ice sports has been declining due to increased immigration, the cost of participation, and the emergence of other sports and activities. Despite sustained efforts to enhance usage, the demand for indoor ice rentals in Hamilton has largely plateaued over the last decade⁴. This unused capacity is equivalent to 3 to 4 surplus ice pads, although the City has increased its supply by one ice sheet since this time and completed renewal projects at selected locations.

Looking ahead, the number of children and youth living in Hamilton is expected to grow, but at a slower rate than the overall population. This should gradually help to fill some of the available capacity. Based on the recommended provision target, the long-term demand for arenas amounts to three additional ice pads by 2051 – an average of one new ice pad every ten years. Any substantial changes to the supply of privately-operated rinks could impact needs and should be evaluated further, along with ice sport registration levels.

In the short-term, consideration may be given to removing up to two under-utilized ice pads; however, these should be replaced through new construction over time. One option may be working more closely with private providers to accommodate localized demand. Eastwood, Saltfleet and Stoney Creek Arenas are candidates for removal as they are aging, under-utilized single pad rinks located on sites that are recommended for CRC expansion or development projects. Evaluation criteria for facility repurposing and removals are contained in Section 8.4.

Specific strategies to address longer-term needs will depend on the closure or repurposing of selected single pad arenas and may include purchase of ice from non-municipal providers and/or new multi-pad arena development associated with recreation centres that can be used year-round. To improve community access, priorities for arena development in the longer-term should include Lower Hamilton, Lower Stoney Creek, and/or Upper Stoney Creek.

The average age of City of Hamilton arena facilities is now 40 years. Older arenas do not operate or functionally serve their users as efficiently or effectively as newer facilities, particularly with respect to energy efficiency, required capital maintenance, accessibility, comfort, sport tourism opportunities, etc. Older multi-pad arenas with the greatest potential for improvement have been recommended for major renewal projects, including Dave Andreychuk Mountain and Chedoke Twin Pad Arenas. Renewal projects will focus not only on lifecycle repairs, but opportunities to provide more and larger change rooms, warm viewing areas, barrier-free accessibility, energy-efficient mechanical systems, and supplementary spaces such as indoor walking

⁴ Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was estimated that the City's ice rinks were used to 80% capacity or less during prime time on average; a target of 95% capacity is recommended.

CURRENT INVENTORY

25 Ice Pads in 20 Arenas

Included in this figure are two of the four pads at the Mohawk Ice Centre (as per agreement). Excluded are the First Ontario Centre (premier event venue) and nine privately-owned ice pads.



tracks and multi-use space. Reinvestment is also required for many single pad arenas, but this will generally be a lower priority.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 ice pad per 23,360 residents</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: 1 municipal (or partnered) ice pad for every 4,500 youth (or roughly one ice pad per 28,750 total persons); consideration may also be given to a service radius of up to 2.5 km.</p> <p>To achieve this target, a total of 28 municipal (or partnered) ice pads will be required by 2051 – 3 more than are currently provided.</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Arena renewal is necessary to support a sustainable arena supply that addresses our evolving needs.</p> <p>b) Major capital projects will mainly focus on creating multi-pad arenas with community spaces that can be accessed year-round.</p> <p>c) Strategic conversion of a small number of under-utilized single pad arenas will make the best use of our assets and transform them into facilities that can serve other purposes.</p> <p>d) Usage of arenas will be closely monitored to help the City plan for the future.</p>	<p>10. Renew the following arenas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dave Andreychuk Mountain Arena (short-term) - Chedoke Twin Pad Arena (short-term) - others to be determined on a case-by-case basis over the medium and longer-terms, with consideration of adding other needed recreational spaces and ability to use year-round <p>11. Decommission the following arenas in the short-term to align supply with demand and realize cost efficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stoney Creek Arena – remove arena from service (add gym to Stoney Creek RC) - Saltfleet Arena – remove arena from service (redevelop as a CRC without ice pads); note: prior to retiring Stoney Creek and Saltfleet Arenas, ensure suitable community access to ice time within Lower Stoney Creek - Eastwood Arena – remove arena from service (replace one ice pad as part of broader CRC development in the medium to longer-term) - conversion of other single pad arenas (to floor-based activities, etc.) may be considered in the medium- to longer-term, where appropriate <p>12. Develop additional arenas to address growth-related needs (3 additional ice pads, for a total of 28) in the medium to longer-term. Specific strategies will depend on closure or repurposing of selected single pad arenas and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase of ice from non-municipal providers - Expansion to existing arena and CRC facilities - Development of new ice pads (possibly as part of future CRCs), with consideration given to Lower Hamilton, Lower Stoney Creek, and/or Upper Stoney Creek

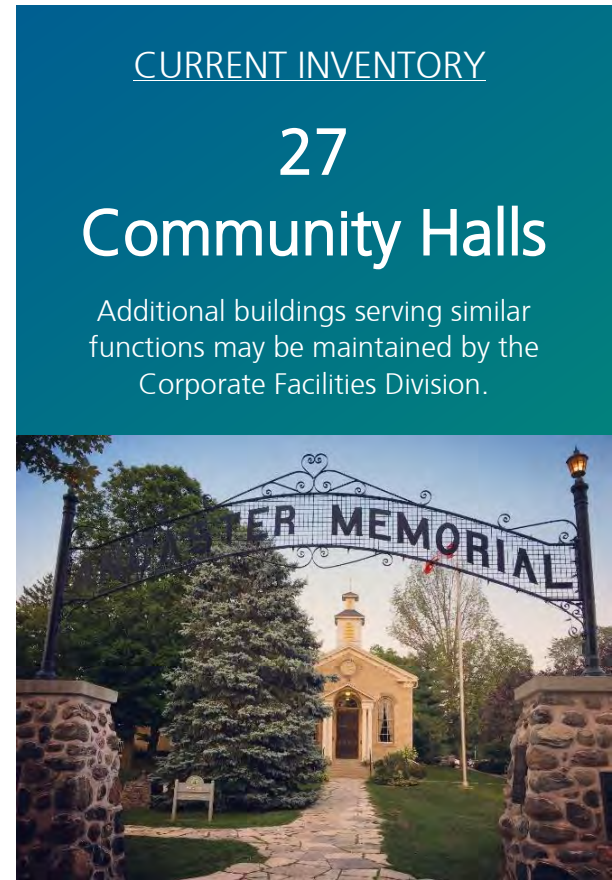
5.7 Community Halls

Most community halls are legacy facilities located in rural areas, serving smaller local markets. As community facilities, many have substantial capacity for greater use, though they are not typically costly to operate as they are not staffed by the City and many rely on volunteer groups or third-party operators.

The City has had good success with transferring operation of several halls to outside groups for specific purposes, such as theatre, child care, etc. Where appropriate, the City should continue to explore opportunities to lease community hall operations to volunteer boards and aligned partners that deliver needed community services.

On average, Hamilton’s community halls are more than 70 years old, in declining repair, and may not be fully barrier-free. These facilities will require reinvestment if they are to remain in the inventory. Looking ahead, closure of underused halls is possible, particularly where these facilities require significant capital upgrades and their functions can be accommodated within a nearby facility.

Recently, the City has also found success with a community hub model that combines many aspects of rural community halls with other community services in an appropriately-scaled multi-use facility. Examples include the Beverly and Greensville Community Hubs. This model may be used in suitable rural settings where similar partnership opportunities exist, such as Mount Hope.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 community hall per 21,630 residents

Future Planning Target: none – assessment is case-specific

Provision Model

Recommendations

- a) In areas of demonstrated needs, existing halls may be redeveloped as appropriately-scaled community hubs involving other community partners (e.g., schools, library, etc.).
- b) In cases where existing halls are under-utilized and are not serving municipal needs, the City will continue to explore opportunities to lease the halls to aligned community-serving partners.
- c) Closure of underused halls that require significant investment is possible, particularly where these functions can be accommodated within a nearby facility.

- 13. Evaluate needs for multi-use and multi-partnered community hubs in growing rural settlement areas, such as Mount Hope (short-term).
- 14. Prior to undertaking significant investment in existing community halls, assess local needs, capacity within area facilities, and potential long-term usage. The assessment should be used to guide options, including sale, decommissioning, third-party-lease, and/or reinvestment.

5.8 Other Recreation Facilities

The Master Plan addresses those recreation facility types that help the City deliver on its core service mandate. Additionally, there are other facility types provided in Hamilton (or for which interest has been expressed), such as indoor turf, fitness, curling, gymnastics, and specialized sport or activity centres. These extend beyond the City's core mandate and are delivered by the private and/or non-profit sectors, largely without any municipal involvement.

Requests for municipal participation in capital projects not identified in this plan can be expected. Municipal involvement in unsolicited proposals is currently assessed on a case-by-case basis and projects that increase access to public services and space for all should be encouraged. The standardized partnership framework described in Section 7.6 sets out why and how the City plans to work with others in fulfilling its mandate and the parameters for these relationships.

Recommendations

15. **Municipal provision of non-core indoor recreation facilities is not recommended, but could be considered in partnership with local community-based clubs.** A standardized partnership framework should be used to evaluate and respond to such requests.



5.9 Summary of Indoor Recreation Facility Needs

As the city grows, our recreation facilities need to grow with us. Fortunately, many facilities are well located to address growth-related requirements (but will require upgrades to meet current and future needs). In some cases, the design and delivery of facilities will also evolve alongside our urban form.

The following table summarizes those growth-related needs identified earlier in this section based on the population- and equity-based provision targets. Recreation facility renewal or expansion projects are not shown. This table is intended to serve as a guide for budgeting and to inform a more nuanced implementation strategy.

Recommended Recreation Facility Development Program Summary (2023-2051) – excludes facility revitalization and renewal

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2023-2051)	Short-term (2023-2031)	Medium-term (2032-2041)	Longer-term (2042-2051)
Community/ Recreation Centres	23	1:27,500 and up to 2.5km radius	7	3	3	1
Indoor Pools (locations)	23	1:30,000 and up to 2.5km radius	4 (within new CRCs)	1	2 (plus 1 replacement)	1
Outdoor Pools	10	1:10,000 youth ages 5-19 and up to 2km radius	2	0	1	1
Gymnasiums	16	1 gymnasium within each new CRC	7 (within new CRCs)	3	3	1
Seniors Recreation Spaces	12	2km radius for Class B centres (shared use)	5 (most within new CRCs)	2	2	1
Arenas (ice pads)	25	1:4,500 youth ages 5-19 and up to 2.5km radius	3	0	1-2	1-2
Community Halls	27	none (case-specific assessment)	tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd

tbd = To be determined.



6. Park Facilities

From sports fields and courts to playgrounds and spray pads, this section contains an assessment of all recreation amenities with the City of Hamilton's parks system. The analysis considers the quality, usage, and distribution of these amenities, in concert with emerging trends and community input.



Summarized below are the park facility needs assessments. A summary of all recommendations is contained in Appendix A, while facility provision benchmarking and mapping of current inventories are illustrated in Appendix B and C. Please refer to the Phase 3 Report (found under separate cover) for the detailed supporting information and findings.

6.1 Soccer and Multi-use Fields

Local participation in outdoor soccer programs has been in decline for several years, mirroring national participation trends. The levels of use on City fields have also declined. Fields were rented an average of 205 hours in 2019, down from 300 hours per field in 2008. Organizations have indicated that they are seeking higher quality fields, thus usage of Class A and B fields has remained strong. In addition, the school boards have substantially increased their supply of artificial turf fields, thereby accommodating a greater proportion of usage. We must continue to ensure that appropriate and affordable community access to these fields is maintained.

As Hamilton grows, it is expected that usage will increase, helping to maximize our existing supply. A participant-based planning target has been recommended, which translates in a long-term need for 235 fields (unlit equivalents) by 2051 – which represents 31 new fields, a 15% increase.

Future field provision strategies need to be balanced with our economic realities – sports fields are land intensive amenities and the cost of land is rising at the same time that large park development opportunities are disappearing.

The provision model reflects this by placing an emphasis on upgrading existing fields in order to generate additional capacity over time. For example, adding lights to an existing field will add capacity equivalent to 50% of an unlit field and converting an existing grass field to artificial turf will increase capacity by 200% to 300%. Three-quarters of the current supply are Class C fields, most of which do not have lights and are unable to accommodate higher levels of use. By improving field quality, we can accommodate greater use and address growth-related needs, saving the City money on land acquisition. Further, optimizing our existing assets helps to ensure access for all, including a wide range of sports such as soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, ultimate frisbee, and more. An audit of existing park sites and fields is required to determine upgrade potential.

Additional artificial turf fields should be considered in strategic locations across the city, including areas with lower field supplies (e.g., Lower Hamilton), sites with tournament infrastructure and multi-sport potential, and where site conditions and anticipated usage would prevent the maintenance of healthy natural turf. Candidate sites for artificial turf installation over existing grass fields (some of which are in the early planning stages) include but may not be limited to Joe Sams Leisure Park, Glanbrook Sports Complex, and Billy Sherring Park. A capital reserve should be established to facilitate turf replacement



CURRENT INVENTORY

190 Soccer and Multi-use Fields

The increased capacity offered by lit and artificial turf fields means this is equivalent to 204 unlit fields. This figure excludes school fields, several of which offer artificial turf.

Not all of the required fields are needed today. Through upgrades, increased access, and new field development, the average requirement is approximately one new field per year, with demand for new fields in the medium- to longer-term. At the moment, it is vital that the City make it a priority to acquire a sufficient land base for future sports fields through secondary plans and parkland dedication opportunities. Collaborations with other landowners (e.g., schools, etc.) may also enhance public access to fields.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 field (ULE) per 87 registered participants (all ages⁵), or approximately 1:2,860 residents.</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: 1 municipal field (ULE) for every 100 registered participants (all ages). By 2051, it is projected that this target will be equivalent to approximately 1 field (ULE) per 3,500 residents if per capita participation rates remain stable.</p> <p>To achieve this target, a total of 235 soccer and multi-use fields (ULE) will be required by 2051, an increase of 31 fields (ULE) over current levels.</p> <p>Note: planning targets reflect the availability of non-municipal fields, but exclude these fields from the calculation.</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) There is currently capacity within the existing inventory; however, additional soccer and multi-use fields will be required to address future growth.</p> <p>b) Demand is greatest for high quality full-size lit fields that can support competitive play. A priority should be placed on sites that can accommodate multiple fields, with consideration for artificial turf fields where appropriate.</p> <p>c) Growth-related field needs will be addressed through a range of strategies, such as new park development, field upgrades, and working with school boards and others to enhance public access and maximize under-utilized lands.</p>	<p>16. Provide access to up to 31 additional soccer and multi-use fields (ULE) by 2051, with most of these fields coming on-line in the medium- to longer-term. A variety of strategies will be used to address these needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the short-term, a priority should be placed on opportunities for reserving lands for sports fields through secondary plans and development proposals; parkland securement approaches will be guided by the City's Parks Master Plan. - New field development should focus on higher quality fields (e.g., artificial turf, Class A, Class B). - An audit of existing field sites is required to determine upgrade potential and a field improvement program is recommended to increase the capacity of existing assets. This may include upgrades to turf surface/quality, lighting and support amenities that will result in more artificial turf, Class A, and Class B fields. - Options for offsetting a portion of upgrade costs through a capital surcharge on user fees should be evaluated. - A capital reserve should be established to facilitate artificial turf replacement. - The City will regularly seek to collaborate with school boards and other land-owners to improve community access to quality fields at affordable rates. - Collect both youth and adult registration levels to help track supply and demand over time.

⁵ Youth and adult soccer participation is estimated based on 2018 registration levels for the Hamilton and District Soccer Association (17,679 registrants).

6.2 Football Fields

The City provides multi-use fields that can be used by a variety of sports (such as soccer, football rugby, ultimate frisbee, etc.) across the spring, summer and fall seasons. A small number of dedicated football and rugby fields are provided in response to the specialized needs associated with training and/or competition. In some cases, dedicated fields are required to mitigate the impact on turf quality.

Registration and usage data suggests that the City's inventory of football fields is sufficient to address current and short-term needs. Over the longer-term, it is recommended that the City expand its network of outdoor artificial turf fields to help support athlete development in sports such as soccer, football and more.

CURRENT INVENTORY

18

Fields with Football Uprights

Football fields are multi-use and can accommodate other sports. This figure excludes school fields, which are also well used for football.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<u>Current Provision Level:</u> 1 unlit equivalent per 27,160 residents	
<u>Future Planning Target:</u> none – assessments to be completed in response to demonstrated demand	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Football, rugby, and ultimate frisbee will continue to be accommodated on multi-use fields, including those provided by school boards. b) The needs of all field sports will be considered when designing new artificial turf fields. 	<p>17. Consider opportunities to accommodate football and other field sports when designing new artificial turf fields. There is no set target for football field provision; needs will be assessed on a case-by-case-basis with consideration of the availability of school fields.</p>

6.3 Baseball Diamonds

The City has fielded several requests for more and better diamonds in recent years as participation levels have risen. Class A and B diamonds (which are more often lit and able to accommodate higher levels of use) are rented twice as much as Class C diamonds.

There is a need to reinvest in our existing diamonds. While the present issue is one mostly of quality – rather than quantity – if participation rates rebuild to pre-pandemic levels, the City can also expect demand for additional diamonds into the future. A total of 32 new diamonds (unlit equivalents) are projected to be required by 2051, an average of approximately one per year. Demand is greatest for youth hardball diamonds and adult softball diamonds. Further

CURRENT INVENTORY

195

Ball Diamonds

The increased capacity offered by lit diamonds means this is equivalent to 223 unlit fields.

consultation with local sports associations is required to determine appropriate diamond dimensions and features prior to construction.

Like soccer and multi-use fields, ball diamonds are land-intensive assets that will be increasingly difficult to provide as the city grows and blocks of parkland shrink in size. Where possible, such as in greenfield areas, new ball diamonds should be prioritized over soccer fields in the short-term, particularly in cases where multiple diamonds can be provided at a single park site.

In more urbanized areas, it will be equally important to make the most of existing diamonds. Adding lights, right-sizing dimensions, removing soccer fields that overlap with outfields, and upgrading fencing, dugouts, etc. should be a focus for park renewal projects. This should especially be a priority in areas such as Lower Hamilton and Lower Stoney Creek that have lower provision levels and greater growth potential.

Where permitted, diamond lighting should be prioritized as this can effectively double the capacity of a ball diamond, saving the City the cost of land and development for a second unlit diamond. For example, if the City were to enhance and add lights to 10% of its Class C fields, this would be the equivalent of adding nearly 14 diamonds – similar to what is currently at Turner Park, a premier 40-hectare sports park.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 diamond (ULE) per 67 registered participants (all ages⁶), or approximately 1:2,620 residents.

Future Planning Target: 1 municipal diamond (ULE) for every 80 registered participants (all ages). By 2051, it is projected that this target will be equivalent to approximately 1 diamond (ULE) per 3,200 residents if per capita participation rates remain stable.

