

Town of East Gwillimbury

Community Park, Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan

Final Report

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Introduction	1
Purpose.....	1
Supporting Documents.....	1
Methodology.....	2
Definitions.....	3
Goals & Objectives	4
Master Plan Context	8
The Town of East Gwillimbury.....	8
Community Demographics.....	9
Trends in Parks, Recreation & Culture.....	10
Community Consultations.....	14
Facilities	20
Indoor Facility Needs.....	20
Arts, Culture & Heritage Needs.....	32
Outdoor Facility Needs.....	34
Parkland	49
Parkland Supply.....	49
Proposed Official Plan Policies.....	50
Parkland Needs.....	51
Parkland Acquisition.....	52
Parkland Design & Amenities.....	55
Natural Environment Lands.....	57

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Service Delivery	60
Delivering Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services	60
Town of East Gwillimbury Community Vision Statement	60
Mission Statement for Parks, Recreation & Culture	61
The Current Delivery Model	61
The Service Delivery Review	62
Implementation	65
Implementation Schedule	65
Monitoring	66
Short-Term Strategic Actions	66
Medium-Term Strategic Actions	70
Long-Term Strategic Actions	72
Ongoing Strategic Actions	73

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Community Park, Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan articulates the planning and developmental needs and priorities associated with recreation programs, facilities, culture, parks, trails and open space. The master planning period extends over a ten year period to 2018.

The Strategic Master Plan has employed a comprehensive methodology that considers demographics, leisure trends, the current municipal supply of facilities and programs, and opinions of the public and municipal officials and staff in conjunction with municipal goals, service level provision targets, and an audit of the Town's leisure service delivery system.

The result of these analyses are over eighty strategic actions guiding the Town to effectively deliver parks, recreation and cultural facilities and services to the current and future residents of East Gwillimbury.

Indoor Facility Needs

A key finding of the Strategic Master Plan has identified the need for a couple of major facilities, namely two new ice rinks (as the population reaches 35,000) and an indoor aquatics facility (as the population reaches 40,000). A couple of options could be considered to address these needs:

Option 1

- Construct two new ice pads at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex once the population reaches 35,000; and subsequently
- Construct an indoor aquatics centre as part of a multi-use community facility as the population reaches 40,000.

Option 2

- Construct two new ice pads and an indoor aquatics centre as part of a multi-use community facility once the population reaches 35,000.



Executive Summary

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The multi-use community facility identified in the options on the preceding page would also include a number of other components, such as dedicated spaces for older adults and youth, a fitness studio, and multi-purpose spaces for municipal programs and community use. A gymnasium is also recommended to serve the western settlement areas of East Gwillimbury and could be located at either the multi-use community facility or possibly added on to the Holland Landing Community Centre.

The course of action with regard to the ice rinks, aquatics centre and/or gymnasium would be contingent upon the feasibility of the existing municipal facilities (i.e. East Gwillimbury Sports Complex, Holland Landing Community Centre) to be expanded. If existing facilities cannot be expanded to accommodate the suggested components, then their inclusion within the multi-use community centre template would be the next best option.

Facility Type	Service-Level Target	New Facilities Required	Estimated Pop. Threshold
Indoor Facilities			
Ice Pads	1 ice pad per 600 minor participants	2	35,000
Indoor Aquatic Centres	1 indoor aquatics centre per 40,000 residents	1	40,000
Multi-use Spaces	Target not applicable	variable	variable
Youth Leisure Spaces	Target not applicable	1	variable
Older Adult Spaces	Target not applicable	1	variable
Gymnasiums	1 full size gymnasium per 30,000 residents	1	30,000 - 40,000
Fitness Studios	Target not applicable	variable	variable
Indoor Turf Centre	Target not applicable	variable	variable
Outdoor Facilities			
Soccer Fields	1 soccer field per 80 participants	6	35,000 (2), 50,000 (4)
Ball Diamonds	1 ball diamond per 100 participants	3	45,000
Multi-Use Courts (Tennis, basketball, etc.)	1 tennis court per 5,000 residents and 1 basketball court per 800 youth (10-19)	4	45,000 - 50,000
Playgrounds	1 playground within 800 metres of residential areas	variable	variable
Skateboard Parks	1 skateboard park per 5,000 youth (10-19)	1	50,000
BMX Park	Target not applicable	1	variable
Mountain Bike Park	Target not applicable	1	variable
Splash Pads	1 splash pad per 5,000 children (0-14)	1	30,000 - 40,000
Off-Leash Dog Parks	Target not applicable	variable	variable
Outdoor Skating Rinks	Target not applicable	variable	variable
Parkland			
Town-wide Parkland	Target not applicable	as required	variable
Community Parks	1.2 hectares per 1,000 residents	as required	variable
Neighbourhood Parks	1.0 hectares per 1,000 residents	31 hectares	variable

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Arts & Cultural Needs

To receive the benefits that a vibrant arts and cultural community brings, the Town should work with such groups wherever possible to maximize their internal capacity through a community development approach. This approach necessitates regular dialogue with the arts and cultural community to find innovative solutions that address the unique needs of this sector.

Many needs of the arts and culture sector can be addressed by designing multi-purpose spaces within facilities that consider the needs of these groups. Furthermore, the provision of outdoor civic space provides an opportunity to blend arts and culture with natural and urban surroundings for the enjoyment of all citizens.

In addition, the Town should attempt to incorporate public art within the urban realm to the greatest degree possible, in order to help establish a sense of place and community pride. An overarching Public Art Policy should be drafted to guide the development and funding of public art projects.

Outdoor Facility Needs

A number of sports fields will be required to address future growth-related needs, including six soccer fields and three ball diamonds. These types of facilities require large tracts of land and it is preferred that multiple sports fields are located at the same site, wherever possible, to maximize operational efficiencies and create opportunities for tournament play.

Furthermore, a number of facilities such as a splash pad, skateboard park, BMX and mountain bike parks, multi-use courts (which allow basketball, tennis, ball hockey, etc.), playgrounds (including one site that is fully accessible for children with disabilities) are warranted within the planning period. These facilities should be distributed in a manner that maximizes coverage to population concentrations, and some may be ideal complements to the site of the proposed multi-use community facility (if space permits).