To achieve this target, a total of 256 diamonds (ULE) will be required by 2051, an increase of 32 diamonds (ULE) over current levels.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) We need to maintain what we have. Sustained efforts are required to improve the quality of diamonds, including adding lights to optimize the capacity of existing assets.</p> <p>b) Additional ball diamonds will be required to address future growth. Demand is greatest for high quality full-size lit diamonds that can accommodate higher levels of play. A priority should be placed on sites that can accommodate multiple diamonds.</p> <p>c) Growth-related diamond needs will be addressed through a range of strategies, such as new park development, diamond upgrades, and working with others to enhance public access and maximize under-utilized lands.</p>	<p>18. Provide access to approximately 32 additional ball diamonds (ULE) by 2051, with a focus on diamond enhancements in the short-term. A variety of strategies will be used to address these needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An audit of existing field sites is required to determine upgrade potential and a diamond improvement program is recommended to increase the capacity of existing assets. This may include adding lights, expanding fields, and improving amenities that will result in more Class A and B diamonds. - A priority should be placed on developing new diamonds in community-level parks and reserving lands for sports fields through secondary plans and development proposals; parkland securement approaches will be guided by the City's Parks Master Plan. - New diamond development should focus on higher quality Class A and B diamonds. - Options for offsetting a portion of upgrade costs through a capital surcharge on user fees should be evaluated. - The City will regularly seek to collaborate with rural sub-committees to improve community access to quality diamonds. - Collect both youth and adult registration levels to help track supply and demand over time.

⁶ Youth and adult ball participation in Hamilton is estimated to be approximately 15,000 based on input from the Master Plan stakeholder consultation. City records indicate that youth registration was 6,670 in 2019.

6.4 Cricket Fields

Cricket is permitted within two City parks, one of which – Confederation Park – contains Hamilton’s first and only regulation-size cricket field. The sport is experiencing strong growth in Canada due to immigration from countries where cricket is a national sport. Cricket also has strong historic roots in the area as it originated in England and was introduced to Canada in the 1800s.

More diverse communities such as Mississauga and Brampton have been designing cricket fields into their parks for years. Efforts to grow the sport amongst youth is also driving demand in many communities; however, there are insufficient facilities to accommodate youth programming in Hamilton. It is recommended that the City work to improve its overall provision rate through the development of three more regulation-size cricket fields – an average of approximately one every ten years – ideally in proximity to Hamilton’s new immigrant communities.

CURRENT INVENTORY

2

Cricket Fields

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 cricket field per 292,000 residents</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: 1 cricket field per 150,000 residents</p> <p>To achieve this target, a minimum of 5 fields will be required by 2051, an increase of 3 fields over current levels.</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) New cricket fields are required to meet current and growth-related needs. Cricket will be accommodated in appropriate locations within the City’s parks system, including larger sites that can accommodate regulation-size fields.</p>	<p>19. Develop up to 3 new cricket fields by 2051. This can be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing new fields into new and redeveloped park sites. These may be designed as cricket/soccer field overlays. - Making use of under-utilized park sites and other City lands. - Ensuring that fields are properly designed and maintained (about 150 to 185 metres in diameter, with artificial turf fields and grass fields that are cut shorter) to accommodate adult play. User groups should be consulted as part of field design.

6.5 Playgrounds

Playgrounds are a common amenity in most park types and are well supported by the community. The City provides playgrounds in growing neighbourhoods, and addresses existing gaps as opportunities allow. All of the City’s new and redeveloped playgrounds are designed with accessibility in mind and are compliant with the provincial regulations. A 500- to 800-metre service radius should be used to inform new community growth areas and infill proposals where there is an ability to include a playground within a suitable existing or future park site.

CURRENT INVENTORY

256 Playgrounds

In total, there are nearly 1,000 features at these playground sites. Many schools also offer playgrounds that can be used by the community after-hours.

The City replaces its playgrounds on a prioritized basis with consideration of install date, safety inspection, usage level, and other coordinated works. Well used sites – such as those at City-wide and Community Parks – wear out faster and require greater maintenance. With a playground inventory of 256 sites, the City should be replacing 13 playgrounds each year (5% of its inventory, assuming a 20-year lifespan per location), but only has funding to replace two to four annually. Rising costs and accessibility requirements are having tremendous impacts on the City’s ability to replace play structures in step with needs. Adequate funding is needed to ensure that these replacements are occurring on an as-needed basis.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 playground location per 2,280 residents, or approximately one per 235 residents aged 0 to 9
Future Planning Target: 1 playground location within 500- to 800-metres of every residential area without crossing a major barrier.
 Site-specific analyses will inform application of this planning target over time.

Provision Model

Recommendations

- a) Playgrounds are a core component of the City’s recreation system and will continue to be supported based on equitable geographic access.
- b) Playground replacement is necessary to provide safe, engaging, and accessible opportunities for play. Funding for replacements will be a priority for the City and its community partners.

- 20. Continue to address growth-related needs and gaps in playground distribution (based on a 500- to 800-metre catchment) through installations in existing parks, new park development, or other means as necessary. The relocation or removal of playground equipment may be explored on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the public and with consideration to pre-established criteria (see Section 8.4).
- 21. Review the adequacy of the City’s annual budget for playground replacement on municipal lands, including annual inflationary factors. Budgets must give proper consideration to accessibility requirements (including rubber surfacing within selected City-wide and Community Parks), associated landscaping, site furniture and supporting amenities.
- 22. Investigate external funding sources and partnership opportunities to supplement municipal funding for the development and replacement of Hamilton’s playgrounds.

6.6 Outdoor Fitness Stations

In recent years, the City has introduced nine outdoor fitness locations to its parks system in order to facilitate physical fitness activities. Although most were installed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, their use has increased recently due to growing interest in outdoor recreation.

Further investment in strategic locations – up to five more locations by 2051 – is recommended. This may be through a mixture of equipment-based locations and open space exercise zones where the community can organize fitness classes (yoga, tai chi, etc.). Funding partnerships will be encouraged.

Outdoor fitness stations are most effective in higher-order parks that are connected to a trail system and close to residential areas (including lower to medium-income areas). Ideally, these spaces should also have adequate access to shade and washrooms.

CURRENT INVENTORY

9

Outdoor Fitness Locations

Each site contains multiple pieces of equipment for free public use.

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 outdoor fitness location per 64,900 residents

Future Planning Target: 1 outdoor fitness location per 60,000 residents; consideration may be given to service radius of up to 2 km.

To achieve this target, up to 14 outdoor fitness locations are required by 2051, an increase of 5 locations over current levels.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Outdoor fitness locations offer our community affordable opportunities to stay fit and will continue to be provided in strategic locations. Funding partnerships will be encouraged.</p>	<p>23. Provide up to five additional outdoor fitness station locations by 2051. A priority should be placed on improving the current distribution, with a focus on areas of lower- to medium-income, including Lower Stoney Creek, West Hamilton/Dundas, and under-served parts of Lower Hamilton.</p> <p>24. Develop planning guidelines to guide the siting of future outdoor fitness locations, including both equipment-based locations and open space exercise zones. These guidelines should give consideration to appropriate park types, support amenities, and other site characteristics that would support strong usage levels.</p>

6.7 Tennis Courts

After years of reduced participation, interest in tennis is rising once again, partly fueled by the pandemic, profile of professional athletes, grassroots programming, and socio-demographic factors. The current supply of outdoor tennis courts is generally meeting broad public needs; however, most of the City's outdoor tennis courts have deteriorated – nearly all were built in the 1970s and 1980s – and many are in need of renewal or complete replacement. Priorities for rehabilitation should emphasize those locations with multiple courts, appropriate support infrastructure, and that offer an appropriate geographic distribution.

To plan for growth, the planning target identifies a need for 23 additional courts by 2051. New courts should be provided in groups of two or more to offer efficiency in use and economies of scale. Court development should ensure an adequate distribution of public courts (South Mountain, Binbrook and Fruitland-Winona should be short-term priorities, with additional courts in Lower Hamilton in the longer-term).

While tennis court complexes are best provided in City-wide and Community Parks, a review of park classification standards is required to determine an approach for their provision in other park types. This review should also consider the viability of shared public courts that can accommodate multiple sports (e.g., tennis, pickleball, etc.).

Where justified, new courts to serve tennis clubs may be considered, either through expansion to existing sites or new club formation. A range of 75-100 members per court can be used as a starting point to gauge demand for additional club courts. Through agreement, clubs will be expected to cover any additional costs over and above the basic level of service associated with a public court. The City will review these agreements on a regular basis to ensure that they address an appropriate and sustainable distribution of operational and financial responsibilities.



CURRENT INVENTORY

79

Tennis Courts

This includes 48 courts that are operated under agreement by non-profit clubs.

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 court per 7,390 residents

Future Planning Target: 1 court (public and club) for every 8,000 residents; consideration may also be given to a service radius of 2.0 km (public courts) and 2.5 km (club courts)

To achieve this target, a total of 102 tennis courts will be required by 2051, an increase of 23 courts over current levels.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Rehabilitation of required public tennis courts will be a priority. Where appropriate, consideration will be given to redesigning public courts to accommodate multiple uses.</p> <p>b) New public tennis courts will be provided to address growth-related needs.</p> <p>c) Establishment of new club courts may be considered in response to demonstrated needs; any upgrades beyond the City’s basic level of service will be the responsibility of the clubs.</p>	<p>25. Develop approximately 23 additional outdoor tennis courts by 2051. Public courts will be required in areas of growth (including South Mountain, Binbook and Fruitland-Winona; and Lower Hamilton in the longer-term) and may be designed as multi-use courts. New club courts may be considered through expansion to existing sites or new club formation, supported by verified membership levels and waiting lists.</p> <p>26. Initiate a tennis court rehabilitation program. This work should be informed by public consultation and an implementation strategy for court renewal and development.</p> <p>27. Review the adequacy of budget amounts for court rehabilitation and investigate external funding sources and partnership opportunities to supplement municipal funding. This applies to all outdoor courts, including tennis, pickleball, basketball, and multi-use courts.</p> <p>28. Review the suitability of developing public tennis courts within Neighbourhood Parks, particularly within the Urban Growth Centre. This review should be extended to other park amenities and park types and be reflected in the Zoning By-law and related policies.</p>

6.8 Pickleball Courts

Pickleball is a relatively new and growing sport across North America. The City has accommodated outdoor pickleball by adding lines to selected tennis courts (pickleball has a smaller court dimension than tennis, but a similar net height) and working with local associations to upgrade and develop dedicated courts to support organized use. Hamilton currently has two 12-court outdoor complexes capable of accommodating leagues and provincial-level tournaments – the city is a leader in provision of outdoor pickleball activities in Ontario.

Participation in pickleball continues to grow and evolve. The sport appeals predominantly to older adults but is starting to be introduced to younger generations. National and Provincial sport organizations have recently been formed; however, the sport development model has not yet matured. Survey data suggests that pickleball is not yet as pervasive as tennis, but it remains on an upward trajectory.

Additional courts (dedicated and/or overlay) are likely to be required over time, the provision of which will be informed through monitoring the impact of recent court provision strategies. Like tennis, opportunities should be provided for both casual users (overlay courts) and organized users (dedicated courts).

CURRENT INVENTORY

36

Pickleball Courts

This includes 24 courts that are pickleball-only and 12 that are shared with tennis.



In selecting locations for future courts, it is important to recognize that pickleball is a social sport, often played in groups and leagues. This suggests the need for adequate seating and sites that can accommodate the necessary parking, transit access, and safe cycling and walking facilities. Locations must have adequate setbacks from residential uses to mitigate noise impacts and should have access to public washrooms. The City will update its standards relative to court planning and construction.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 court per 16,220 residents</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: no specified target as provision for this sport is still evolving; consideration may be given to a service radius of 2.0 km for public courts</p> <p>Additional courts (dedicated and/or overlay) are likely to be required by 2051, the provision of which will be informed through monitoring the impact of recent court provision strategies.</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Pickleball is an emerging sport that will continued to be accommodated within the parks system using appropriate strategies in response to demonstrated community need.</p> <p>b) While we will continue to offer pickleball courts that are dedicated as well as those that are shared with tennis and other uses, demand is greatest for pickleball-only courts that can support greater capacity of use.</p>	<p>29. Monitor community demand for pickleball and address needs for outdoor courts through various strategies. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing “dedicated” courts to address organized play. The City will work with pickleball organizations to monitor and assess the need for additional dedicated court complexes over time. Standards for court construction should be reviewed, including an appropriate setback from residential areas. - Providing “overlay” courts to address casual play. Through new construction and court rehabilitation projects, the City will consider the relining of public tennis courts to allow for shared use. This will typically be on sites with one to two courts. Priority should be given to improving the geographic distribution of public pickleball courts.

6.9 Basketball and Multi-use Courts

Demand is growing for basketball and other court sports – these activities offer accessible, affordable, and casual play opportunities for people of most ages and abilities. Interest in court sports has been on the rise for the last few years and has also been fueled by pandemic-related increases in outdoor recreation.

Youth are frequent users of courts and it is important that we offer an equitable distribution of opportunities to support participation. A focus on revitalizing existing courts (and making them more multi-use) and developing new courts to address gaps and growth areas is recommended. The City’s overall supply of courts is strong; however, many courts are clustered within various neighbourhoods, leading to an inequitable distribution.

CURRENT INVENTORY

106.5

Basketball and Multi-use Courts

This includes 48 full courts, 38 half courts, and 39.5 multi-use courts.

Many of the City’s existing outdoor basketball courts need repair in order to offer a safe, consistent and quality experience. The City’s Hard Surface Court Study will provide guidance on court rehabilitation priorities, which requires site-specific analysis. It is also recommended that the City update their design standards for multi-use courts to better respond to the wide range of activities that are able to use these spaces. Moving forward, multi-sport courts will be the preferred form of new court development. Consideration should also be given to policies to support shared use.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 court (full court equivalent) per 5,480 residents, or one per 605 residents aged 10 to 19 years

Future Planning Target: 1 court (full court equivalent) for every 650 residents (ages 10-19); consideration may also be given to a service radius of 1.0 km.

To achieve this target, a total of 131 courts (full court equivalents) will be required by 2051, an increase of 24.5 courts over current levels.

Provision Model

Recommendations

- a) Youth should have equitable geographic access to outdoor basketball courts. New courts will be required to address gaps and growth.
- b) A strategy is required to identify and prioritize improvements to existing courts.
- c) Where appropriate, new and redeveloped courts should emphasize multi-use designs capable of supporting a variety of programs and activities.

- 30. Improve the distribution of basketball and multi-use courts by adding new courts in gap and growth areas. Approximately 24.5 additional courts (full court equivalents) are required by 2051.** Where appropriate, new courts should be designed as multi-use courts. Short-term priorities for court development include:
 - West Hamilton/Dundas (all areas);
 - Upper Stoney Creek (northern portion);
 - Ancaster (west of Highway 403);
 - Lower Hamilton (Gage Park area); and
 - Hamilton Mountain (northern portion).
- 31. Update the City’s design standards and usage policies for multi-use courts to reflect contemporary trends and allow for greater flexibility in use and programming.**
- 32. Initiate a basketball and multi-use court rehabilitation program.** This work should be informed by public consultation and an implementation strategy for court renewal and development.

6.10 Beach Volleyball Courts

Outdoor volleyball is a social sport that appeals largely to youth and young adults. Interest is greatest for organized play, often facilitated by providers that promote and deliver programs. There are two outdoor sand volleyball courts within Hamilton’s parks and the City has recently received requests for more. Until 2021, a private league leased 12 courts located within Confederation Park (managed by the Hamilton Conservation Authority); however, these are now closed due to an ongoing legal dispute.

As a pilot project, the City should consider the installation of one smaller court complex with three courts to accommodate localized play, tournaments, and programming. This installation should be in parks with suitable supporting infrastructure and be adjacent to CRCs that support indoor volleyball programming. Design and maintenance standards should be developed to support the provision of these amenities.

CURRENT INVENTORY

2

Beach Volleyball Courts

There are also 12 courts in Confederation Park that are managed by the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

Recommendations

33. To support City and community programming, identify one site to support a 3-court sand volleyball complex. This may be established as a pilot project and made permanent subject to successful use. Design and maintenance standards should be developed to support the provision of these park amenities.

6.11 Bocce Courts

The City supports outdoor bocce in many of its parks, as well as an indoor facility at Chedoke Twin Pad Arena. The sport is a club-based activity that does not allow for broader public use beyond certain populations. Agreements between the City and bocce clubs should be regularly reviewed to ensure that operational and financial matters are being adequately addressed.

The relatively low participation profile and lack of demonstrated growth suggest that there is no need for additional courts during the timeframe of this Plan. Conversion of underutilized courts and support buildings to other in-demand uses should be considered on a case-specific basis. As with all park-based amenities, the City may assess future requests from the community where supported by local demand.

CURRENT INVENTORY

39

Bocce Courts

These are located at 15 sites. The City also offers four indoor courts at the Chedoke Twin Pad Arena.

Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 court per 14,970 residents

Future Planning Target: not applicable (additional facilities not recommended)

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Low usage levels and rising capital and operating requirements may lead to the repurposing of some bocce courts and support buildings. Additional bocce courts are not recommended.</p>	<p>34. No new bocce courts and/or dedicated bocce buildings are recommended. Continued communication is required between the City and user groups to ensure the safe and reasonable use of support buildings. Existing outdoor bocce courts will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.</p>

6.12 Lawn Bowling Greens

Lawn bowling is a club-based activity that welcomes members of all ages, but is predominantly played by older adults and seniors. The activity has a long history in Hamilton, with clubs in Dundas Driving Park and Gage Park established in the early 1900s, followed by Village Green in Ancaster. A green in Churchill Park was removed years ago.

The four existing greens are meeting needs and have capacity for greater use into the future. At this time, there is no foreseeable need for additional greens during the timeframe of this Plan, although monitoring of participation trends is required to inform future provision strategies. Closures may be possible if clubs become unviable. It is recommended that the City review its agreements with the operating clubs to ensure an appropriate division of responsibilities and consideration of sustainability measures.



CURRENT INVENTORY

4

Lawn Bowling Greens

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 lawn bowling green per 145,990 residents</p>	
<p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: not applicable (additional facilities not recommended)</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Additional lawn bowling greens are not recommended. Monitoring of participation and volunteer trends is needed to inform future provision strategies and potential closures.</p>	<p>35. No new lawn bowling greens are recommended. Existing facilities will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.</p> <p>36. Agreements between the City and lawn bowling clubs should be reviewed to ensure an appropriate and sustainable allocation of operational and financial responsibilities.</p>

6.13 Spray Pads

Spray pads are often the source of community requests as they offer access to affordable, family-friendly outdoor activity during the summer months. The City has responded to these requests by steadily increasing the number of spray pad locations throughout Hamilton. As more of these assets are added to the system, older spray pads – many of which were more simply designed – are being replaced with larger, more elaborate designs. These new builds are also often associated with washrooms, seating, and shade – levels of amenity that are not appropriate for all park types.

Hamilton is currently providing spray pads at a much higher rate than benchmarked communities. It is not sustainable, nor is it required for the City to continue to substantially increase its level of provision of spray pads. In providing Hamilton’s children and families with suitable access to spray pads, two factors should be considered:

- 1) that spray pads are equitably distributed across the City so that they are within reasonable proximity of all residential communities; service radii of 1km (neighbourhood-level) and 1.5km (community-level) are used to measure this; and
- 2) that spray pads are available within higher-order parks that serve as community destinations (busier parks can sustain larger spray pads with more features and have other necessary support amenities such as shade, seating, washrooms, parking, etc.), such as many City-wide and Community Parks.