Executive Summary

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Parkland Needs

It is recommended that the Town encourage an overall parkland provision level of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 residents over the course of the master planning period. Doing so would require that the Town acquire a minimum of 25 hectares of additional parkland to meet facility requirements as the population approaches 50,000 residents.

Procurement of lands in excess of the target is considered to be justifiable in order to not only meet outdoor facility needs and the site of the proposed multi-use community centre, but also to place the Town in a position to meet the demands of a rapidly escalating population base. For example, in the three years immediately following the master planning period (i.e. between 2018 and 2021), acquisition of an additional 40 hectares would likely be required assuming the population increases by another 10,000 residents during this time.

Parkland acquisition should consist of conveyances and supported by other means of acquisition to ensure that sufficient parkland is obtained. Furthermore, given the rapid and considerable population growth expected in the municipality, the Town should be proactive and strategic in parkland acquisition in the short and medium terms, particularly when purchasing lands, to meet the needs of future residents. In doing so, the Town may be able to negotiate a more favourable market price for land (at current or short-term prices) rather than attempting to assemble large tracts of land in the longer-term which may be more expensive as developable lands become scarce.

Introduction

Introduction

Purpose

The Community Park, Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan has been developed as a tool to assist decision-makers, stakeholders and the general public in determining needs and priorities related to services and facilities encompassing the parks, recreation and cultural demands of East Gwillimbury. The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide an action plan that directs the development of future municipal facilities and services in a fiscally responsible manner. The scope of the Strategic Master Plan encompasses the Town's role in providing services and facilities pertaining to parks, recreation, arts, culture and heritage entities through to the year 2018.

Supporting Documents

Detailed technical analyses supporting the Strategic Master Plan is contained in three background reports (under separate cover). The Planning Context Report establishes baseline information such as population forecasts, leisure trends, parks and facility inventories, and results from public consultation initiatives. The Needs Assessment Report and the Service Delivery Report synthesize this baseline information with facility provision and service-level targets, as well as other indicators of community need to establish the strategic actions set out in this Strategic Master Plan document.

In conjunction with the Strategic Master Plan, the Town of East Gwillimbury and the Project Consultants have prepared a separate Parkland Standard Design Manual. This Manual facilitates the design and development of parks and trails within the Town of East Gwillimbury, while incorporating the vision, goals and objectives of the Strategic Master Plan strategy.



Methodology

Town Council formally approved the undertaking of the Strategic Master Plan in October 2007; the master planning process was initiated in November 2007 and presented to Council for consideration in August 2008.

The Strategic Master Plan has been built upon an understanding of local demographics, leisure trends and consultations with municipal staff, key stakeholders and the general public. A series of goals and objectives have been developed to guide strategies pertaining to the provision of services and facilities; these goals and objectives are based upon a number of considerations including corporate directions and policies, discussions with municipal officials, and public input.

Needs are assessed using market-driven and population-based (per-capita) targets. Program statistics have utilized data contributed by community recreation and culture groups during consultation. Targets represent a point where the Town needs to further consider the justification and priority of additional investment in specific facilities. For example, after achieving a target the Town should consider including (but not limited to) the following criteria prior to confirming the need for new facilities:

- Historical increases in growth;
- Evidence of latent demand (e.g. waiting lists);
- Usage patterns and capacity available at existing venues;
- Physical condition of existing facilities;
- Geo-spatial equalities;
- Capacity of the Town to fund, operate and maintain facilities.

Inventory data considers only municipal assets located on parkland owned by the Town of East Gwillimbury, and is considered to be accurate as of January 2008. Recreation and leisure facilities located on school properties are not included, unless otherwise noted, as the Town cannot guarantee any operational aspects (e.g. scheduling and maintenance practices).

Strategic Actions

- *The Town should utilize targets in conjunction with other important factors, including trends, spatial and usage data, degree of “pent-up” demand, and population growth in respective age groups to make informed decisions pertaining to facility-based demand and before finalizing capital investment.*
- *The Town should collect registration data from local organized facility user groups (including but not limited to ice sports, sports field users, etc.) in order to better understand current market conditions and demand for activities.*

Introduction

Introduction

Definitions

Throughout the Master Plan, a number of references are made to the following terms:

Recreation	broadly defined as activities consisting of all sporting, fitness and physical pursuits that a person or group pursues for the purposes of personal satisfaction and development, physical health and/or competition.
Culture	refers to local arts, cultural and heritage resources including, but not limited to, music, theatre, dance, visual arts and literature.
Leisure	a combination of all recreation, cultural, creative, intellectual and social activities that a person or group pursues in their free time for the purposes of personal satisfaction and development.
Active Living	a holistic approach to personal wellbeing that combines physical activity with mental, spiritual, and social engagement into a wide range of passive and gentle active leisure pursuits (e.g. yoga, stretching, leisurely walking, etc.).
Older Adults	those generally 55 to 70 years of age (i.e. the Baby Boom cohort) or who are expected to maintain their interest in more active forms of leisure (e.g. fitness, hockey, hiking, etc.), although with a lesser degree of intensity than in the past.
Seniors	those generally over 70 years of age or who are generally associated with the more passive leisure activities pursued by past generations (e.g. card playing, arts and crafts, shuffleboard, etc.).



Goals & Objectives

Goals & Objectives

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The Master Plan's goals are intended to be high level, directional statements which articulate the overall context for *what* is intended to be accomplished. Goals are the ideals that the Town of East Gwillimbury (in particular the Community Programs & Infrastructure Department) and the community should strive to achieve over time as they pertain to leisure opportunities. The goals articulated below embrace the provision of parks, recreation, culture and arts programs, services, facilities, and open space.

The Master Plan's objectives are specific elements of the goals and represent a “desired end result.” As such, these objectives will guide the development and implementation of the recommendations contained in the Plan, as well as for future decision-making for the Town of East Gwillimbury.

Goal 1: The Town will be both a provider and a facilitator of appropriate parks, recreation, and cultural opportunities to residents of East Gwillimbury.

- a) Facilitate and enable the delivery of leisure services offered through other municipal departments and community organizations.
- b) Offer appropriate leisure services which cannot be delivered through community resources, while supporting community organizations who provide services not offered by the municipality.
- c) Actively pursue acceptable partnerships in the delivery of recreation, parks and cultural services to maximize the strengths of the community and municipality alike.
- d) Monitor usage and condition of leisure services and facilities in order to provide a high level of service for residents.
- e) Be flexible to changes and adaptation in role of the Department.

Goals:

High level, directional statements which articulate the overall context for *what* is intended to be accomplished



Goals & Objectives

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Goal 2: The Town will make every attempt to minimize barriers to participation as they relate to age, gender, income, culture, transportation or physical abilities at a minimum.

- a) Ensure leisure services are available to all residents, regardless of age, ability or background.
- b) Consult with under-represented groups to understand the barriers they face and develop strategies to be more inclusive.
- c) Consider the requirements of those with special needs or disabilities in the design of leisure facilities and programs.
- d) Find ways to ensure affordability in leisure services, particularly so that cost does not become a barrier to participation for households.
- e) Locate leisure facilities, programs and amenities in a manner that is accessible or balanced by population concentrations for the benefit of the greatest proportion of residents.

Goal 3: The Town will strive to actively track current and emerging trends and encourage innovations through facility and program designs.

- a) Monitor national, provincial and regional trends pertaining to facilities and services under the municipal purview.
- b) Regularly communicate with community user groups to understand needs.
- c) Be responsive to residents needs for facilities, services and programming.

Objectives:

Specific elements of the goals which guide the development and implementation of the Strategic Master Plan's actions



Goals & Objectives

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Goal 4: The Town will embrace concepts of healthy lifestyles, civic pride and community development through the services that it offers.

- a) Maintain a focus on providing active living and wellness opportunities for residents.
- b) Foster community engagement and ownership in enhancing healthy lifestyles and personal development.
- c) Promote family and community interaction and social cohesion.
- d) Promote and foster volunteerism as a means to strengthening our social fabric.
- e) Enhance the presence of arts, culture and heritage in East Gwillimbury.
- f) Work with local community organizations to develop their internal capacities to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency.
- g) Focus on providing healthy lifestyle choices, social interaction, and year-round activity for residents.
- h) Create a wide variety of choices to provide the best quality of life for residents.



Goal 5: The Town will manage physical growth and fiscal development in a sustainable manner to ensure that both current and future residents enjoy a high quality of life in East Gwillimbury.

- a) Services and facilities will be provided in a fiscally responsible framework.
- b) Ensure that future capital expenditures can be alleviated by a reserve fund, when appropriate.
- c) Fiscal accountability, cost efficiency and service effectiveness are prime considerations.
- d) Ensure that physical growth is complementary to existing development, retains East Gwillimbury's character and atmosphere, and promotes sustainable community development initiatives.



Goals & Objectives

Goals & Objectives

Goal 6: The Town will emphasize and strengthen the identity of East Gwillimbury through the promotion of the natural, urban, rural, and heritage features of the Town.

- a) Respect individual community identities while working together as a single-tier municipality.
- b) Strengthen the regional identity of East Gwillimbury and develop destination points within the Town for both residents and visitors.
- c) Emphasize the strong heritage character in the Town as a place-making tool (linking history with parks, recreation, culture resources).
- d) Promote the urban, rural, and natural beautification of East Gwillimbury.
- e) Create a branding system for awareness of Town assets, communication, properties, interpretive opportunities, boundaries, etc.

Goal 7: The Town will design and maintain parks and open spaces in an integrated manner by blending appropriate ecological management practices and natural area conservation and protection with the provision of a wide variety of active and passive recreation, cultural and heritage experiences.

- a) Continue to provide diverse opportunities for active, passive, and cultural recreation opportunities in park and open space settings.
- b) Engage residents and community groups in the beautification of the community.
- c) Incorporate natural settings into parks to accentuate the Town's identity and regional location.
- d) Provide leadership in environmental stewardship and education.
- e) Partner with other organizations with an interest in the conservation and preservation of natural areas.

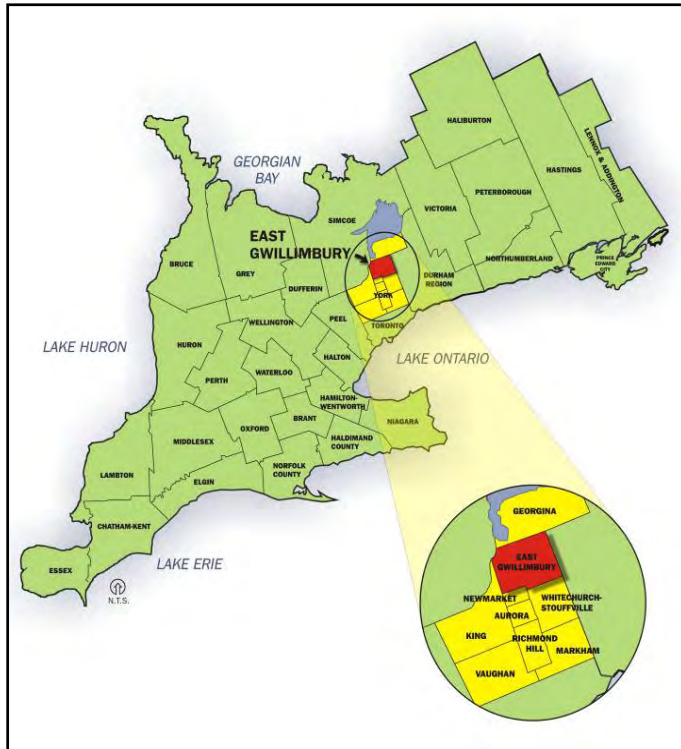
Goal 8: The Town will improve physical connections within and between East Gwillimbury's communities to facilitate active lifestyles and enhance sense of community.

- a) Identify and capitalize upon opportunities that would improve physical connectivity within and between communities.
- b) Improve the physical and social connections between dispersed populations.
- c) Strengthen relationships between local and regional assets through connections and physical linkages.