A high-level analysis of current distribution has identified a small number of geographic gaps that should be resolved as appropriate park development and redevelopment opportunities arise. Growth in greenfield areas may also present an opportunity for spray pad installation where required to maintain equitable access.

It is expected that new additions to the inventory will generally be offset by the removal of spray pads that are at the end of their life and that are no longer required to address the City’s preferred provision model. Potential removals should focus primarily on Neighbourhood Spray Pads at the end of their functional lifespan. Site-specific analysis is required prior to major capital renewal. Evaluation criteria for facility repurposing and removals are contained in Section 8.4.

CURRENT INVENTORY

69

Spray Pads

These are classified as “community” (28) and “neighbourhood” (41).



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 spray pad per 8,460 residents; 1 per 880 children aged 0-9 years

Future Planning Target: 1 spray pad location within 1.0 to 1.5 km of every residential area

Site-specific analyses will inform application of this planning target over time.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) We will work to maintain the current number of spray pads over time (approximately 70). As new spray pads are developed within under-served areas (sometimes replacing wading pools), older spray pads will be phased out in areas that have above-average access.</p> <p>b) Spray pads will primarily be provided within City-wide and Community Parks, where appropriate. They may be developed within other park types when needed to fill gaps.</p> <p>c) Existing Neighbourhood Spray Pads may be removed from service at the end of life if they are within proximity of other outdoor aquatic facilities. Site-specific analysis is required prior to major capital renewal.</p>	<p>37. Install spray pads in gap and growth areas, with consideration of recommended service radii (1km for neighbourhood spray pads and 1.5km for community spray pads) and the identification of appropriate locations.</p> <p>New spray pads in the short-term include those in current capital plans, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broughton Park East or alternative site (HM) - Mountain Drive Park (HM) - Brightside Park (LH) - Woodland Park (LH) - Smokey Hollow Park (FLA) <p>New spray pads in the medium-term should continue to address existing and growth-related gaps in distribution. Appropriate sites should be selected in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower Stoney Creek – 2 (one north of QEW and one in the Saltfleet area) - Upper Stoney Creek (Rymal Road area) <p>38. Evaluate the need to replace or remove existing Neighbourhood Spray Pads when they reach end of life. The evaluation should apply the criteria advanced in this Master Plan (see Section 8.4), including the recommended service radii.</p>

6.14 Wading Pools

The City has been gradually phasing out wading pools in favour of spray pads and revitalized outdoor pools, many of which are now designed to offer similar shallow water experiences. As the City’s remaining wading pools approach end of life, each will be evaluated for feasibility to repair or to replace with a spray pad or other in-demand park use. Not all wading pools will be repurposed and not all surplus wading pools will be converted to spray pads. In making the investment planning decision, the City will examine the evaluation criteria contained in Section 8.4.

CURRENT INVENTORY

8

Wading Pools

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 wading pool per 73,000 residents; 1 per 7,600 children aged 0-9 years</p>	
<p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: not applicable (no additional wading pools are recommended)</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) As they approach end of life, existing wading pools should be evaluated for potential removal or repurposing to spray pads or other in-demand uses.</p>	<p>39. Existing wading pools will be evaluated for repurposing or removal as they reach end of life; evaluation criteria have been identified in the Master Plan (Section 8.4).</p>

6.15 Skateboard Parks

The skateboarding culture in Hamilton is strong and appeals to a wide variety of ages. The City's Skateboard Park Study found that additional investment is required to address gaps and the renewal of some of the City's older skate parks, which also accommodate multi-wheeled recreational activities. Hamilton is currently adding skate parks at Valley Park in Upper Stoney Creek and Alexander Park in West Hamilton/Dundas.

This study continues to inform location and design decisions for future all wheels sports park amenities in Hamilton. For example, the study identifies a five-tier hierarchy of parks consisting of Skate Dots, Neighborhood, Community, City, and Regional or Destination Skate Parks.

A site-specific feasibility review is required to validate the three remaining locations proposed in the previous study: Ancaster Community Centre; Powell Park; and/or Sir Wilfrid Laurier Recreation Centre. Other sites may also be appropriate for neighbourhood-level parks. The priority in the short-term is to provide two City/Community Skate Parks to address gaps, then incorporate more localized park typologies (e.g., Neighbourhood Skate Parks, Skate Dots) within the parks and trails system where appropriate.

CURRENT INVENTORY

8

Skateboard Parks

Most sites support skateboards, scooters, inline skates, and BMX bikes.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 skate park per 73,000 residents, or one per 8,040 residents aged 10 to 19 years

Future Planning Target: 1 skate park (neighbourhood, community and city levels) for every 7,500 residents aged 10-19 years (plus skate dots on an as-needed basis); consideration may also be given to service radius of 1.0 km to 5.0 km

To achieve this target, a total of 11-12 skate parks will be required by 2051, an increase of 3-4 locations over current levels.

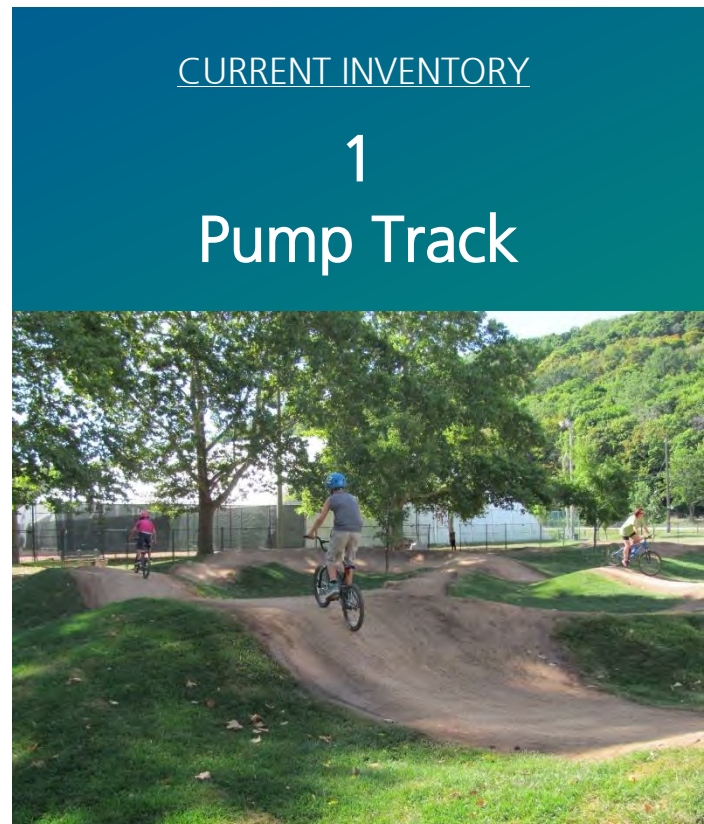
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Skate parks serve children, youth, and adults using a variety of wheeled devices (skateboards, scooters, bikes, etc.). We will continue to identify appropriate park sites that address gaps in distribution of “all wheels” parks across the city.</p> <p>b) The planning framework presented in the Skateboard Park Study will be used to guide capital planning, design, construction, and renewal of “all wheels” parks. Input from users will be sought through the park design phase.</p>	<p>40. Develop two additional City-level or Community Skate Parks in the short- to medium-term to address gaps in distribution. Confirm locations within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancaster (possibly Ancaster Community Centre) – City Skate Park - Lower Stoney Creek (possibly Fruitland-Winona) – Community Skate Park <p>41. Develop up to two additional Neighbourhood-level skate parks in the medium- to longer-term to address localized needs. Confirm locations within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Mountain (site tbd); - Lower Hamilton (possibly Powell Park); and/or - Lower Stoney Creek (possibly Sir Wilfrid Laurier) <p>42. Consider the inclusion of Skate Dots (one or more benches, ledge walls or rails) within new and redeveloped parks and trails.</p> <p>43. Establish a skate park renewal program that addresses aging infrastructure, including the replacement of modular parks with poured-in-place concrete parks at the end of lifecycle.</p>

6.16 Bike Parks and Pump Tracks

Bike parks offer cyclists a purpose-built course in which to ride, develop their skills, and socialize with others and are an emerging level of service in many municipalities. Off-road biking can be accommodated on skate parks, pump tracks, racing tracks, street-style courses with obstacles, cross-country trails, downhill courses, and more. BMX Freestyle recently made its Olympic debut at the Tokyo 2020 Games and has a growing appeal to children, youth and adults.

The City’s skate parks accommodate not only skateboards, but also scooters, rollerblades and BMX bikes. They appeal to some more advanced BMX trick riders and – depending on their design – some may also accommodate more introductory-level users.

A dirt pump track was established in Gage Park in 2015 and made permanent in 2017. This track is accessible and inclusive of a broader range of ages and skill levels – it has been well received by the community and serves both local riders and those from outside Hamilton. The track should be expanded and its surface be converted to asphalt to decrease maintenance, extend the season, and broaden its userbase.



Increasingly, municipalities are developing pump tracks (a blend of dirt and hardscape tracks) in association with skate parks to offer “all wheels” venues that are inclusive of all skill levels. Through the evaluation of sites for skate park development and redevelopment, opportunities to include pump tracks should be considered, with the goal of providing two to three new sites by 2051. Other City Divisions are also working on an assessment of mountain biking trail facilities, as guided by the 2017 Recreational Trails Master Plan Update.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<u>Current Provision Level</u> : 1 pump track per 584,000 residents	
<u>Future Planning Target</u> : a provision target for bike parks has not been established, although an improved distribution would enhance accessibility (up to 5km service radius)	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Off-road biking facilities benefit a wide range of users and are a key part of the City’s integrated cycling network. We will seek options to expand opportunities for BMX and mountain bike riders within appropriate settings.</p> <p>b) When establishing new or redeveloped skate parks, we will evaluate the potential to create pump tracks that enhance access across the city.</p>	<p>44. Expand and convert the dirt bike park in Gage Park to asphalt to decrease maintenance, extend the season, and broaden its userbase.</p> <p>45. Provide two to three new bicycle pump tracks by 2051. These should be distributed across the city and associated with new and redeveloped skate parks (which can accommodate multi-wheeled users such as scooters, skateboards and BMX bikes). Selection of bike park locations requires a site-specific analysis using the criteria established to guide the Gage Park pilot project.</p> <p>46. Work with other City Divisions to explore options for expanding mountain biking opportunities within City parks (as identified in the Recreational Trails Master Plan).</p>

6.17 Leash Free Dog Areas

Leash free areas provide safe and accessible locations for residents to legally exercise their dogs off-leash. Some are fenced (dog parks) while others make use of under-utilized parkland and open space (free running areas). They 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.

Convenience helps to promote use, particularly since many users visit off-leash parks multiple times a week, often throughout the year. Therefore, it is important that the City continues to work towards its goal of offering one “free running area” and/or “dog park” per ward (of which there are 15), subject to the availability of appropriate sites and available funding. The Leash Free Parks Policy provides guidance on where leash free parks can be located. In accordance with the policy, site evaluations can be initiated based on requests from community members.

CURRENT INVENTORY

12

Leash Free Dog Areas

This includes nine dog parks (exclusive use) and three free running areas (shared use).

Update to the City’s leash free provision, design and location guidelines will be required as Hamilton grows through new high-rise developments in the urban growth centre, growth nodes and corridors. Leash free areas in densely populated areas require different approaches due to the intensity of use and competing interests for parkland. This policy review should consider approaches in other intensifying communities and include consultation with the public and stakeholders, including the development industry that may have a role to play in supporting pet owners.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<p><u>Current Provision Level</u>: 1 leash free dog zone per 48,670 residents</p> <p><u>Future Planning Target</u>: a minimum of 1 leash free dog zone per City ward</p> <p>To achieve this, at least four more leash free dog areas will be required by 2051</p>	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) We will continue to seek an equitable balance of leash free dog areas across the city’s urban communities.</p> <p>b) New approaches for leash free dog zone design, provision and management will be required in higher density residential areas.</p>	<p>47. Continue to work toward the goal of establishing a minimum of one leash free dog area per ward, with a primary focus on resolving gaps in Lower Stoney Creek, Hamilton Mountain, and parts of Lower Hamilton.</p> <p>48. Update the Leash Free Parks Policy to address the dynamics of providing, designing and maintaining leash free dog areas in higher density neighbourhoods. This updated approach should recognize the shared responsibility of the development community and the City in responding to the needs of pet owners and their pets.</p>

6.18 Outdoor Ice Rinks and Skating Trails

Outdoor recreational ice skating is permitted in approximately 70 parks across the City of Hamilton, though the actual number of sites varies from year to year and is likely much lower as most of these locations rely on volunteer committees to establish and maintain the ice. This approach is cost-effective and community-responsive, creating affordable and accessible neighbourhood-based skating opportunities for residents of all ages.

The City offers four outdoor artificial (refrigerated) ice rinks (including one skating trail) at higher use sites within Hamilton. The newest facility is the Serafini Family Skating Pad at the Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre. These artificial rink locations are operated by the City and the refrigerated ice allows for an extended season. Most of the City’s refrigerated rinks have been realized through community partnerships and donations.

CURRENT INVENTORY

**Up to 71
Outdoor Ice Rinks
& Trails**

This includes three refrigerated rinks and one skating trail. Most are natural rinks operated by volunteers; the supply varies considerably from year to year.

Going forward, the City will continue to work with volunteers to support the neighbourhood rink program. To combat the pandemic-related loss of volunteers, additional marketing and support activities may be necessary. In addition, a small number of new artificial (refrigerated) rinks and/or trails are recommended over the coming years to provide larger, community-serving locations for outdoor recreational skating. Suitable park types, partnerships and sustainable operating funds are required to make new artificial rinks a reality. Possible locations include Olympic Park in Hamilton Mountain and Confederation Park in Lower Stoney Creek. Designs that encourage year-round (open-air) use are encouraged, such as multi-use pads that allow for court sports in the summer. Options for synthetic ice (no water or refrigeration needed) may also be explored as new technologies emerge.



Provision Levels and Planning Target

Current Provision Level: 1 outdoor ice skating amenity (natural or artificial) per 8,225 residents (actual provision can vary from year-to-year); one artificial rink or trail per 146,000 persons

Future Planning Target: generally guided by distribution based on service radii of 1km (natural rinks) and 5km (artificial rinks and trails)

To achieve this target, there will be a need for two additional artificial rinks or trails by 2051. The provision of natural rinks should continue to be based on geographic gaps, appropriate sites, financial feasibility, and volunteer commitments.

Provision Model	Recommendations
<p>a) Community involvement in the maintenance and operation of natural ice rinks in appropriate City parks will continue to be supported and encouraged.</p> <p>b) Additional City-operated artificial rinks and trails are desired, but will require partnerships and cost-sharing arrangements.</p>	<p>49. Encourage partnerships and community funding for the development of two artificial (refrigerated) outdoor ice rinks in additional locations across the City. Possible locations include (but may not be limited to) Confederation Park and Olympic Park on Hamilton Mountain.</p> <p>50. Explore synthetic ice and other technologies that can enhance the efficiency and viability of current and future outdoor ice rinks.</p> <p>51. Continue to sustain the volunteer-led neighbourhood rink program that supports natural ice rinks in suitable park locations across Hamilton. Where appropriate, water service should be considered as a primary amenity in new and redeveloped parks to support future rink provision. Additional marketing and support activities should also be provided to volunteers to bolster the success of the program.</p>

6.19 Community Gardens

There are several dozen community allotment gardens across Hamilton (including 14 in City parks) that residents can access to grow plants. In a time of rising costs of living, concern over food security, and urban intensification, community gardens fill an important role for both individuals and communities. Not only do they support affordable food options, but community gardens also build community, enhance the environment, and contribute to personal wellness.

The City’s Community Garden Policy guides the establishment and administration of garden sites, which are managed by a non-profit network that relies on volunteers to help sustain the program. This program has been very well received, with growing demand for gardens over the years. Most gardens are situated in Lower Hamilton (in the areas with the highest residential densities) but can be found throughout the city. The City will continue to support the community garden program through a variety of partnerships, with a long-term goal of ensuring that all residents wishing to have access to garden plots can. To facilitate this, community gardens should be considered as a primary amenity in new and redeveloped parks within high needs areas.

CURRENT INVENTORY

14

Community Gardens

There are many more gardens on non-municipal lands, typically operated by community agencies

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<u>Current Provision Level:</u> 1 community garden location per 41,710 residents; excludes non-municipal locations	
<u>Future Planning Target:</u> no set target	
Provision Model	Recommendations
a) Community gardens are important to community building, resilient food systems, and environmental education. They will continue to be supported in appropriate parks and municipal lands, with the cooperation of partners.	52. Support the establishment of community gardens on appropriate municipal lands and as an option in new and redeveloped parks (in accordance with the Community Gardens Policy). An equitable distribution across Hamilton is desired (recognizing that the City is one of many landowners), with more sites in denser, higher needs areas.

6.20 Golf Courses

The City owns and operates three 18-hole municipal golf courses at two locations – Chedoke and King’s Forest Golf Clubs. Both clubs are notable for their picturesque locations along the Niagara Escarpment, as well as their high-quality designs.

While no additional municipal golf courses are anticipated, there is a need for further direction regarding operations and programming through the development of a Golf Strategy. Such a strategy would engage the public and golfing community in creating a long-term vision for the two golf

CURRENT INVENTORY

2

Golf Courses (54 Holes)

clubs, while seeking opportunities to ensure highest and best use, while broadening complementary programming and community access to the sites throughout the year. The City recently launched winter golf and disc golf initiatives at the courses to strong success.

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<u>Current Provision Level</u> : 1 municipal golf club per 291,980 residents, or one hole per 10,815 persons	
<u>Future Planning Target</u> : no set target	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Affordable and accessible opportunities for golf will continue to be supported. b) We will seek innovative programming, partnerships and a financially responsible operating model for our golf courses. 	<p>53. An updated Golf Strategy is required to create and guide a long-term vision for the City’s municipal golf courses and related services. The Strategy should include community engagement, and consider items such as (but not limited to) highest and best use, infrastructure needs, complementary year-round programming, public access, environmental management, financial objectives, and more.</p>



6.21 Outdoor Running Tracks

There are five recognized running tracks within Hamilton’s parks system, including the competition-level track and field facility at Mohawk Sports Park, which is used to host city-wide and higher-level events (and is part of Hamilton’s bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games). The remaining tracks are legacy facilities that are primarily utilized for casual community use, such as walking and running.

Hamilton’s sport system is able to accommodate most if not all stages of athletic development, from basic fundamentals to world class competition. For example, several area schools provide high quality outdoor tracks that support student athletics, organized clubs, and community access. Efforts should be made to ensure that this system continues to function as intended, with Mohawk Sports Park serving as a city-wide venue (along with McMaster University’s Mona Campbell Track) that is supplemented by facilities at area schools. A successful bid for the Commonwealth Games would assist the City in completing rehabilitation and upgraded works at Mohawk Sports Park.

Neighbourhood and community-level tracks in deteriorating condition should be evaluated and considered for removal if they become unsafe. To support active residents seeking opportunities to walk and jog, pathway systems in parks should be expanded over time in coordination with area trails.