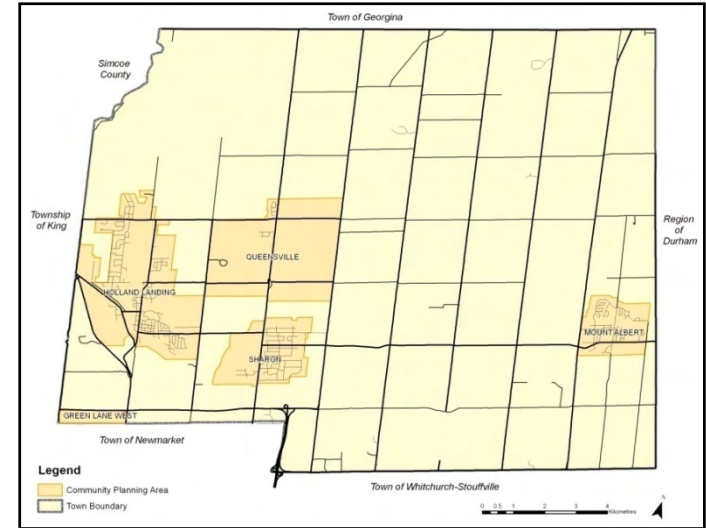
The Town of East Gwillimbury

Located in York Region, the Town of East Gwillimbury is bordered by the Town of Georgina to the north, the Township of King to the west, the Town of Uxbridge to the east and the Towns of Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville to the south. The Town offers a vibrant mix of established and new residential neighbourhoods, along with a rich natural heritage that consists of nearly 200 hectares of parks and open spaces. All of these factors, along with a growing business community, contribute to a high quality of life for East Gwillimbury’s residents.



The 2006 Census records East Gwillimbury’s population at 21,069, representing a modest increase of 2.5% from the year 2001. The Town presently estimates its population to be 22,000 residents, a level that is expected to remain fairly consistent until municipal and regional infrastructure servicing is extended.

Current and future levels of population growth will be driven by the Town’s location in the Greater Toronto Area, one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. Certain parts of East Gwillimbury, however, are subject to the provincial *Greenbelt Act (2005)* and *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act (2001)* which limits the type and scale of future development activity in areas defined by these policies.

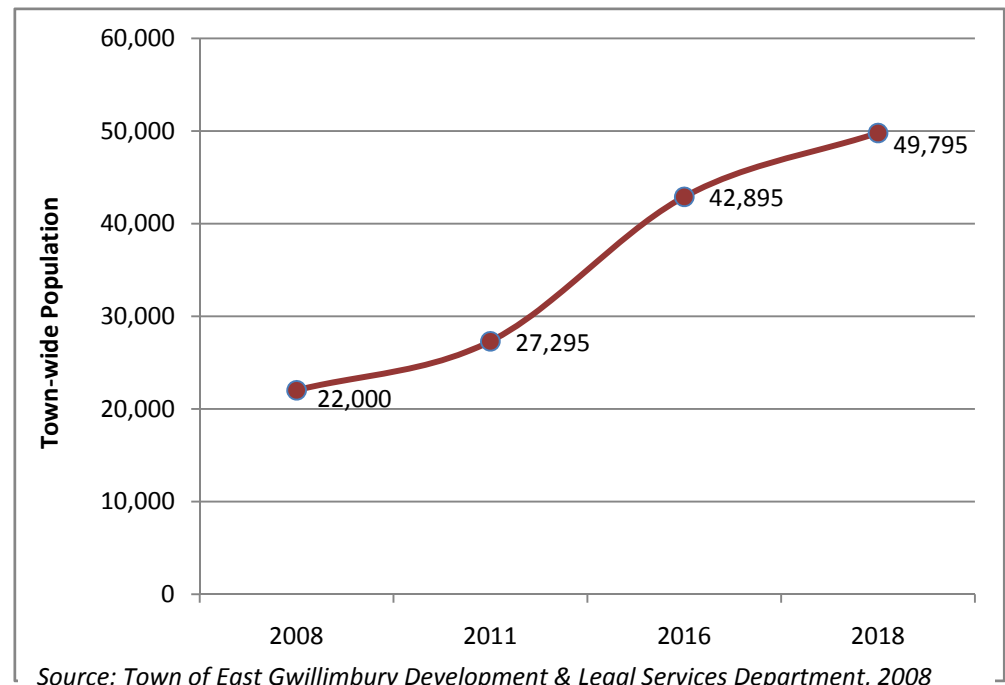


Community Demographics

The demographic profile of East Gwillimbury is used to evaluate the facility and service-level requirements of the present day population as well as the future population. For example, understanding how many people reside in East Gwillimbury, their age characteristics, social and ethnic background, etc. begins to form a picture of the types of facilities and activities that are likely to be in demand.

The following key points are important to consider in the context of East Gwillimbury’s parks, recreation and cultural system:

- East Gwillimbury has experienced fairly stable growth during the past fifteen years, growing from 18,367 residents in 1991 to 21,069 residents¹ in 2006 and an estimated 22,000 residents as of January 2008.
- Although East Gwillimbury’s median age is slightly older than the provincial average, an influx of younger adults and young families (and thus younger age profile) can be expected. This would occur concurrently with national aging trends and likely result in large increases in the number of children (under 10 years of age), younger adults (20-34) and older adults (over 55 years of age).
- By the year 2018, East Gwillimbury’s population is expected to more than double from current levels to a population of 49,795, contingent upon future servicing and residential/growth employment plans.



¹ Statistics Canada Census

- A greater degree of ethnic diversification can be expected as the population escalates, due to the region's popularity as destination for newcomers to Canada – this may translate into a demand for new types of facilities and services.
- Although Statistics Canada reports local median incomes as being higher than the provincial average, continued emphasis on providing affordable programs and services remains a very important consideration.