CURRENT INVENTORY

5

Outdoor Tracks

In addition to those in City parks, many schools also provide running tracks (though community access may be restricted).

Provision Levels and Planning Target	
<u>Current Provision Level</u> : 1 municipal outdoor running track per 116,790 residents	
<u>Future Planning Target</u> : no set target	
Provision Model	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) With the exception of the track at Mohawk Sports Park, the City will continue to look to schools to address organized track and field use. b) Looped hard-surface walking routes will be considered in appropriate new and redeveloped parks. 	<p>54. No additional outdoor running tracks are recommended, though more looped hard-surface walking paths should be established within the parks system. Neighbourhood and community-level tracks in deteriorating condition should be evaluated and considered for removal if they become unsafe.</p> <p>55. Continue to maintain Mohawk Sports Park which, along with several school sites, meets community-wide needs for competition-level track and field sites.</p>

6.22 Support Buildings in Parks

The City has undertaken condition assessments of approximately 170 support buildings (such as clubhouses, fieldhouses, utility buildings, concessions, etc.), storage buildings, and shelters and pavilions within municipal parks. Some of these structures are small and utilitarian and many were built several decades ago, are not barrier-free, and have rising lifecycle costs. Some are leased to groups on an exclusive basis.

There have been increasing requests for new or upgraded fieldhouses and clubhouses to support sports fields, tennis complexes, bocce courts, and more. However, most existing structures were not designed to support public occupancy or year-round use. Of those capital requests that have been supported in the past, the City has found that many clubhouse facilities fall into disuse over time.

The ability to sustain a clubhouse or fieldhouse is directly linked to the critical mass of amenities and uses supported within a park, as well as the sustainability of the organizations that use them. Most of these unstaffed park buildings are not appropriate venues for program space; Hamilton’s recreation centres and community halls are the most suitable locations for these activities as they contain meeting and multi-purpose spaces. The City is currently reviewing its various agreements with community organizations and will continue to seek the most effective ways to accommodate needs within its vast inventory of spaces.

Clubhouses that are underutilized, in poor condition and/or inaccessible to the public require rationalization. The provision of new buildings is dependent on the establishment of major park amenities that require washrooms, storage, etc. Where possible, support buildings should be connected to larger community recreation centres; stand-alone, single-purpose buildings will generally be discouraged.

Recommendations
<p>56. Prepare a strategy and decision-making framework to guide the renewal, development and disposition of clubhouses and fieldhouses. Give consideration to building usage and conditions, responsibilities, community access, etc.</p>

6.23 Washroom Buildings in Parks

Public washrooms are critical to supporting park use and demand spiked during the pandemic along with casual park use. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents to the Master Plan survey identified park washrooms as a high priority for investment, the highest of all facility types. Through a pilot program, the City is currently testing ways to make some of its park washrooms available throughout the winter, though most were not designed for year-round use and the cost of upgrades can be substantial.

The City has approximately 70 washroom buildings within its parks system, plus many more within its indoor recreation facilities. Approximately 36% of these park locations are in poor or critical condition, suggesting a continued need for renewal or replacement that meets accessibility requirements. Hamilton’s approach is to provide washroom facilities within City-wide and Community Parks and selected trailheads, where warranted. Provision of washroom facilities in other types of parks would require Council approval and additional funding; portable washroom facilities may be considered as an alternative.

Recommendations

57. Provide permanent, accessible washroom facilities within Community and City-wide Parks and at selected trailheads, where required. Consideration should be given to high use sites that may support year-round facilities (pending direction from the winter washroom pilot program). Washrooms will not generally be provided within Neighbourhood Parks.

6.24 Summary of Outdoor Park Facility Needs

Park facilities provide the infrastructure needed to support outdoor recreation, from casual use to competitive sport. As our parks system grows, so too will our supply of park facilities that reflect the needs of our evolving population and their interests.

The following table summarizes growth-related needs identified earlier in this section based on the population- and equity-based provision targets. Park facility renewal or upgrade projects are not shown. This table is intended to serve as a guide for budgeting and to inform a more nuanced implementation strategy.

Recommended Park Facility Development Program Summary (2023-2051) – excludes facility revitalization and renewal

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2023-2051)	Short-term (2023-2031)	Medium-term (2032-2041)	Longer-term (2042-2051)
Soccer and Multi-use Fields	190 (204 ULE)	1 ULE:100 registered participants	31	6	13	12
Football Fields	18 (21.5 ULE)	none (case-specific assessment)	tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd
Baseball Diamonds	195 (223 ULE)	1 ULE:80 registered participants	35	16	9	10
Cricket Fields	2	1:150,000	3	2	1	0
Playgrounds (locations)	256 sites	500m to 800m radius within residential areas	tbd (requires site-specific analysis)	tbd	tbd	tbd

Facility Type	Current Municipal Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2023-2051)	Short-term (2023-2031)	Medium-term (2032-2041)	Longer-term (2042-2051)
Outdoor Fitness Stations	9	1:60,000 and up to 2km radius	5	2	2	1
Tennis Courts (public and club)	79	1:8,000 and 2km to 2.5km radius	23	7	8	8
Pickleball Courts	36	up to 2km radius	tbd (monitoring required)	tbd	tbd	tbd
Basketball and Multi-use Courts	106.5 FCE	1:650 youth ages 10-19 and up to 1km radius	24.5	5	9	10.5
Beach Volleyball Courts	0	pilot projects recommended	2-4 (assess pilot projects)	2-4	tbd	tbd
Bocce Courts	39	n/a (no new facilities)	0	0	0	0
Lawn Bowling Greens	4	n/a (no new facilities)	0	0	0	0
Spray Pads	69	1 to 1.5km radius within residential areas	tbd (maintain current supply)	5 (offset by removals)	2+ (offset by removals)	tbd
Wading Pools	8	n/a (no new facilities)	0	0	0	0
Skateboard Parks	8	1:7,500 youth ages 10-19 and 1km to 5km radius	3-4 (plus skate dots)	1	1-2	1
Bike Parks and Pump Tracks	1	up to 5km radius	2-3	1	1	0-1
Leash Free Dog Zones	12	minimum of 1 leash free dog zone per City ward	4+	2+	2+	tbd
Outdoor Ice Rinks and Trails	71	1 to 5km radius within residential areas	2 artificial (plus natural rinks)	1	1	0
Community Gardens	14	site-specific analysis	tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd
Golf Courses	2 (54 holes)	n/a (no new facilities)	0	0	0	0
Outdoor Running Tracks	5	n/a (no new facilities)	0	0	0	0
Support Buildings in Parks	not itemized	site-specific analysis	tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd
Washroom Buildings in Parks	not itemized	site-specific analysis	tbd	tbd	tbd	tbd

ULE = Unlit Equivalents - Each lit field is equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields hours. Each lit artificial field is equivalent to 3 unlit fields.

FCE = Full Court Equivalents - Each half basketball court is equivalent to 0.5 full courts.

tbd = To be determined.

7. Recreation Service Delivery

This section examines how the Recreation Division delivers its services and programs, and identifies key initiatives and areas of focus to support the activation of the Recreation Master Plan's guiding principles.



Summarized below are program and service improvements that will provide focus to the Recreation Division over the next ten years. A summary of all recommendations is contained in Appendix A. Please refer to the Phase 3 Report (found under separate cover) for the detailed supporting information and findings.

7.1 Service Provision

Re-engaging our Residents and Monitoring Satisfaction

Like all municipalities, the City of Hamilton's recreation services have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we recover from this challenging situation, we must continue to engage our residents and ensure that our services are meeting the highest priority needs, with the goal of re-engaging the community within recreation and sport activities.

The community survey completed for this Master Plan indicated an overall satisfaction rate of 45% for recreation and parks opportunities in Hamilton, which may reflect pandemic-related service and programming disruptions over the course of the last two years. This is in contrast with past surveys of recreation users that indicate an overall satisfaction level of 88%. It is encouraging to see that those directly accessing the City's recreation programming are expressing high levels of satisfaction; however, the community-wide survey serves as an indicator of broader opinions and where service improvements may be required.

Additionally, the community survey explored satisfaction levels by age cohort. The lowest rates of satisfaction (24%) were expressed for teens, while the highest level rests with pre-schoolers at 54%. A target of 80-85% holds municipal recreation providers in good standing. Question design (e.g., satisfaction with City services v. all available opportunities) and sample selection (e.g., registered users v. all residents) may help to make these findings more comparable for the City in the future.

Serving Under-Represented Populations

Input into this Plan identified the need for additional tools and knowledge to better understand local needs and be more inclusive of underserved populations. This initiative is supported by the Master Plan's guiding principles, especially where it results in tools to apply research such as population demographics, identify service delivery partners and local contacts, establish simple processes to engage partners and residents, and work collectively with other community service providers. This assistance will provide frontline staff with the mandate and ability to have discussions with underserved groups as to what services do and do not exist, and to empower them to develop and partner on local solutions. Innovative programs and initiatives built with community partners that share a single vision and joint responsibilities has proven to be a winning formula in Hamilton.



Supporting Volunteers

The success of the recreation and sport service model in Hamilton relies on volunteers to maintain much of the delivery system, thus the sustainability of community stakeholder organizations is critical. Volunteers are needed to provide good governance and leadership to not-for-profit community stakeholder groups, as well as coach, manage teams, organize tournaments, govern, and more. Community stakeholders have indicated that volunteerism is decreasing, making it difficult for organizations to achieve their fullest potential.

Community sport groups have indicated that the decrease in volunteerism is due to burnout, resulting in fewer people trying to keep community organizations in operation. The pandemic has also had an impact on the number of volunteers able to manage events and activities. Additional effort is needed to understand volunteer needs and support community-led organizations moving forward.

Recommendations
58. Identify satisfaction levels with recreation services once service recovery is closer to pre-pandemic levels.
59. Place primary focus on getting participants back into sport, increasing volunteerism, and educating Hamiltonians on the importance and benefits of recreational participation for people of all ages and backgrounds.
60. Develop tools for staff to engage underserved populations at the neighbourhood level and address barriers to participation.
61. Develop a Volunteer Plan in concert with community stakeholders to address the apparent decline in volunteers. This plan may include (but should not be limited to) identifying skill gaps, communication, use of technology, training, promotion, and recognition.

7.2 Hiring and Staffing

The pandemic caused many layoffs and some employees had to pivot to be retrained and gain alternate employment or chose to leave the workforce all together. This response has left a labour shortage in many industries – the unemployment rate in Canada is the lowest it has been in many years. This unique situation has affected the delivery of recreation services. Hamilton has experienced staff shortages and has new employees in positions who have limited historical knowledge of local programs and communities due to staff resignations, new hires, and transfers.

In the Recreation Division, there has been greater turnover in full-time staff and difficulty attracting an adequate number of part-time employees. Public training courses and programs had decreased through the pandemic, resulting in a decline of the number of qualified staff and participants. There have also been several staff relocations due to staff changes. The knowledge and retention of local service delivery, learning about new communities and neighbourhoods, and the undertaking of training and development to have full momentum continues as we begin to recover.

Employee recruitment is an important initiative that requires additional attention. Focusing on part-time staff is a strategic approach given that some may eventually move into full-time positions as part of succession planning initiatives. Localized leadership training and recruitment efforts is a likely starting point. Some municipalities have been successful by holding job fairs and leadership training in places where youth typically

gather (including high schools), as well as offering free leadership training (either universally or within high priority neighbourhoods).

Recommendations

62. Coordinate with allied partners to attract, retain and incentivize staff in the public recreation sector, including understanding current skill gaps and barriers to applying. Work with Human Resources to address through streamlined, localized, and non-traditional recruitment and hiring practices.



7.3 Diversity and Inclusion

Working Together to Make an Impact

The Recreation Division will continue to support and address the needs of under-represented populations. Needs identified may be supported through direct programming, partnerships, one-on-one support, or a combination of approaches. It is important to continue to listen and strengthen ongoing communications with Committees of Council and representatives of underserved groups and support organizations.

Regular forums that gather recreation and sport service providers – including organizations involved with underserved populations – are recommended. These sessions would provide an opportunity for rich discussions and to work more collaboratively as a collective. They will also serve to educate and inform about services that support underserved residents, program gaps, current research, and opportunities to reduce barriers and increase participation.

Enhancing Access to Financial Assistance

The Recreation Assistance Program provides residents experiencing low-income an opportunity to participate in drop-in activities, programs, camps, and minor sports at either a low cost, no-cost, or a reduced fee. Opportunities and subsidies vary according to the age of the residents applying for subsidy. Applicants can apply on-line or in-person.

Although the application process is streamlined and confidential, concern over stigmatization may reduce the number of potential applicants. There is the potential to work more closely with social service organizations to encourage the benefits of participation in recreation and sport and provide a single application for multiple benefits. Engaging more residents in recreation has shown substantial benefits such as increased confidence through learning new skills, increased social interaction, as well as reduced reliance on the healthcare system.

Recommendations

63. Host a forum every other year with community partners of underserved residents to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion in Hamilton's recreation and sport sector. The purpose of these forums will be to discuss advancements, gaps, collective impact, and future actions in ensuring that all underserved residents can lead active and healthy lifestyles by reducing barriers to participation.
64. Enhance access to recreation by working with other social service providers to allow for a single application for all City benefits and subsidy programs.

7.4 Performance Measurement

Municipalities must demonstrate to taxpayers and other contributors that the funding is efficiently and effectively used to advance public good. This can be achieved through the collection and application of data, which can also ensure that decisions are evidenced-based. Typically, data is collected to measure inputs, outputs, efficiencies, and effectiveness.

Measures and target-setting can assist staff in understanding the clear expectations of service delivery, such as utilization of facilities and program satisfaction targets. The Recreation Division collects data by session and currently summarizes this annually for programs in the following areas: Higher Level Outputs; Program Delivery; Bookings and Access; Asset Management; Food Preparation and Delivery; and Golf Operations. This information is shared with staff and any gaps are addressed as identified. Additional measures and targets should be developed to reflect what is important to the public and operational priorities.



Recommendations

65. Develop a simple set of service delivery targets and respective performance measures. Key steps include:

- a) engage all levels of Recreation Division staff in defining the targets and measures, recognizing that priorities may differ between recreation planning areas and operational units;
- b) develop a data collection methodology and a dashboard that would be shared and accessible to reflect the work within the operational units;
- c) collect baseline data in year one and refine targets to ensure that they are achievable and embrace continuous improvement;
- d) host an annual forum with staff to share successes and ways of meeting or exceeding service delivery targets; and
- e) share achievements through communications vehicles and recognition.

7.5 Pricing

The City approves a rates and fees schedule for recreation services and fees are subsequently posted for public information as per the legislated requirements for all municipal departments. Hamilton City Council invests in recreation as a matter of public policy through an intentional approach that establishes affordable rates and include as many residents as possible in recreation and sport opportunities.

A Pricing Policy is needed to provide ongoing guidance regarding the setting of fees. Such a policy would outline the purpose and guiding principles in setting balanced rates and fees, a high-level costing methodology, a categorization of the types of programs and services, and a target as to the percentage that should be recovered through the fee structure per program and service type. The point of the policy would be to define the value of various program or service types in terms of what they contribute to the community good and individual good. Pricing typically seeks to gain greater cost recovery of programs that benefit fewer numbers of residents (private lessons for example) versus gaining lower cost recovery levels for programs that contribute to the greater number of residents (public skating and swimming for example).

Recommendations

66. Develop a Recreation Services Pricing Policy. The policy will provide guidance to staff and transparency to the public in the setting of fair-minded rates and fees for the provision of recreation services in Hamilton. A diverse and skills-based steering committee may be engaged to assist in the development and testing of the principles that will help to define the value of recreation services.

7.6 Partnerships

The Recreation Division has a variety of service and facility-based relationships with a wide range of organizations, including nearly 200 formal agreements. By and large, these arrangements are successful in leveraging resources and maximizing recreational opportunities for Hamiltonians. Staff are regularly involved with identifying service gaps for which partnerships may be sought including the risks and rewards of various forms of agreements.

However, there are areas of partnership development that would benefit from policies that would assist in exploring, executing, and administering partnerships of various forms. This includes a standard approach for developing and evaluating arrangements with outside groups (such as alternative service delivery models) or for responding to unsolicited proposals (such as providing land or funding to support a non-municipal capital project). The Phase 3 Report contains a framework for developing policies and logic models around these subjects.



Generally speaking, any contemplated partnership should provide benefits to the general public that outweigh the risks and that make appropriate use of public and private funds. Relationships with outside groups may be considered when:

- the City does not have capacity or budget for direct program delivery or facility management;
- there is an established provider/partner already working with the City;
- the site fills or augments service gaps in communities in lieu of City services;
- there is a need to build capacity to engage communities; and/or
- the potential service provider is the preferred/specialist for program delivery.

Recommendations

67. Adopt a Standardized Partnership Framework that sets out a fair, equitable and transparent process for creating future relationships with outside entities. The framework should:

- a) build on the results of the opportunities assessment and provide a structure for continuous partnership evaluation in the future;
- b) include goals and objectives statements to frame realistic expectations for the relationship;
- c) include an evaluation process specific to unsolicited proposals; and
- d) include a process for monitoring and evaluating the relationship.

68. Regularly review agreements with clubs that have dedicated access to facilities to ensure an appropriate and sustainable distribution of operational and financial responsibilities. Examples include tennis and pickleball court complexes, lawn bowling greens, bocce courts, select seniors' centres, community halls, etc.

7.7 Sport Development

Formalizing our Role in Community Sport

Hamilton’s sport delivery model offers quality assurance in safe sport experiences and is typical of most municipalities our size. However, the model is not formalized and there is no Sport Plan currently in place to address emerging needs, such as equity and inclusion for Council-identified underserved populations.

The City’s sport delivery model should be formalized in order to assist residents in more easily navigating the system and for partners to work collectively toward the betterment of sport in Hamilton. The Sport Plan should articulate a common vision and agenda and promote the sharing of resources to increase sport participation and create a seamless delivery system.

Additionally, the Federal Government has declared that Canada will achieve gender equity in sport by 2035 and is providing resources to further this work at the local level. Hamilton does not have a plan to address girls, women, and gender diverse peoples’ participation in sport at present. Females comprise 51% of Hamilton’s population and the recommended plan should consider efforts to increase their participation. The need to promote entry points into sport for all ages, abilities and backgrounds is one of several items that may be more fulsomely addressed through the development of a Sport Plan that involves the community and sport organizations.

Supporting Sport Tourism

Tourism Hamilton works with others to attract tourists and events (including sporting events) to the city that will have a positive economic impact on the community and supporting industries. Often, these events utilize City of Hamilton facilities, parks, and staff, and the City receives funding through a Municipal Accommodation Tax to offset a portion of the tourism-related promotion and development costs. Additional funds can be accessed through Council for higher calibre events. Annual economic impact varies pending on the types of events supported.

The City’s role in sport tourism has expanded over time, but is not currently directed by a Council-approved plan. Presently, work is focused on maximizing operational and community benefits by categorizing the various levels of sporting events (from local to international) and the requirements needed to support them, such as staff assistance, grants, research, marketing, bidding, and event hosting. This should be formalized through an updated Sport Tourism and Hosting Strategy and annual reports that identify achievements and future initiatives.

Recommendations

69. **Develop a Community Sport Plan.** The plan will define the sport delivery model in Hamilton, focus on increasing participation of Hamilton’s underserved populations, and measure the effectiveness of the sport delivery system.
70. **Develop a Sport Tourism and Hosting Strategy.** At minimum, the strategy – prepared in partnership between Sport Tourism and the Recreation Division – would assess event hosting requirements, the capacity of facilities to host events, possible facility upgrades and high-level costs, and the economic impact potential.

8. Funding, Evaluation and Next Steps

Generating and sustaining sufficient levels of funding and appropriate partnerships to develop and maintain its expanding infrastructure will be critically important to the success of the Recreation Master Plan. This section provides guidance on the Master Plan's implementation, including financial considerations.



Summarized below are key considerations for funding and implementing the Master Plan. A summary of all recommendations is contained in Appendix A. Please refer to the Phase 3 Report (found under separate cover) for the detailed supporting information and findings.

8.1 Funding the Plan – Unlocking our Potential

Access to sufficient funding to construct, revitalize, and renew recreation and parks infrastructure is a challenge for most municipalities. This concern is magnified in Hamilton, which has many facilities approaching – or beyond – the end of their lifecycle. Not only must the City invest in its existing assets, it must also respond to the needs of growth through capital funding for new and enhanced recreation and parks facilities. The City’s ability to generate and sustain sufficient levels of funding to develop and maintain its expanding infrastructure will be critically important to the success of this Master Plan.

The City’s 2023-2032 Capital Forecast allocates an average of \$19.2 million in annual spending to items within the scope of this Master Plan, such as community recreation centres, pools, sports fields and skateparks. Of this total amount, an annual average of \$12.9 million is allocated to the development of new assets and an annual average of \$6.3 million is allocated to the rehabilitation/replacement of existing assets. Primary funding sources include block funding (tax-supported) and development charges (growth-funded). The capital forecast is fluid and funding amounts and sources are confirmed on an annual basis.

Projected Annual Capital Budget Amounts, Facility Development and Renewal (2023-2032)

Capital Funding Source	2023-2032 Average Annual Budget (net funding), including 'in-scope' and 'out-of-scope' assets	Budget Amount Attributable to 'In-scope' Assets* (net funding)	
		Estimated % of Annual Budget typically attributable to 'in-scope' assets	Estimated Annual Budget Average for 'in-scope' assets
Recreation Facilities Block Funding**	\$7.1M	78%	\$5.5M
Park Development Block Funding	\$5.0M	3%	\$0.2M
Park Operations Block Funding	\$1.8M	33%	\$0.6M
Subtotal: Asset Renewal	\$13.9M	--	\$6.3M
Recreation Development Charge Revenues	\$8M to \$10M	100%	\$9.0M
Parks Development Charge Revenues	\$3.5M to \$4.2M	100%	\$3.9M
Subtotal: Asset Development	\$11.5M to \$14.2M	--	\$12.9M
Total	\$25.4M to \$28.1M	--	\$19.2M

Source: City of Hamilton 2022 Tax Supported Capital Budget

Note: Excludes funding from program-specific reserves.

* Out-of-scope items include general park development, trails/corridors/links, bridges, works buildings, cemeteries, heritage/museum sites, equipment, and land acquisition. In-scope items include all facilities addressed in this Master Plan.

** A portion of the Recreation Facilities Block has historically been used to offset facility development (not just renewal).

Over time, infrastructure has aged and service expectations have shifted, resulting in increased pressures on available funding. To partially offset rising costs, the City increased the capital levy by 0.65% in the 2022 Tax Capital budget, a portion of which will be allocated to recreation and parks capital block funds. Addressing non-growth-related projects will be the City’s greatest financial challenge – a continued commitment to sustainable and predictable funding is required to protect the City’s infrastructure.

Recommendations

- 71. Use this Master Plan as a resource in developing the City’s annual and multi-year budget documents, secondary plans, and related studies.
- 72. Maximize available funding sources through effective financial processes and practices.

8.2 Our Growing Backlog – The Time to Invest is Now

Despite a widespread understanding that recreation and parks facilities are essential in supporting a healthy community, the City’s infrastructure is aging and in various stages of disrepair. Physical environments within recreation facilities are inherently harsh and many are subject to excessive wear and tear. While most facilities are functional, ongoing maintenance and repair issues continue to mount – such as rusted backstops, cracked sport court surfaces, underperforming heating and cooling systems and unreliable aquatic systems. And, in many cases, the antiquated design of older facilities, such as those with undersized washrooms, inaccessible activity spaces, and lack of adequate storage spaces, are affecting facility functionality and public perception of the City’s ability to stay ahead of mounting needs.

The capital backlog of deferred maintenance within Hamilton’s parks and recreation facilities is growing. **For just recreation facilities (such as community centres, pools and arenas; this excluding park assets⁷), the amount of deferred maintenance has increased more than four-fold since 2008, from \$20.4 million to \$89.8 million.** Among the many reasons for this is that the City’s capital maintenance budgets have been frozen or reduced during this time. As maintenance budgets lag, facilities become tired and out-of-date, making it increasingly difficult to offer quality parks and recreation experiences.

Many of Hamilton’s recreation facilities were built decades ago, are reaching the end of their useful life, and are not keeping pace with the needs and expectations of the general public. The average City community recreation centre was built forty years ago and many require ongoing repairs to building interiors, washrooms, windows, roofs, heating and cooling systems, and plumbing and electrical systems. This reality is impacting the City’s ability to consistently provide the full range of opportunities at the very time when the general public needs them most, particularly as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In the end is it not a question of ‘if’ but of ‘when’. We can make smart repairs now or hold off and make increasingly expensive repairs later. Canada needs to accelerate the rate of infrastructure renewal now. Infrastructure investments can have positive impacts on the environment, by reducing energy consumption through the introduction of modern technology and by taking advantage of other efficiencies inherent in modernizing sport and recreation facilities.”

- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, submission to 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card

⁷ Comparable information on the capital backlog for parks facilities is not available.

The City has a responsibility to keep its facilities operationally sound, safe and appealing to users. Simply put, contributing to facilities today will save the City money in the long-run and is an investment in our residents.

The Impact of Deferred Maintenance

Chronic underfunding of repairs and replacements can have several negative consequences, such as:

- supporting stopgaps and half-measures that can lead to much more expensive facility repairs in the longer-term;
- creating risk and liability to public health and safety, damaging the City's reputation as a high quality service provider;
- impairing the City's ability to maintain current service levels, leading to lower participation and satisfaction levels amongst residents;
- increasing the number of unexpected service disruptions (sometimes for extended periods), resulting in foregone revenue;
- reducing the efficiency of building systems, leading to increased operating costs and impairing the City's ability to meet its climate action goals;
- placing additional pressure on other funding tools, such as increased user fees;
- delaying the construction of new assets as funds are diverted to address failing infrastructure;
- reducing the overall lifespan of a facility due to a lack of proper preventative maintenance, creating conditions where the facility may need to be replaced rather than repaired; and
- creating redundancy in the system, as multiple underperforming facilities are required to deliver the same level of service of fewer (but higher functioning) facilities.

The City's capacity to implement a robust facility renewal program is dependent on the availability of appropriate funding, which is predominantly derived from tax contributions. Preventative maintenance is always more affordable and convenient than responding to unanticipated building or equipment repairs. Sufficient resources and effective asset management practices are required to keep facilities functional until such time that a major renovation or full replacement can be funded.

In addition, the City regularly undertakes many capital rehabilitation projects each year, but not all systems are replaced at the same time. This can result in band-aid fixes and often the funding must be reallocated from other priority projects. This has a ripple effect as it diverts money away from repair work such as plumbing and electrical fixtures, roofing, facility furnishings, vacuum ducts, HVAC systems, security systems and barrier-free accessibility projects. As much as possible, the City must work to coordinate facility upgrades and renewal projects to minimize disruptions while maximizing outcomes.



8.3 Addressing our Funding Gap and Capitalizing on Opportunities

High quality, accessible recreation opportunities are essential to the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Unfortunately, the City's inability to keep up with repairs has led to a substantial backlog of state of good repair initiatives for the facilities addressed in this plan. This backlog is the result of long-term underinvestment in maintenance and repair, and significantly impacts the City's ability to deliver its services in facilities that safely and reliably meet the needs of residents. The larger the backlog, the quicker it grows and more difficult it becomes to manage. Increasing reinvestment rates will slow the deterioration of municipal infrastructure.

Through the 2023 budget, the City is planning to increase its rate of annual investment in existing facilities going forward. While the increase will not fully relieve the backlog, it points the City in the right direction and will help to bolster facility repair projects until more funding becomes available. With that said, recent supply shortages have led to rapidly increasing project costs, and it is unclear just how much of an impact the block funding increase will have at this time.

The City uses a portion of its annual block funding to extend the useable life of facilities by remediating deficiencies identified by asset condition assessments, such as mechanical systems, roofing, structural systems, flooring and equipment replacement. Block funding may also be used for facility upgrades and development, such as the incremental costs associated with barrier-free improvements or upgraded technologies. The use of the existing maintenance block funding for new or growth-related facilities is strongly discouraged as it severely limits funding for improving existing facilities. A new and distinct recreation facilities block to supplement growth-related funding sources should be considered as one opportunity to assist with the development of new recreation facilities.

The 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card⁸ identifies target reinvestment rates for sport and recreation facilities to be generally between 1.7% and 2.5%. Hamilton's 2016 State of the Infrastructure Report found that the City's reinvestment was below the minimum funding level, further noting that increasing the reinvestment rate will stop the deterioration of municipal infrastructure.

Without an increased level of investment, the City's infrastructure deficit will continue to increase and service quality will suffer. Deterioration in the physical condition of facilities raises growing health and safety issues, and affects the quality of experiences. The situation calls for a disciplined reinvestment strategy and a commitment to secure sustainable and predictable funding to support projects that protect the City's infrastructure.

Facility rehabilitation projects are under-funded, contributing to an increasing backlog of repairs. The City's annual reinvestment rate is approximately 0.5% of asset replacement value, whereas a rate of 2.0% is recommended.

The City is losing ground in its efforts to maintain the current facility inventory.

⁸ Informing the Future: The 2016 Canadian Infrastructure Report Card, supported by the Canadian Construction Association; Canadian Public Works Association; Canadian Society for Civil Engineering; and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Page 11.

In cases where assets are approaching end of life or under-performing, the Master Plan provides a framework for making informed, evidence-based decisions about when to renovate, repurpose and rebuild facilities.

In addition, we must not forget about allocating sufficient operating funding to ensure that our services and facilities remain accessible and responsive to community needs. This is another area that has recently been affected by rising cost factors and challenges with attracting and retaining qualified staff. Operating funds for programs, services, and facilities are derived from several sources, including (but not limited to) municipal taxation and user fees. The Recreation Division is one of the greatest contributors to user fee revenue for the City. An analysis of budget implications and partnership options should be undertaken prior to approving major capital projects, ensuring that sufficient annual operating funds are allocated to any approved project.



Recommendations

- 73. Continue to increase spending on facility rehabilitation and replacement to address the growing backlog of deferred maintenance and focus on necessary upgrades.** A sustainable funding model will create more resilient infrastructure and avoid higher capital costs in the future. Considerations include:
 - a) Calculating annual funding amounts for ongoing repair and replacement projects as 2% of facility replacement values.
 - b) Establishing a capital renewal policy that considers bolstering block funds to provide high priority and sufficient funding for ongoing facility renewal and lifecycle requirements.
 - c) Considering the establishment of a separate funding stream to address new, non-growth-related facility development.
 - d) Considering alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches to achieve capital and operating cost recovery targets, such as (but not limited to) surcharges, fundraising, grants, sponsorships and naming rights, and various forms of collaboration to provide the best value to residents.
- 74. Coordinate facility upgrades and renewal projects to minimize disruptions while maximizing outcomes (e.g., combine multiple work items).**
- 75. Assess operating budget implications and partnership options prior to approving major capital projects.**
- 76. Maintain facilities in a safe, clean and attractive condition. Develop a process to measure unplanned closures and their impacts.**
- 77. Consider repurposing aging facilities that are no longer needed to maintain service levels.**

8.4 Assessment Tools – Community Engagement will Continue

The Recreation Master Plan is a dynamic document that guides overall municipal service and facility provision strategies. In doing so, the Plan provides tools to evaluate needs at a local level, where residents will be given another opportunity to put forward their suggestions and comments. Trends, growth forecasts, best practices, and community feedback are just some of the inputs that provide the basis for the Plan's recommended provision models and priorities. Active monitoring of these factors is required to ensure that the City is providing services and facilities that are responsive to evolving needs.

As Hamilton becomes home to approximately 236,000 new residents by 2051, there will be a need for many new facilities and programs to satisfy growth-related requirements. The Recreation Master Plan speaks to these needs and provides several population-based targets that can be used to guide future planning and budgeting. However, population and participation trends are continually influencing the demand for various leisure activities – supplying enough facilities and services (but not too many) to meet needs at any given time is a significant challenge.



Feasibility Studies – Providing Further Definition to Facility Development and Reinvestment Opportunities

This Recreation Master Plan employs an evidence-based decision framework to enable the identification and prioritization of major capital projects. The framework utilizes a standards-based gap and provision analysis that prioritizes areas of highest need, considering a range of factors that support equitable provision and access.

The recommendations and proposed timelines are not intended to be rigid, but provide strategic direction to the City as it builds its capital plan, makes strategic decisions, and considers various forms of community partnerships. Regular vetting of capital projects and priorities (including growth-related and lifecycle needs) is required to ensure that the recommendations remain appropriate.

As the City moves forward with implementing this Master Plan, additional steps are required to bridge the gap from planning to design to construction. This process should be informed by the preparation of feasibility studies for major indoor recreation facilities. These studies should be completed at least two years before the capital project is forecasted to begin (or at least five years in advance for major capital projects). Sometimes a similar process may be considered for park master plans that direct new park development or wholesale redevelopment.

These project-specific studies and related processes will achieve several objectives, including (but not necessarily limited to):

- 1) **Validate Facility and Service Requirements:** This will be informed by the findings of this Master Plan, demographic and socio-economic data, local needs (including requests for new amenities), recreation trends and preferences, facility condition assessments, etc.

- 2) **Identify an Appropriate Site for Facility Development:** This may include a site selection process that identifies locations within the existing parks system; in some cases, new land will be needed to accommodate the facilities.
- 3) **Initiate Conceptual Design:** Conceptual designs are created to inform the detailed design and construction process.
- 4) **Confirm the Project Budget and Funding Sources:** This is an iterative process that will be guided by the facility program, site, design, and other related factors. Both capital and operating cost impacts should be considered. As the project nears the detailed design and construction phase, these estimates will become more detailed and precise. Secure funding will be required to advance any and all projects.
- 5) **Evaluate Partnership Considerations:** This includes consideration of co-location opportunities and service-related partnerships with internal and external agencies, where applicable; the Master Plan provides a series of tools to evaluate various forms of partnerships.
- 6) **Undertake Public and Stakeholder Consultation:** The community will be engaged through a variety of means to provide meaningful input on facility and program needs. Sometimes this engagement occurs at the detailed design stage.
- 7) **Establish Timing and Consider Coordinated Initiatives:** This includes consideration of related park and facility upgrades and renewal projects, including combining logical work orders.

Project-specific feasibility studies provide the basis for moving priorities identified in this Recreation Master Plan forward to the next stage. Once these are in place, more detailed design, engineering, tendering and construction processes can begin.

It is important to recognize that planning and execution can take several years, with projects only proceeding when funding has been confirmed.

Addressing Site-Specific Requests

The City frequently receives requests from the community, members of City Council and other interests to add new amenities to the recreation and parks system. This can vary widely, from community gardens and sport courts to high-level athletic facilities. Typically, these requests require site-specific investigations that extend beyond the scope of this Master Plan.

The starting point for evaluating these capital requests is this Recreation Master Plan. The Plan identifies system-wide guiding principles as well as specific provision models, planning targets, and recommendations for most municipal recreational amenity types. Requests should be evaluated using the various frameworks contained in this Plan as these have been devised with consideration of community input, demographics, participation and usage trends, best practices, and



related factors. If the request can be supported based on the Master Plan’s provision framework and has an identified funding source, it may be further considered by staff and Council.

For those requests that are not directly supported by the Master Plan or have not been identified as a priority herein, alternative funding is likely to be required. At a minimum, consistency with the Plan’s guiding principles should be required. Further, the need for and viability of the project should be tested by City staff to confirm that it addresses a gap, would not have negative impacts on other programming, and would not displace funding that has been allocated to other priority projects.

For major capital requests that extend beyond the City’s core mandate (such as those that are commonly delivered by other providers), this Recreation Master Plan outlines a process for addressing these unsolicited proposals, such as the requirement for a proponent-led business plan (see Sections 5.8 and 7.6).

Evaluation Criteria for Facility Repurposing and Removals

Occasionally there will be leisure activities with declining participation and interest despite a growing city, such as bocce and lawn bowling. Additionally, some neighbourhood-level facilities – such as spray pads and playgrounds –are provided on the basis of geographic distribution and for which the need for new facilities may wane as Hamilton grows inward. For these facility types, an approach is needed that is more strategic than growth-related. This means that some existing facilities may be removed and repurposed to other uses as they reach the end of their life, or that the City will stop providing them in certain locations. In most cases, site-specific analysis will be required to identify opportunities for facility investment, conversion, and closure.

The Plan has identified the following facility types as having additional capacity and/or non-growth-related provision characteristics.

Facility types require further analysis to determine closure, repurposing and/or reinvestment potential

Facility Type	General Direction Regarding Provision
Arenas	New arenas will be required to address growth in strategic locations. Some existing arena facilities, however, may be candidates for conversion to other uses or removal from service altogether.
Community Halls	Closure of underused halls is possible, particularly where these facilities require significant capital upgrades and their functions can be accommodated within a nearby facility.
Playgrounds	Playgrounds will continue to be provided on the basis of equitable access. There may be cases where the relocation or removal of playground equipment is justified, often triggered by a capital investment decision.
Bocce Courts	Existing facilities will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.
Lawn Bowling Greens	Existing facilities will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.
Spray Pads	New spray pads will be required in growing areas and gaps on the basis of achieving an adequate distribution. Potential removals should focus primarily on Neighbourhood Spray Pads at the end of their functional lifespan.
Wading Pools	Existing wading pools will be evaluated for repurposing or removal as they reach end of life.

For the aforementioned facility types, the following criteria have been developed to guide the site-specific analysis of opportunities for closure, removal and conversion to other in-demand uses:

- 1) **Condition:** The amenity is in poor condition, in need of significant investment and approaching or exceeding the end of its function life.
- 2) **Nearby Facilities:** Removal would eliminate duplication of service within the catchment area the amenity serves (with consideration to the service radii identified in the Master Plan), where the amenity in question has a lower level of service than the retained amenity.
- 3) **Usage Levels:** The amenity has low usage and will have no adverse impact on recreation programming.
- 4) **Local Needs:** Removal responds to the shifting demographic characteristics of the immediate neighbourhood, with consideration given to providing facilities in high needs areas (may differ depending on facility type).
- 5) **Safety and Site-Specific Limitations:** The amenity cannot be maintained safely due to site-specific challenges that affect its appropriate use.
- 6) **Other Community-Supported Demands:** There is significant demand for other amenities within the space that are supported by the community and growth forecasts.