Trends in Parks, Recreation & Culture

The benefits of participating in parks, recreation and cultural activities cannot be understated; by providing leisure opportunities, the municipality's payback to the community in terms of individual health and well being is a cost effective community investment, while to the individual, involvement in leisure programs and services:

- improves personal health and reduction of healthcare costs
- promotes community social cohesion
- increases community spirit and pride
- improves quality of life
- reduces anti-social behaviours
- strengthens families and neighbourhoods
- improves work performance and productivity
- prolongs independent living
- reduces stress and better achieves balance in life

There are a number of local, provincial and national trends which must be considered when developing facilities and services specific to parks, recreation and culture. Understanding trends pertaining to participation in certain activities, designing facilities and delivering programs and services will allow the Town to strategically position itself to provide leisure opportunities.



Key Lifestyle Trends

- High levels of physical *inactivity* and *obesity* are being observed across the country, largely due to a lack of time and participation in more sedentary forms of leisure (i.e. watching television, online activities, etc.).
- In order to facilitate healthy lifestyles, all levels of government are examining ways to increase physical activity and participation levels through the introduction of programs, funding and other initiatives. Examples include the Province’s Active 2010 strategy, sport and physical activity plans being undertaken by various municipalities, etc.

General Trends in the Leisure System

- *Income* can be a significant barrier to participation in leisure pursuits if costs to participate are high – a person’s ability to pay needs to be considered by municipalities and community organizations alike when delivering leisure services.
- Demand for *unorganized* and drop-in activities is on the rise, at the expense of most organized and structured programs which are inflexible to those with limited amounts of free time.
- The “multi-use” facility and park concept is being increasingly viewed as the preferred development model since it consolidates a number of leisure activities at a single location, thereby providing a “one-stop shopping” venue for time-pressed individuals, offering cross-programming opportunities for a wide range of ages, and reducing municipal operational costs.
- Municipalities are often entering into *partnerships* with community and private-sector organizations to maximize efficiencies associated with capital and operational costs, so long as the municipality and the community benefit as a whole.
- *Volunteerism* is in decline across the country, therefore, supporting local volunteers is critical to ensuring that these dedicated individuals continue to participate in civic life and that new volunteers can be recruited.



Key Trends in Sports & Recreation

- Adults and older adults are embracing the “active living” or “wellness” philosophy, thus municipalities are orienting their programming to respond to these demands.
- *Trails* (both nature and paved) continue to be one of the most demanded “facilities” as walking for leisure, cycling, inline skating, etc. are all popular forms of leisure and active transportation activities.
- Fewer children and youth are participating in most organized sports (soccer and girls hockey are notable exceptions), rather choosing to pursue casual activities on their own schedule.
- *Arena* sports (i.e. hockey, ringette, etc.) continue to be in demand, with shortages in prime time ice hours observed across the province.
- *Sport and nature-based tourism* represents a growing market, thus necessitating a focus on family recreation and “destination” facilities, as well as passive outdoor sports and activities such as golf, hiking, bird watching, etc.



Key Trends in the Parks System

- People want to live near parks and open spaces as they are associated with a higher quality of life.
- Parks are increasingly viewed as an opportunity for *non-programmed recreation and cultural activities*, and can accommodate facilities targeted for all ages.
- Demands have been observed for gathering areas such as public picnicking areas, outdoor barbeques, etc., particularly in communities with diverse ethnic populations.
- As people become increasingly aware of benefits related to environmental protection, the integration of *environmental features* into active parks is becoming more apparent.
- Education and public awareness of environmental and park-specific issues are forming components of resource management strategies.

Key Trends in Arts & Culture

- Governments are recognizing the importance of culture and consider it an important part of developing a sustainable community. Culture has been referenced in strategic documents such as the Province's *Places to Grow Act*.
- Absolute attendance figures for most arts and culture events have risen over the past two decades, however, these increases have not kept pace with population growth.
- The Baby Boom generation may renew interest in the arts and cultural sector due to a higher level of free time (as they retire) and disposable income.
- Research has been focused towards community-based forms of art experiences that engage residents to collaboratively participate in the arts.
- Models encouraging participation in the arts are continuously being developed for specific age groups such as youth (e.g. urban art) and seniors to stimulate creative thought.
- A reduced focus of the arts within the school curriculum is a challenge that may result in younger age groups not being introduced to arts-based opportunities and may result in declining participation rates as they grow into adulthood.
- Heritage preservation is a key component in developing liveable and creative cities by defining identity and senses of place.
- Cultural tourism opportunities are increasingly forming key components of economic development strategies being developed by municipalities.



Community Consultations

The community consultation program is a key component of the Community Park, Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan as it provides the necessary insights, public perceptions and attitudes towards the various forms of recreation, arts and culture in East Gwillimbury. Locally collected data, when compiled with an analysis of national, provincial and regional trends and other factors, facilitates the critical formulation of community-specific decisions. This Plan has employed a number of public participation tools including:

- Household Survey;
- Online Feedback Opportunities;
- Key Informant Interviews;
- Community Focus Groups;
- Community and User Groups Surveys; and
- Public Open House and Meeting.

These tools gathered valuable input regarding the strengths and challenges, while establishing the desired needs of local residents in East Gwillimbury. The findings from consultations, along with community and municipal resources, are considered in the assessment of facility, program and service delivery needs.

Household Survey

A statistically significant household telephone survey of East Gwillimbury residents was conducted in January 2008. The sample of 384 randomly selected households yields a confidence level of 95% with a confidence interval of $\pm 5\%$ (i.e. the survey provides for an accuracy of $\pm 5\%$, 19 times out of 20). The survey is considered to be representative of the Town's population and achieves proportional representation from each settlement area.



Activity Participation

As shown in the adjacent chart, walking / hiking is the most favoured leisure activity. In fact, the top five activities are unstructured, unprogrammed pursuits in some form. This is likely indicative of a time-pressed populace looking to casually participate in leisure activities during periods of free time.

Also of interest was the significant proportion of the sample who participated in swimming, despite no indoor or outdoor public swimming facilities available in East Gwillimbury.