The timing for assessing amenity removal may vary, but will oftentimes be triggered by capital projects (the amenity has reached the end of its lifecycle and requires significant maintenance), community requests, park renewal and development projects, and/or other strategic municipal initiatives. It is important to note that further consultation will be required for most projects, as well as site-specific analysis.

8.5 This Plan is a Living Document

The City should regularly review and assess the recommendations of this Recreation 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 ten-year update to the Plan. Through these mechanisms – or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustment of resource allocations and priorities identified in this Plan may be required.

Reviewing the Master Plan requires a commitment from all municipal staff, officials, organizations and residents involved in the planning, financing, and delivery of recreation and parks services. An appropriate time for this is prior to the annual budget process. Steps for completing an annual review of the Master Plan are identified in the Phase 3 Report.



Recommendations

78. Implement a system for the regular monitoring of the Master Plan. Opportunities to link the Master Plan to other corporate strategies and initiatives should also be sought.

79. Reassess the direction, priorities, and accomplishments of the Master Plan at approximately ten-year intervals to inform planning and funding strategies.

8.6 Next Steps – Implementation Strategy

Implementation of this Master Plan will require leadership, commitment, resources, and sustained efforts. Success will also be dependent upon a collaborative effort led by the City and involving a variety of dedicated partners and service providers. Full implementation will require the pursuit of alternative funding and the establishment of various arrangements with community organizations, schools, developers, and other partners.

The Master Plan’s 30-year timeframe reflects the time needed to plan and execute major capital projects, a multi-year process that typically involves securing funding, engaging residents, acquiring land, developing partnerships, and meeting regulatory requirements, as well as facility design and construction. The implementation of some recommended capital projects will require more detailed planning, which will include further public engagement and partnership development.

This Master Plan identifies community expectations and needs. A detailed Implementation Strategy will soon be developed to clarify capital priorities that will feed into the City’s budget process; factors that may influence priorities are discussed in the Phase 3 Report. When needs outpace our financial resources, priority setting is essential. Consideration of community partnerships, efficient systems and operating models, and long-term fiscal sustainability is also critical. Through implementation, the City will reconcile the Plan’s recommendations with its fiscal capacity and align growth-related needs with the development cycle.

The timing of the recommendations proposed in this Master Plan recognizes the need for phased implementation and/or outside funding sources as some recommendations are based upon what is needed and not necessarily what may be financially achievable by the City at the present time. As part of the annual budget process, this Plan will be reviewed to identify areas where the availability of resources may affect the timing of implementation. Analysis of implementation options and budget implications (both operating and capital) should be undertaken prior to approving major projects. It is also critical that the City regularly monitor and report progress on the Plan and its recommendations.

Recommendations

80. **Prepare an Implementation Strategy for this Recreation Master Plan to inform long-term capital budgets.** This Strategy will assess financial implications and use the tools in this Master Plan to establish a prioritized listing of capital projects over the next ten years (including both major renovations and new facilities).
81. **Ensure that planning for major capital projects includes meaningful community engagement, feasibility studies that validate building program and service requirements (informed by demographic and socio-economic data, local needs, recreation trends and preferences, etc.), and consideration of potential partnerships.**
82. **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).**
83. **Develop evidence-based facility assessment tools and guidelines to improve database management and business intelligence.**
84. **Regularly review design standards for new and renovated recreation facilities.**
85. **Maintain an up-to-date facility and park inventory to support future planning efforts and track Master Plan progress.**

Appendix



SHALLOW AREA N

A. Recommendation Summary

For ease of reference, all recommendations within this Recreation Master Plan are contained in the following table. For additional detail, please see the specific sections of this Plan and applicable background reports.

Proposed Timing

- Short-term: 2023 to 2031
- Medium-term: 2032 to 2041
- Longer-term: 2042 to 2051
- Ongoing: Guidelines and practices to be followed on a continual basis

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Community Recreation Centres	1. Prepare a CRC Renewal and Redevelopment Strategy in the short-term to guide major reinvestment in existing facilities. Key components include site specific needs and opportunities audits to determine the potential to renew and/or expand aging CRCs on-site or nearby. Many of these facilities may be co-located with schools and/or are constrained, such as Ryerson, Sir Winston Churchill, Dominic Agostino Riverdale, Hill Park, Sir Allan MacNab, Dalewood, and Central Recreation Centres and others. Criteria to assess need and priority are advanced in this Master Plan.	Short-term
	2. Establish new growth-related CRCs (7) in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waterdown (short-term) – pool, gym, program space, etc. (Harry Howell Arena) - Binbrook (short-term) – gym, program space (Glanbrook Arena) - Fruitland-Winona (short-term) – gym, program space to replace temporary CC (secondary plan site) - South Mountain (medium-term) – pool, gym, program space, etc. (site required) - Saltfleet (medium-term) – pool, gym, program space (Saltfleet Arena site - repurpose) - Growth-related needs in Lower Hamilton (medium to longer-term) – vertical CRCs; specific components to be evaluated (Eastwood Arena and 2 sites tbd) 	Short-term to Longer-term
Indoor Pools	3. Modernize indoor pools as part of CRC renewal projects, where feasible. Undertake a feasibility study in the short-term to consider options for renewing or replacing Dundas Community Pool.	Short-term and Ongoing
	4. Develop indoor pools as part of the following growth-related CRCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waterdown (short-term) – Harry Howell Arena - South Mountain (medium-term) – site required - Saltfleet (medium-term) – replace H.G. Brewster Pool through redevelopment of Saltfleet Arena site - Growth-related needs in Lower Hamilton (medium to longer-term) – 2 sites tbd 	Short-term to Longer-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Outdoor Pools	<p>5. Redevelop existing outdoor pools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victoria Park (short-term) - Chedoke Pool (medium-term) - Ancaster (longer-term) 	Short-term to Longer-term
	<p>6. Develop new outdoor pools to address growth-related needs in the following areas as opportunities allow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Mountain (medium-term) - Lower Hamilton (longer-term) 	Medium-term to Longer-term
Gymnasiums	<p>7. Develop gymnasiums as part of all new and expanded CRCs, where feasible. Notable gymnasium additions to existing CRCs in the short-term include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Norman Pinky Lewis RC - Stoney Creek RC <p>See CRC recommendations for more detail.</p>	Short-term and Ongoing
Seniors Recreation Spaces	<p>8. Expand existing seniors' recreation centres (e.g., Sackville Hill Seniors Centre, Ancaster Seniors Activity Centre) to meet growing program needs.</p>	Short-term
	<p>9. Consider enhanced seniors' programming space at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alexander Park Community Hub project (short-term) – in partnership with local club if warranted/supported at this location - Proposed Fruitland-Winona CRC (short-term) – replacement for Winona Senior Citizen Centre - Proposed South Mountain CRC (medium-term) - Proposed Saltfleet CRC (medium-term) - Work with community partners to address potential needs in Hamilton Mountain and Upper Stoney Creek (longer-term) 	Short-term to Longer-term
Arenas	<p>10. Renew the following arenas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dave Andreychuk Mountain Arena (short-term) - Chedoke Twin Pad Arena (short-term) - others to be determined on a case-by-case basis over the medium and longer-terms, with consideration of adding other needed recreational spaces and ability to use year-round 	Short-term and Ongoing

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Arenas (continued)	<p>11. Decommission the following arenas in the short-term to align supply with demand and realize cost efficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stoney Creek Arena – remove arena from service (add gym to Stoney Creek RC) - Saltfleet Arena – remove arena from service (redevelop as a CRC without ice pads); note: prior to retiring Stoney Creek and Saltfleet Arenas, ensure suitable community access to ice time within Lower Stoney Creek - Eastwood Arena – remove arena from service (replace one ice pad as part of broader CRC development in the medium to longer-term) - conversion of other single pad arenas (to floor-based activities, etc.) may be considered in the medium- to longer-term, where appropriate 	Short-term and Ongoing
	<p>12. Develop additional arenas to address growth-related needs (3 additional ice pads, for a total of 28) in the medium to longer-term. Specific strategies will depend on closure or repurposing of selected single pad arenas and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase of ice from non-municipal providers - Expansion to existing arena and CRC facilities - Development of new ice pads (possibly as part of future CRCs), with consideration given to Lower Hamilton, Lower Stoney Creek, and/or Upper Stoney Creek 	Medium-term to Longer-term
Community Halls	<p>13. Evaluate needs for multi-use and multi-partnered community hubs in growing rural settlement areas, such as Mount Hope (short-term).</p>	Short-term and Ongoing
	<p>14. Prior to undertaking significant investment in existing community halls, assess local needs, capacity within area facilities, and potential long-term usage. The assessment should be used to guide options, including sale, decommissioning, third-party-lease, and/or reinvestment.</p>	Ongoing
Other Recreation Facilities	<p>15. Municipal provision of non-core indoor recreation facilities is not recommended, but could be considered in partnership with local community-based clubs. A standardized partnership framework should be used to evaluate and respond to such requests.</p>	Ongoing

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Soccer and Multi-use Fields	<p>16. Provide access to up to 31 additional soccer and multi-use fields (ULE) by 2051, with most of these fields coming on-line in the medium- to longer-term. A variety of strategies will be used to address these needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the short-term, a priority should be placed on opportunities for reserving lands for sports fields through secondary plans and development proposals; parkland securement approaches will be guided by the City’s Parks Master Plan. - New field development should focus on higher quality fields (e.g., artificial turf, Class A, Class B). - An audit of existing field sites is required to determine upgrade potential and a field improvement program is recommended to increase the capacity of existing assets. This may include upgrades to turf surface/quality, lighting and support amenities that will result in more artificial turf, Class A, and Class B fields. - Options for offsetting a portion of upgrade costs through a capital surcharge on user fees should be evaluated. - A capital reserve should be established to facilitate artificial turf replacement. - The City will regularly seek to collaborate with school boards and other land-owners to improve community access to quality fields at affordable rates. - Collect both youth and adult registration levels to help track supply and demand over time. 	Short-term to Longer-term
Football Fields	<p>17. Consider opportunities to accommodate football and other field sports when designing new artificial turf fields. There is no set target for football field provision; needs will be assessed on a case-by-case-basis with consideration of the availability of school fields.</p>	Ongoing

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Baseball Diamonds	<p>18. Provide access to approximately 32 additional ball diamonds (ULE) by 2051, with a focus on diamond enhancements in the short-term. A variety of strategies will be used to address these needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An audit of existing field sites is required to determine upgrade potential and a diamond improvement program is recommended to increase the capacity of existing assets. This may include adding lights, expanding fields, and improving amenities that will result in more Class A and B diamonds. - A priority should be placed on developing new diamonds in community-level parks and reserving lands for sports fields through secondary plans and development proposals; parkland securement approaches will be guided by the City’s Parks Master Plan. - New diamond development should focus on higher quality Class A and B diamonds. - Options for offsetting a portion of upgrade costs through a capital surcharge on user fees should be evaluated. - The City will regularly seek to collaborate with rural sub-committees to improve community access to quality diamonds. - Collect both youth and adult registration levels to help track supply and demand over time. 	Short-term to Longer-term
Cricket Fields	<p>19. Develop up to 3 new cricket fields by 2051. This can be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing new fields into new and redeveloped park sites. These may be designed as cricket/soccer field overlays. - Making use of under-utilized park sites and other City lands. - Ensuring that fields are properly designed and maintained (about 150 to 185 metres in diameter, with artificial turf fields and grass fields that are cut shorter) to accommodate adult play. User groups should be consulted as part of field design. 	Short-term to Longer-term
Playgrounds	<p>20. Continue to address growth-related needs and gaps in playground distribution (based on a 500- to 800-metre catchment) through installations in existing parks, new park development, or other means as necessary. The relocation or removal of playground equipment may be explored on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the public and with consideration to pre-established criteria (see Section 8.4).</p>	Ongoing
	<p>21. Review the adequacy of the City’s annual budget for playground replacement on municipal lands, including annual inflationary factors. Budgets must give proper consideration to accessibility requirements (including rubber surfacing within selected City-wide and Community Parks), associated landscaping, site furniture and supporting amenities.</p>	Short-term
	<p>22. Investigate external funding sources and partnership opportunities to supplement municipal funding for the development and replacement of Hamilton’s playgrounds.</p>	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Outdoor Fitness Stations	<p>23. Provide up to five additional outdoor fitness station locations by 2051. A priority should be placed on improving the current distribution, with a focus on areas of lower- to medium-income, including Lower Stoney Creek, West Hamilton/Dundas, and under-served parts of Lower Hamilton.</p>	Short-term to Longer-term
	<p>24. Develop planning guidelines to guide the siting of future outdoor fitness locations, including both equipment-based locations and open space exercise zones. These guidelines should give consideration to appropriate park types, support amenities, and other site characteristics that would support strong usage levels.</p>	Short-term
Tennis Courts	<p>25. Develop approximately 23 additional outdoor tennis courts by 2051. Public courts will be required in areas of growth (including South Mountain, Binbook and Fruitland-Winona; and Lower Hamilton in the longer-term) and may be designed as multi-use courts. New club courts may be considered through expansion to existing sites or new club formation, supported by verified membership levels and waiting lists.</p>	Short-term to Longer-term
	<p>26. Initiate a tennis court rehabilitation program. This work should be informed by public consultation and an implementation strategy for court renewal and development.</p>	Short-term
	<p>27. Review the adequacy of budget amounts for court rehabilitation and investigate external funding sources and partnership opportunities to supplement municipal funding. This applies to all outdoor courts, including tennis, pickleball, basketball, and multi-use courts.</p>	Short-term
	<p>28. Review the suitability of developing public tennis courts within Neighbourhood Parks, particularly within the Urban Growth Centre. This review should be extended to other park amenities and park types and be reflected in the Zoning By-law and related policies.</p>	Short-term
Pickleball Courts	<p>29. Monitor community demand for pickleball and address needs for outdoor courts through various strategies. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing “dedicated” courts to address organized play. The City will work with pickleball organizations to monitor and assess the need for additional dedicated court complexes over time. Standards for court construction should be reviewed, including an appropriate setback from residential areas. - Providing “overlay” courts to address casual play. Through new construction and court rehabilitation projects, the City will consider the relining of public tennis courts to allow for shared use. This will typically be on sites with one to two courts. Priority should be given to improving the geographic distribution of public pickleball courts. 	Short-term to Longer-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Basketball and Multi-use Courts	<p>30. Improve the distribution of basketball and multi-use courts by adding new courts in gap and growth areas. Approximately 24.5 additional courts (full court equivalents) are required by 2051. Where appropriate, new courts should be designed as multi-use courts. Short-term priorities for court development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - West Hamilton/Dundas (all areas); - Upper Stoney Creek (northern portion); - Ancaster (west of Highway 403); - Lower Hamilton (Gage Park area); and - Hamilton Mountain (northern portion). 	Short-term to Longer-term
	<p>31. Update the City’s design standards and usage policies for multi-use courts to reflect contemporary trends and allow for greater flexibility in use and programming.</p>	Short-term
	<p>32. Initiate a basketball and multi-use court rehabilitation program. This work should be informed by public consultation and an implementation strategy for court renewal and development.</p>	Short-term
Beach Volleyball Courts	<p>33. To support City and community programming, identify one site to support a 3-court sand volleyball complex. This may be established as a pilot project and made permanent subject to successful use. Design and maintenance standards should be developed to support the provision of these park amenities.</p>	Short-term
Bocce Courts	<p>34. No new bocce courts and/or dedicated bocce buildings are recommended. Continued communication is required between the City and user groups to ensure the safe and reasonable use of support buildings. Existing outdoor bocce courts will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.</p>	Ongoing
Lawn Bowling Greens	<p>35. No new lawn bowling greens are recommended. Existing facilities will be evaluated for removal should clubs fold.</p>	Ongoing
	<p>36. Agreements between the City and lawn bowling clubs should be reviewed to ensure an appropriate and sustainable allocation of operational and financial responsibilities.</p>	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Spray Pads	<p>37. Install spray pads in gap and growth areas, with consideration of recommended service radii (1km for neighbourhood spray pads and 1.5km for community spray pads) and the identification of appropriate locations.</p> <p>New spray pads in the short-term include those in current capital plans, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broughton Park East or alternative site (HM) - Mountain Drive Park (HM) - Brightside Park (LH) - Woodland Park (LH) - Smokey Hollow Park (FLA) <p>New spray pads in the medium-term should continue to address existing and growth-related gaps in distribution. Appropriate sites should be selected in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower Stoney Creek – 2 (one north of QEW and one in the Saltfleet area) - Upper Stoney Creek (Rymal Road area) 	Short-term to Medium-term
	<p>38. Evaluate the need to replace or remove existing Neighbourhood Spray Pads when they reach end of life. The evaluation should apply the criteria advanced in this Master Plan (see Section 8.4), including the recommended service radii.</p>	Ongoing
Wading Pools	<p>39. Existing wading pools will be evaluated for repurposing or removal as they reach end of life; evaluation criteria have been identified in the Master Plan (Section 8.4).</p>	Ongoing
Skateboard Parks	<p>40. Develop two additional City-level or Community Skate Parks in the short- to medium-term to address gaps in distribution. Confirm locations within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ancaster (possibly Ancaster Community Centre) – City Skate Park - Lower Stoney Creek (possibly Fruitland-Winona) – Community Skate Park 	Short-term to Medium-term
	<p>41. Develop up to two additional Neighbourhood-level skate parks in the medium- to longer-term to address localized needs. Confirm locations within:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hamilton Mountain (site tbd); - Lower Hamilton (possibly Powell Park); and/or - Lower Stoney Creek (possibly Sir Wilfrid Laurier) 	Medium-term to Longer-term
	<p>42. Consider the inclusion of Skate Dots (one or more benches, ledge walls or rails) within new and redeveloped parks and trails.</p>	Ongoing
	<p>43. Establish a skate park renewal program that addresses aging infrastructure, including the replacement of modular parks with poured-in-place concrete parks at the end of lifecycle.</p>	Short-term
Bike Parks and Pump Tracks	<p>44. Expand and convert the dirt bike park in Gage Park to asphalt to decrease maintenance, extend the season, and broaden its userbase.</p>	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Bike Parks and Pump Tracks (continued)	45. Provide two to three new bicycle pump tracks by 2051. These should be distributed across the city and associated with new and redeveloped skate parks (which can accommodate multi-wheeled users such as scooters, skateboards and BMX bikes). Selection of bike park locations requires a site-specific analysis using the criteria established to guide the Gage Park pilot project.	Short-term to Longer-term
	46. Work with other City Divisions to explore options for expanding mountain biking opportunities within City parks (as identified in the Recreational Trails Master Plan).	Short-term
Leash Free Dog Areas	47. Continue to work toward the goal of establishing a minimum of one leash free dog area per ward, with a primary focus on resolving gaps in Lower Stoney Creek, Hamilton Mountain, and parts of Lower Hamilton.	Short-term to Longer-term
	48. Update the Leash Free Parks Policy to address the dynamics of providing, designing and maintaining leash free dog areas in higher density neighbourhoods. This updated approach should recognize the shared responsibility of the development community and the City in responding to the needs of pet owners and their pets.	Short-term
Outdoor Ice Rinks and Skating Trails	49. Encourage partnerships and community funding for the development of two artificial (refrigerated) outdoor ice rinks in additional locations across the City. Possible locations include (but may not be limited to) Confederation Park and Olympic Park on Hamilton Mountain.	Ongoing
	50. Explore synthetic ice and other technologies that can enhance the efficiency and viability of current and future outdoor ice rinks.	Short-term
	51. Continue to sustain the volunteer-led neighbourhood rink program that supports natural ice rinks in suitable park locations across Hamilton. Where appropriate, water service should be considered as a primary amenity in new and redeveloped parks to support future rink provision. Additional marketing and support activities should also be provided to volunteers to bolster the success of the program.	Ongoing
Community Gardens	52. Support the establishment of community gardens on appropriate municipal lands and as an option in new and redeveloped parks (in accordance with the Community Gardens Policy). An equitable distribution across Hamilton is desired (recognizing that the City is one of many landowners), with more sites in denser, higher needs areas.	Ongoing
Golf Courses	53. An updated Golf Strategy is required to create and guide a long-term vision for the City's municipal golf courses and related services. The Strategy should include community engagement, and consider items such as (but not limited to) highest and best use, infrastructure needs, complementary year-round programming, public access, environmental management, financial objectives, and more.	Short-term
Outdoor Running Tracks	54. No additional outdoor running tracks are recommended, though more looped hard-surface walking paths should be established within the parks system. Neighbourhood and community-level tracks in deteriorating condition should be evaluated and considered for removal if they become unsafe.	Ongoing

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Outdoor Running Tracks (continued)	55. Continue to maintain Mohawk Sports Park which, along with several school sites, meets community-wide needs for competition-level track and field sites.	Ongoing
Support Buildings in Parks	56. Prepare a strategy and decision-making framework to guide the renewal, development and disposition of clubhouses and fieldhouses. Give consideration to building usage and conditions, responsibilities, community access, etc.	Short-term
Washroom Buildings in Parks	57. Provide permanent, accessible washroom facilities within Community and City-wide Parks and at selected trailheads, where required. Consideration should be given to high use sites that may support year-round facilities (pending direction from the winter washroom pilot program). Washrooms will not generally be provided within Neighbourhood Parks.	Ongoing
Service Provision	58. Identify satisfaction levels in the Recreation Division once service recovery is closer to pre-pandemic levels.	Short-term
	59. Place primary focus on getting participants back into sport, increasing volunteerism, and educating Hamiltonians on the importance and benefits of recreational participation for people of all ages and backgrounds.	Short-term
	60. Develop tools for staff to engage underserved populations at the neighbourhood level and address barriers to participation.	Short-term
	61. Develop a Volunteer Plan in concert with community stakeholders to address the apparent decline in volunteers. This plan may include (but should not be limited to) identifying skill gaps, communication, use of technology, training, promotion, and recognition.	Short-term
Hiring and Staffing	62. Coordinate with allied partners to attract, retain and incentivize staff in the public recreation sector, including understanding current skill gaps and barriers to applying. Work with Human Resources to address through streamlined, localized, and non-traditional recruitment and hiring practices.	Short-term
Diversity and Inclusion	63. Host a forum every other year with community partners of underserved residents to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion in Hamilton's recreation and sport sector. The purpose of these forums will be to discuss advancements, gaps, collective impact, and future actions in ensuring that all underserved residents can lead active and healthy lifestyles by reducing barriers to participation.	Short-term
	64. Enhance access to recreation by working with other social service providers to allow for a single application for all City benefits and subsidy programs.	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Performance Measurement	<p>65. Develop a simple set of service delivery targets and respective performance measures. Key steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) engage all levels of Recreation Division staff in defining the targets and measures, recognizing that priorities may differ between recreation planning areas and operational units; b) develop a data collection methodology and a dashboard that would be shared and accessible to reflect the work within the operational units; c) collect baseline data in year one and refine targets to ensure that they are achievable and embrace continuous improvement; d) host an annual forum with staff to share successes and ways of meeting or exceeding service delivery targets; and e) share achievements through communications vehicles and recognition. 	Short-term
Pricing	<p>66. Develop a Recreation Services Pricing Policy. The policy will provide guidance to staff and transparency to the public in the setting of fair-minded rates and fees for the provision of recreation services in Hamilton. A diverse and skills-based steering committee may be engaged to assist in the development and testing of the principles that will help to define the value of recreation services.</p>	Short-term
Partnerships	<p>67. Adopt a Standardized Partnership Framework that sets out a fair, equitable and transparent process for creating future relationships with outside entities. The framework should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) build on the results of the opportunities assessment and provide a structure for continuous partnership evaluation in the future; b) include goals and objectives statements to frame realistic expectations for the relationship; c) include an evaluation process specific to unsolicited proposals; and d) include a process for monitoring and evaluating the relationship. 	Short-term
	<p>68. Regularly review agreements with third-party operators that have dedicated access to facilities to ensure an appropriate and sustainable distribution of operational and financial responsibilities. Examples include tennis and pickleball court complexes, lawn bowling greens, bocce courts, select seniors' centres, community halls, etc.</p>	Ongoing
Sport Development	<p>69. Develop a Community Sport Plan. The plan will define the sport delivery model in Hamilton, focus on increasing participation of Hamilton's underserved populations, and measure the effectiveness of the sport delivery system.</p>	Short-term
	<p>70. Develop a Sport Tourism and Hosting Strategy. At minimum, the strategy – prepared in partnership between Sport Tourism and the Recreation Division – would assess event hosting requirements, the capacity of facilities to host events, possible facility upgrades and high-level costs, and the economic impact potential.</p>	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Funding the Plan	71. Use this Master Plan as a resource in developing the City’s annual and multi-year budget documents, secondary plans, and related studies.	Ongoing
	72. Maximize available funding sources through effective financial processes and practices.	Ongoing
Addressing our Funding Gap	73. Continue to increase spending on facility rehabilitation and replacement to address the growing backlog of deferred maintenance and focus on necessary upgrades. A sustainable funding model will create more resilient infrastructure and avoid higher capital costs in the future. Considerations include: a) Calculating annual funding amounts for ongoing repair and replacement projects as 2% of facility replacement values. b) Establishing a capital renewal policy that considers bolstering block funds to provide high priority and sufficient funding for ongoing facility renewal and lifecycle requirements. c) Considering the establishment of a separate funding stream to address new, non-growth-related facility development. d) Considering alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches to achieve capital and operating cost recovery targets, such as (but not limited to) surcharges, fundraising, grants, sponsorships and naming rights, and various forms of collaboration to provide the best value to residents.	Short-term and Ongoing
	74. Coordinate facility upgrades and renewal projects to minimize disruptions while maximizing outcomes (e.g., combine multiple work items).	Ongoing
	75. Assess operating budget implications and partnership options prior to approving major capital projects.	Ongoing
	76. Maintain facilities in a safe, clean and attractive condition. Develop a process to measure unplanned closures and their impacts.	Ongoing
	77. Consider repurposing aging facilities that are no longer needed to maintain service levels.	Ongoing
Plan Evaluation and Monitoring	78. Implement a system for the regular monitoring of the Master Plan. Opportunities to link the Master Plan to other corporate strategies and initiatives should also be sought.	Short-term
	79. Reassess the direction, priorities, and accomplishments of the Master Plan at approximately ten-year intervals to inform planning and funding strategies.	Medium-term
Implementation	80. Prepare an Implementation Strategy for this Recreation Master Plan to inform long-term capital budgets. This Strategy will assess financial implications and use the tools in this Master Plan to establish a prioritized listing of capital projects over the next ten years (including both major renovations and new facilities).	Short-term

Subject Area	Recommendations	Timing
Implementation (continued)	81. Ensure that planning for major capital projects includes meaningful community engagement, feasibility studies that validate building program and service requirements (informed by demographic and socio-economic data, local needs, recreation trends and preferences, etc.), and consideration of potential partnerships.	Ongoing
	82. 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).	Short-term
	83. Develop evidence-based facility assessment tools and guidelines to improve database management and business intelligence.	Short-term
	84. Regularly review design standards for new and renovated recreation facilities.	Ongoing
	85. Maintain an up-to-date facility and park inventory to support future planning efforts and track Master Plan progress.	Ongoing

B. Facility Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to illustrate facility provision levels in other jurisdictions. This data is one of several inputs that has informed the development of provision targets for the Master Plan.

The comparator group includes seven large urban municipalities in Ontario: Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Ottawa, Vaughan, London, and Windsor. Unless otherwise noted, the data includes facilities that are owned and/or permitted for public use by the municipality, including facilities that are leased or under agreement (such as school board fields and facilities for which the City of Hamilton has an agreement for public use). The data represents a snapshot in time and must be viewed in context with other factors.

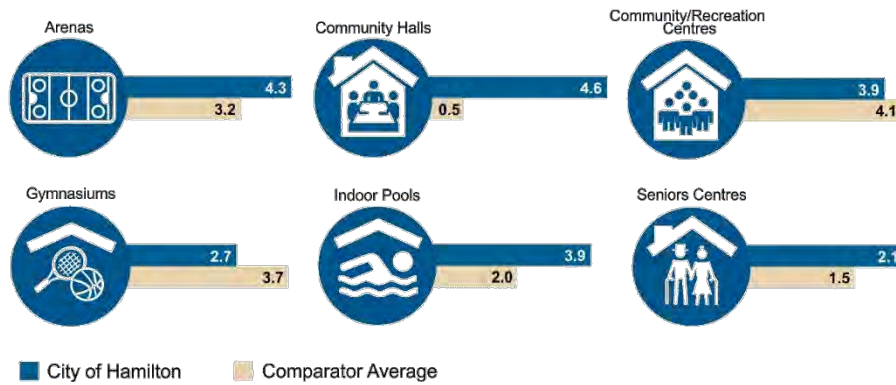
Average Municipal Facility Provision Levels, Per Capita

Facility Type	City of Hamilton*	Comparator Average
Recreation Facilities	1 per:	1 per:
Community/Recreation Centres	25,400	24,680
Indoor Pools	25,400	49,760
Outdoor Pools	58,400	65,040
Gymnasiums	36,500	27,300
Seniors Recreation Spaces	48,670	66,400
Arenas (ice pads)	23,360	31,000
Community Halls	21,630	186,040
Park Facilities	1 per:	1 per:
Baseball Diamonds (total fields)	2,990	6,110
Soccer and Multi-Use Fields (total fields)	3,100	4,760
Football Fields (note: excludes shared use fields)	593,960	56,090
Cricket Fields	292,000	102,830
Playgrounds	2,230	1,820
Outdoor Fitness Stations	64,900	58,660
Tennis Courts	7,390	4,530
Pickleball Courts (dedicated)	24,300	387,330
Basketball and Multi-use Courts	5,480	9,900
Bocce Courts	14,970	24,570
Lawn Bowling Greens	145,990	176,280
Spray Pads	8,460	17,940
Wading Pools	73,000	36,290
Skateboard Parks	73,000	80,130
Bike Parks and Pump Tracks	583,960	474,600
Leash Free Dog Zones	48,670	62,960
Outdoor Ice Rinks and Trails (refrigerated)	145,990	79,100
Outdoor Running Tracks	116,790	n/a
Community Gardens	41,710	62,810
Golf Courses	291,980	474,600

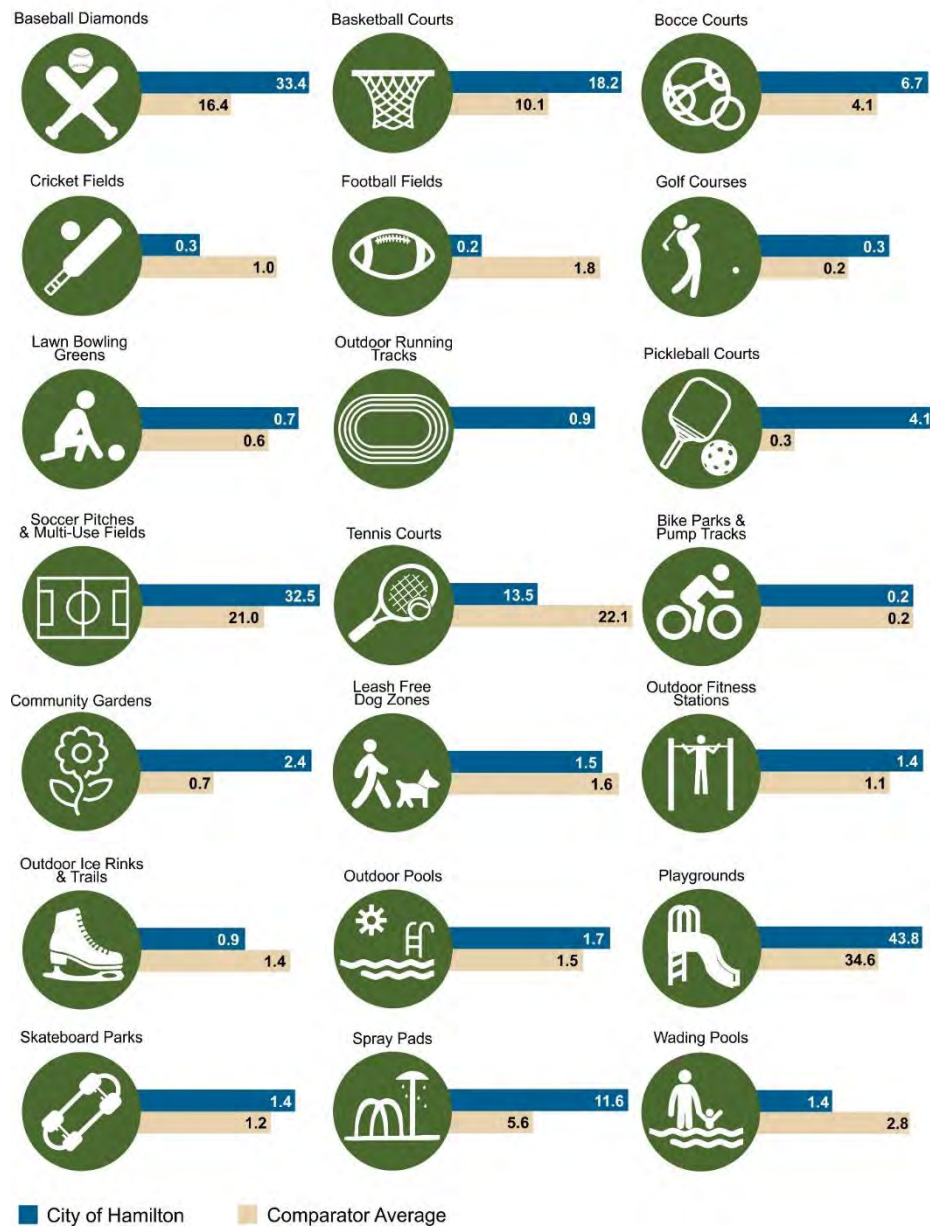
Source: Adapted from recent municipal master plans by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, 2021

* Based on a 2021 population estimate of 593,963 persons. Rates are rounded.

Indoor Recreation Facilities (per 100,000 persons)



Outdoor Recreation Facilities (per 100,000 persons)