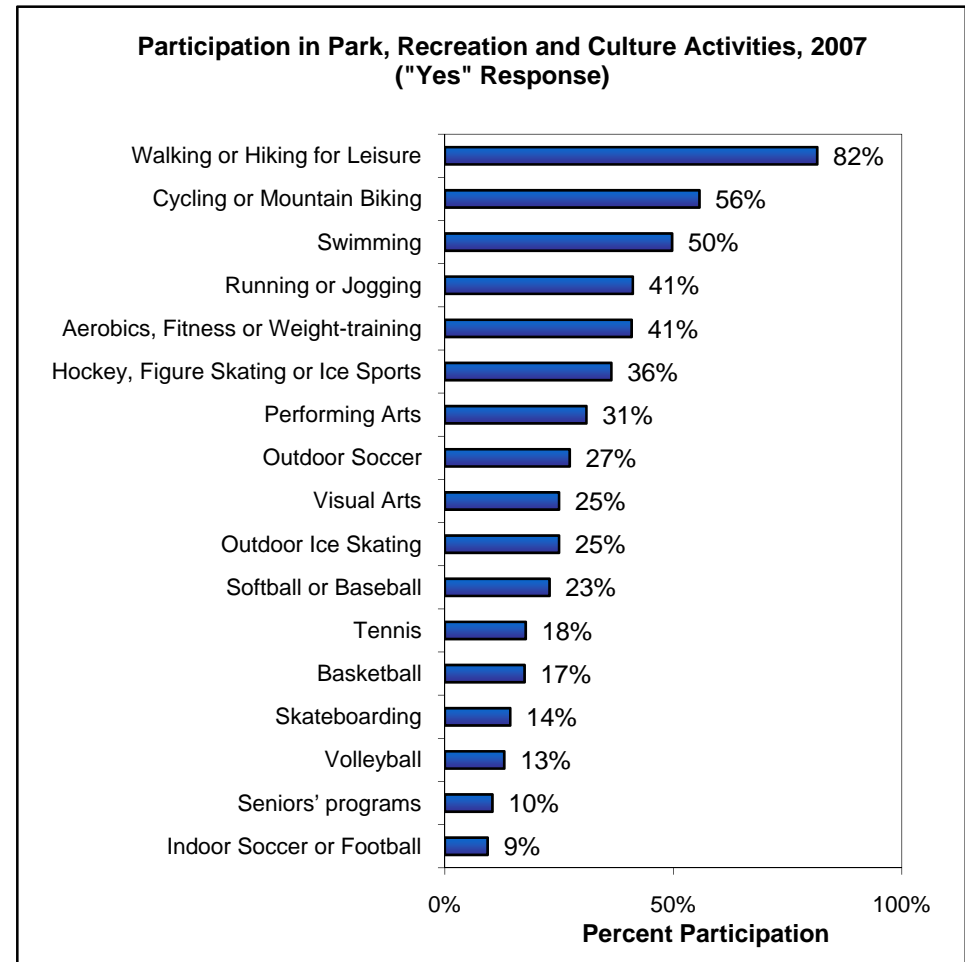
For respondents participating in arts and cultural activities:

- 62% attended local festivals or special events;
- 58% attended theatrical events;
- 38% visited a museum; and
- 30% visited an art gallery.

Barriers to Participation

65% of survey respondents stated that they are able to participate in recreation and cultural activities as often as they would like; conversely, 35% of respondents were not able to participate as much as desired. For those unable to participate, the main reasons were:

- Lack of time (68%);
- Lack of desired facilities or programs (17%);
- Health problems (11%);
- Transportation / distance concerns (10%); and
- Cost / expense (7%).



Importance & Satisfaction

Facilities that were rated as being most important to respondents included passive parks, public libraries, and trails and pathways. Those sampled placed the least importance on art galleries and performance spaces, by a considerable margin.

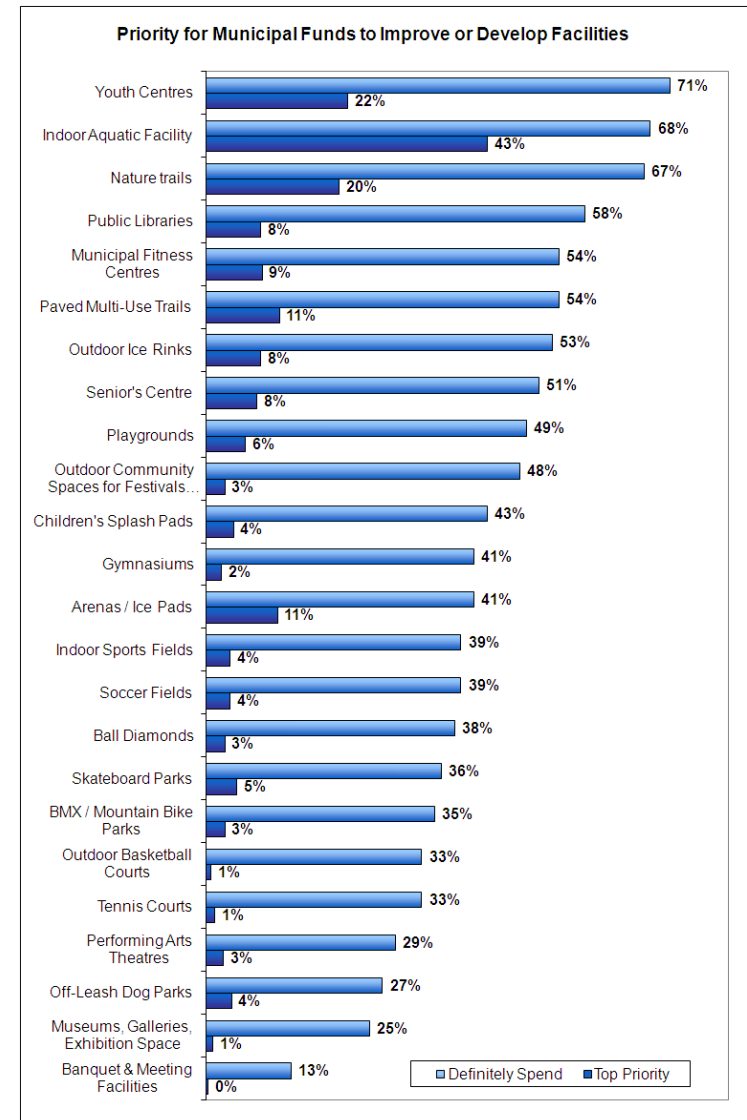
In terms of satisfaction, respondents were most satisfied with public libraries, active parks and community festivals/special events. Conversely, the least amount of satisfaction was placed upon indoor aquatic facilities and art galleries and performing spaces, likely due to the fact that there are no such municipal facilities.