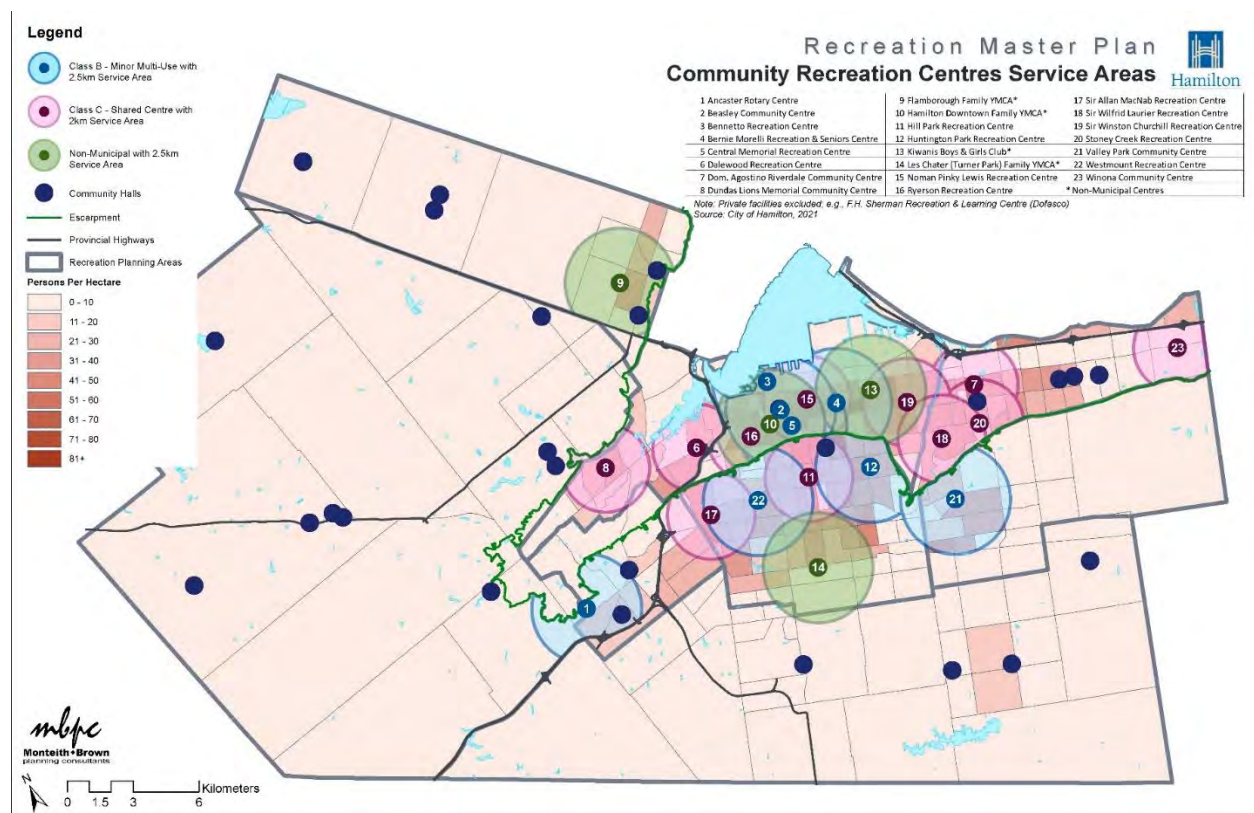


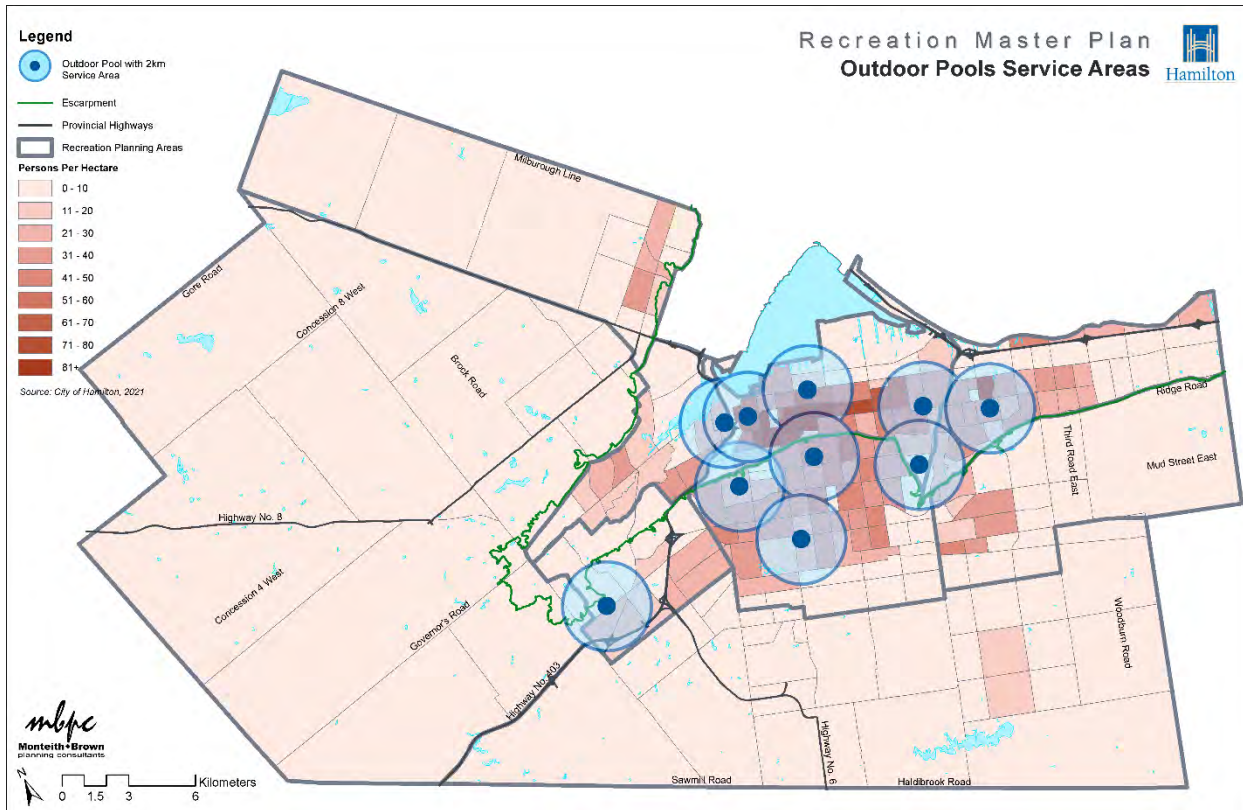
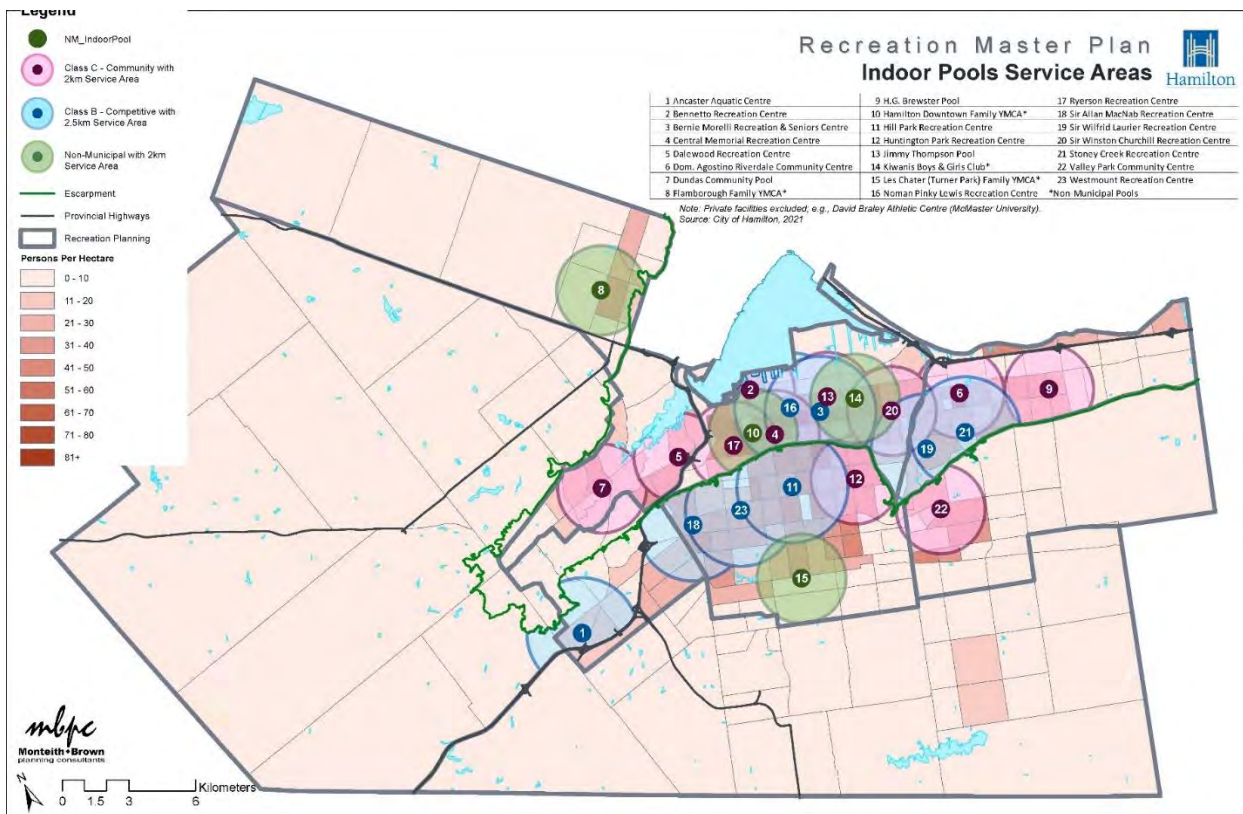
C. Facility Mapping

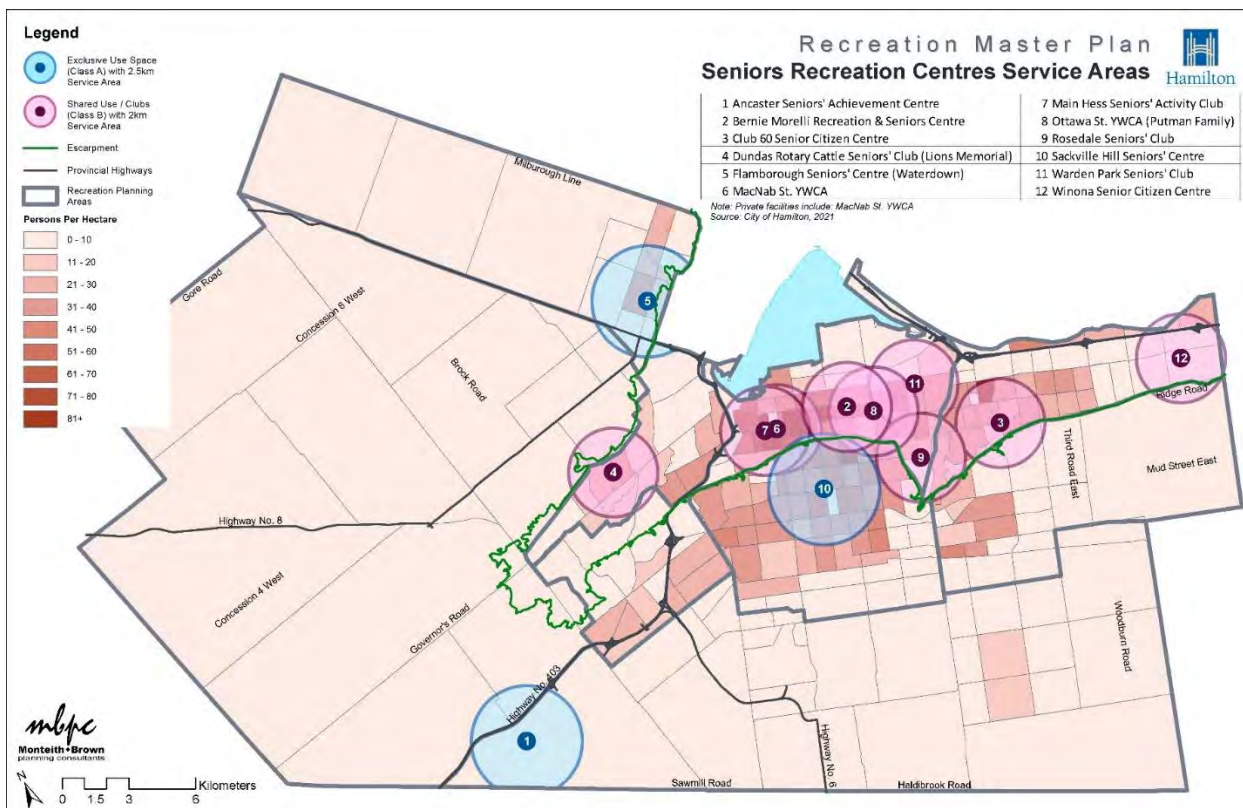
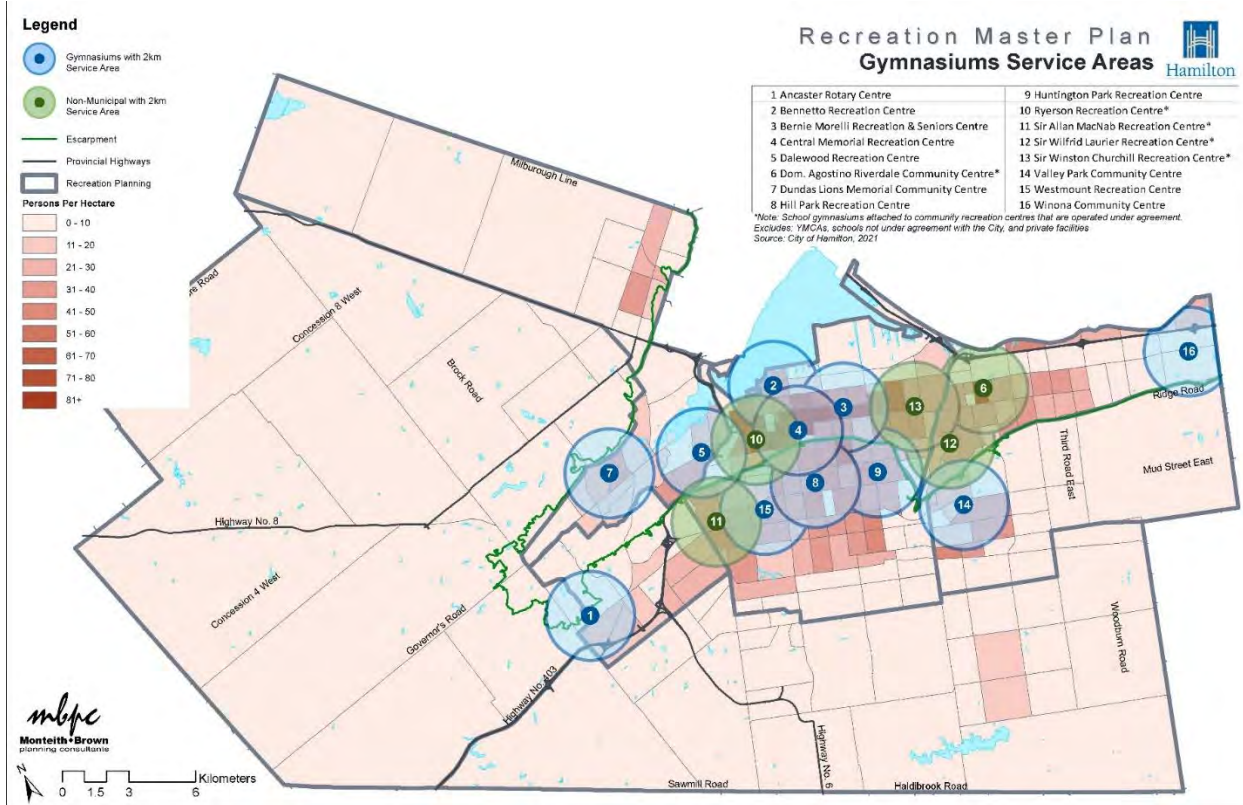
The following mapping illustrates the locations and classifications (where applicable) of existing City of Hamilton recreation and parks facilities, including those assets that are used under agreement by the municipality. In cases where the Recreation Master Plan identifies distribution-based provision targets, theoretical service radii have been added to the maps to show potential gap areas.

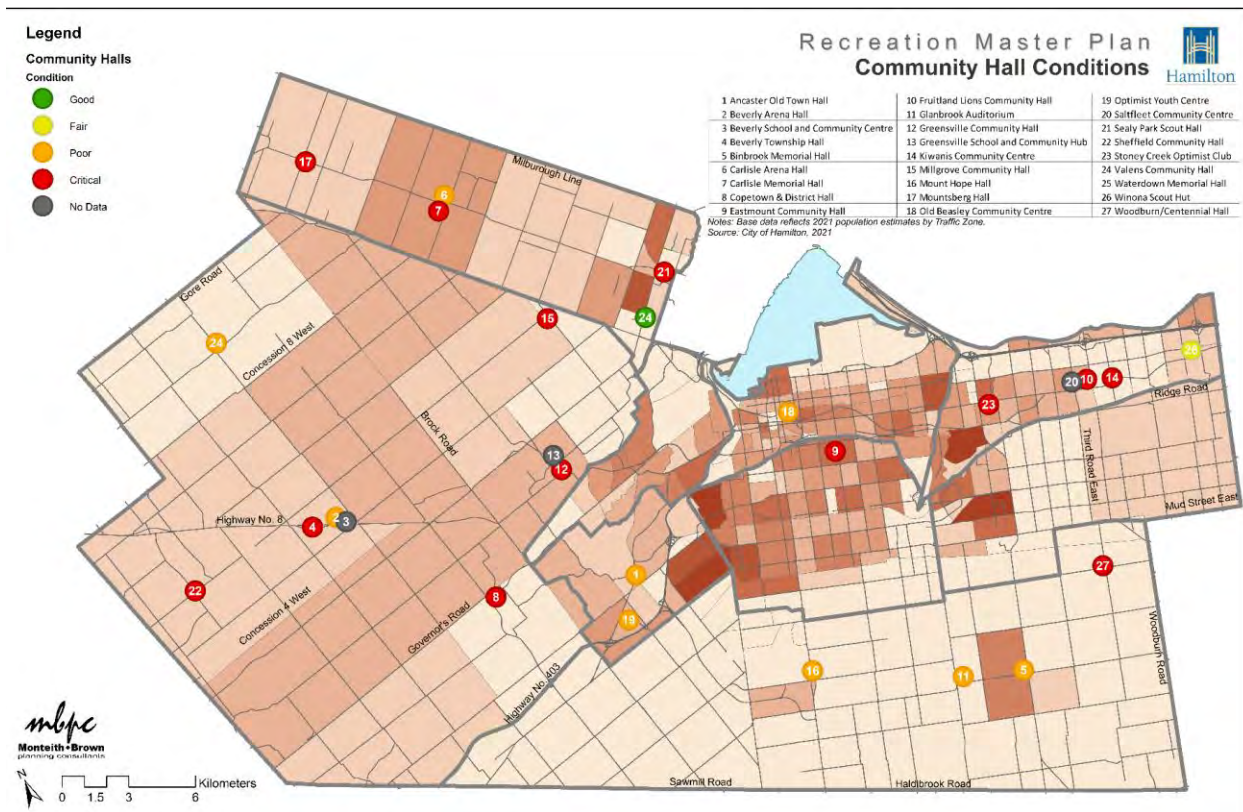
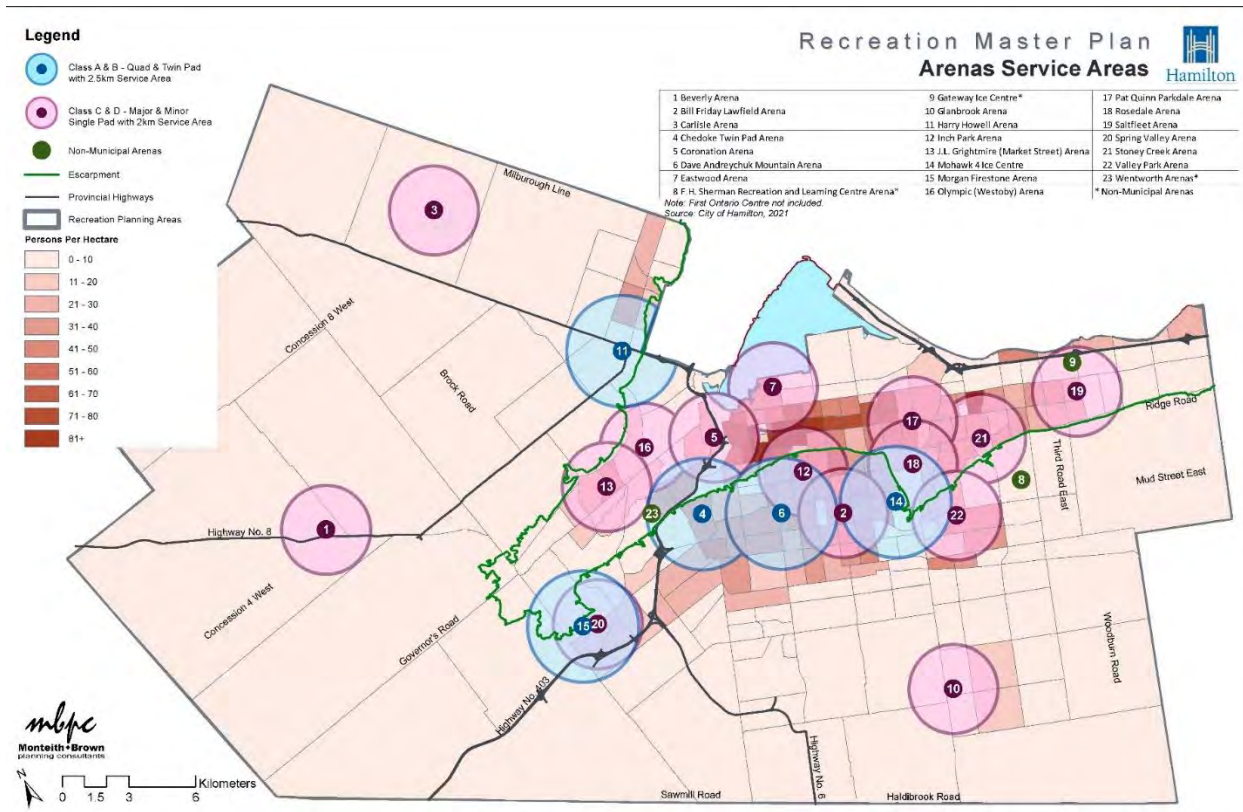
The facility maps and corresponding inventories are one of several inputs that informed the Master Plan's needs assessments. They are provided herein for reference only and are accurate as of January 1, 2022. Any use which a third party makes of this mapping, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties.

Recreation Facilities









Park Facilities