It should be noted that the East Gwillimbury Public Library is concurrently undertaking a Library Master Plan, and jointly utilized this household survey to collect public opinions and information specific to that particular initiative.

Facility Investment Preferences

Respondents were queried which facilities would satisfy their households needs the most by ranking the level of investment they felt the Town should focus upon. The top five highest priority investments were for:

- Indoor aquatic facility;
- Youth centre;
- Nature trails;
- Paved trails; and
- Arenas / ice pads.



Community Focus Group

A community focus group was held in January 2008 with representatives of various local stakeholder groups. A total of fifteen individuals attended the session and represented the following groups:

- East Gwillimbury Minor Hockey
- East Gwillimbury Skating Club
- East Gwillimbury Soccer Club
- East Gwillimbury Tennis Club
- East Gwillimbury Trails Committee
- Golden Anchor Seniors Club
- Holland Landing Lions Club
- Mount Albert Lions Soccer Club
- Queensville Players
- Sharon Lions Club
- Sharon Temple
- York North Family Resource Programmes

Recreation Activities

Of note was the affordability of soccer, and funding opportunities available for hockey and skating. Participants stated that the tennis courts were well maintained and easy to book. Some interest was expressed in providing a partnership between the Town and the Tennis Dome for further tennis opportunities. Community-initiated programs, such as flag football, have been very successful in the community.

Recreation & Culture Services

Participants were generally very satisfied with recreation activities in East Gwillimbury. It was noted that there should be more alternatives available for residents who do not participate in organized or team sports.

Existing community centres, including the Mount Albert Community Centre, Ross Family Sports Complex, and North Union Hall, were applauded for their maintenance, availability, provision of facilities and services, and supportive staff members. The availability of recreation and culture facilities was suggested to be the best in Holland Landing.



While it was agreed that there was generally adequate provision of soccer fields in East Gwillimbury, some improvements were suggested, including field improvements in Mount Albert and the addition of more mini-fields for children.

Interest was expressed in the development of a multi-use community centre. Participants suggested the following facilities could be included in such a centre:

- Meeting rooms
- Multi-purpose rooms
- Library branch
- Theatre / performing arts space
- Arena
- Pool
- Indoor soccer centre
- Administrative space

Residents suggested that the facility should be centrally located to maximize accessibility. Additional features included the combination of indoor and outdoor components, the potential for expansion, and the ability of many different user groups to make use of the facility. It was suggested that a community centre could be associated with the development of a high school to share costs and improve access.

Trails & Parks

Participants expressed much pride in East Gwillimbury's parks. Anchor Park in particular was mentioned, as was Sharon Park for the inclusion of residents in the design process. It was suggested that Anchor Park has further potential for more amenities, and to be lit in the evening for soccer.

Participants stated that trails should become a higher priority for the Town, in terms of provision, maintenance and use. It was suggested that collaboration between trails users will be necessary to create adequate multi-use and seasonal trails. Accessibility for a variety of user groups was expressed, with special interest in the provision of paved and non-paved trails, and trails designed for bicycles, equestrians, and hiking.



Programming & Services

Community Focus Group participants noted that the Town is responsive to the needs of residents, and that Town staff provide excellent support and assistance. Two services noted in particular were the Lions Club and public library services. Residents suggested that wireless internet should be available in all Town buildings. Concern was expressed for further opportunities for older teens to become involved in recreation and culture (and involvement during the Master Planning process), and the provision of more programs for older adults and seniors.

“I feel the parks are very well designed, the programs seem very well thought out.”

- Online Survey Respondent

Online Feedback Form

An online questionnaire was posted on the Town of East Gwillimbury website for the duration of the master planning process and a total of 17 responses were recorded. Comments suggest that these respondents are generally satisfied with existing facilities and parks, as well as general maintenance. Comments for improvement generally revolve around the need for programs and facilities geared for children and youth (i.e. splash pads, skateboard parks, toboggan hills, etc.) as well as a number of requests for an indoor aquatics facility and additional ice rinks.

Key Informant Interviews & Stakeholder Surveys

In January 2008, interviews were conducted with members of Council, Town staff, key and stakeholder groups. Given the personal and/or confidential nature of these communications, individual responses have not been reproduced in this document, but key concerns, ideas, and themes were carefully considered and integrated with the other research to form the basis of the analyses contained in the Master Plan.

A self-administered survey was presented to over thirty local organizations having an interest in parks, recreation and culture related activities; the survey was made available on-line as well. A total of 16 surveys were returned and analyzed.



Indoor Facility Needs

The table below summarizes the supply and demand (as quantified by service level targets) for indoor leisure facilities in East Gwillimbury.

Indoor Facility Type	Recommended Provision Target	Current Pop. (22,000)			Future Pop. (50,000)	
		Municipal Supply	Current Demand	Surplus (Deficit)	Future Demand	Surplus (Deficit)
Community Centres	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	8	See analysis contained in this Section			
Ice Rinks	1 Ice Rink per 800 registered participants	2	1.8	0.2	3.9	(1.9)
Indoor Aquatics	1 Indoor Aquatics Centre per 40,000 residents	0	0.6	(0.6)	1.2	(1.2)
Gymnasiums	1 Gymnasium per 30,000 residents	1	0.7	0.3	1.7	(0.7)
Multi-Purpose Rooms	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	12	See analysis contained in this Section			
Older Adult Space	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	2	See analysis contained in this Section			
Youth Leisure Space	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	0	See analysis contained in this Section			
Training Clubs	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	0	See analysis contained in this Section			
Indoor Turf	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	0	See analysis contained in this Section			

Multi-Use Community Centres

A total of eight community centres are distributed across East Gwillimbury, some of which are representative of the traditional community hall design, while others employ the more modern multiple-purpose design concept.

Settlement Area	Supply	Facilities
Holland Landing	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holland Landing Community Centre • River Drive Park Community Centre
Mount Albert	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ross Family Complex • Mount Albert Community Centre
Sharon	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Gwillimbury Sports Complex • Sharon Temperance Hall
Queensville	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensville Community Centre
Rural	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Union Community Centre



The Master Plan recommends a number of new facilities to be developed by the year 2018 (assuming the population reaches the expected 50,000 threshold), many of which should be considered to be located in new or existing community centres. Consolidation of multiple uses at a single location is deemed to be operationally efficient from the municipal perspective while providing convenience to users and encouraging multi-generational activities.

Facility Expansion / Retrofit Possibilities

Utilizing existing facilities to meet new facility demands can be an effective way to provide new services without incurring costs of land acquisition and new facility construction. The existing facility, however, should be an ideal candidate in terms of its structural condition, capability of its site, and proximity to the market it will serve; otherwise, capital costs associated with expansion or upgrade may in fact be on par or even higher than those associated with new facility development.

East Gwillimbury Sports Complex

- Ideal centralized location for the development of two new ice pads in the year 2013.
- Would offer economies of scale in operation and /or construction as compared to development of a new arena elsewhere in Town.
- If expansion of the existing facility is deemed unfeasible through future study, ice pads should be developed as part of a new multi-use community centre.

Holland Landing Community Centre

- Ideal candidate for expansion/retrofit due to centralized location in a well established and growing urban area.
- Accessible location makes it a particularly attractive option for youth-oriented facilities such as a gymnasium, youth space and/or skateboard park.
- If expansion of the existing facility is deemed unfeasible through future study, facility components should be developed as part of a new multi-use community centre.

Other Community Centres

- Other facilities may be modified in order to allow a greater diversity of programming use.
- Facilities should be re-examined on a case-by-case basis, soliciting input from major users and the surrounding community prior to redesign.

New Facility Development

There are two primary drivers for the development of a new multi-use community centre, both of which will influence the timing of construction. The first component is an indoor aquatic centre, which would be ideally developed when the Town's population reaches 40,000. The second driver, a twin-pad arena, is a variable component based upon the feasibility of expanding the existing East Gwillimbury Sports Complex.

Strategic Actions

- *Based upon facility assessments conducted as part of the Strategic Master Plan, one new multi-use community centre will be required once the population reaches between 35,000 and 40,000 residents, depending on the facility development strategy chosen by the Town. The new facility should preferably be located within the western settlement areas of East Gwillimbury (i.e. Holland Landing, Sharon or Queensville).*
- *The Town should conduct a feasibility study, business plan and design concept to verify that all the components recommended for the facility through this Strategic Master Plan are justified given the community characteristics and level of demand present at that time.*
- *In anticipation of land acquisition challenges associated with the Town's forthcoming projected build-out, this multi-use facility should be sited and designed in a manner that allows future expansion should additional recreation or leisure components be required in the long-term.*

Facilities Facilities

The development of two new ice pads is recommended once the population reaches 35,000, thus if the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex cannot be expanded in a cost-effective manner, then timing of a new multi-use community centre should be initiated at that time. If the existing arena facility is expanded as suggested, development of a new multi-use facility would be based on timing of the indoor aquatic centre which would occur around the time the population reaches 40,000.

In addition to the indoor aquatics facility and/or twin-pad arena, the following components should be included as part of a new multi-use community centre:

Core Facility Components



- Indoor Aquatics Centre
- Fitness Studio (no equipment)
- Multi-purpose community and program space
- Dedicated older adults space
- Preschool/early childhood program rooms
- Indoor walking track
- One lit ball diamond
- Barrier-free playground

Components to be added pending the inability of existing facilities to accommodate them



- Twin-pad arena
- Full size gymnasium
- Dedicated youth space
- Dedicated seniors space (could be combined with older adult space)
- Soccer fields
- Skateboard park

Optional Facility Components (pending partnership potential, access to funding, etc.)



- Childcare Centre
- Indoor Turf Centre
- Leasable Tenant Space
- Library Branch

Strategic Actions (continued...)

- *New facilities should continue to be designed according to LEED Silver standards as per Corporate Policy, and also incorporate other "green" technologies to showcase the Town's leadership role in energy efficiency, innovation and environmental stewardship.*
 - *Ensure that new public leisure facilities are designed with the user's safety in mind, through use of CPTED or similar principles.*
-

Facilities Facilities

Ice Rinks

The Town of East Gwillimbury is presently served by two ice rinks, both located at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex in Sharon. According to municipal usage data, ice is being utilized fairly effectively at the existing arena, however, increasing pressures will be placed upon the amount of available prime ice time as the population grows. This sentiment is shared by local stakeholders and residents participating in community consultations for the Strategic Master Plan.

To provide an accurate understanding of market conditions, a participant-based facility provision target of 1 ice rink per 600 minor participants has been established (minor sports users presently constitute the largest users and are the most frequent bookers of prime time ice). Based upon this target, the Town will likely begin to experience more acute pressures on its ice supply as the population approaches 35,000 if no new ice rinks are developed. Demand for two new ice rinks can be expected once the population reaches 50,000.

Although demand for one full ice rink will likely be expected at a population threshold of 35,000 and the second new ice rink at a 50,000 population, it is generally more cost-effective (in construction and operation) for the Town to simultaneously construct two ice rinks as opposed to just one. For this reason, both ice rinks are recommended for development as part of an expansion to the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex (if deemed feasible by future engineering studies) or as a twin-pad arena in a new multi-use community centre.

The Master Plan supports further study to determine the best course of action for future ice rink provision. Among other things, the study should employ a cost-benefit analysis associated with the capital and operational impacts of both facility location options, as well as the ability of the existing arena facility in Sharon to accommodate an additional two ice rinks.



Strategic Actions

- *The provision of an additional two ice pads should be considered once the population reaches 35,000. Prior to development, the Town should undertake a study as to the feasibility of the East Gwillimbury Sports Centre to potentially accommodate an additional two ice pads at its current site versus providing a twin-pad facility elsewhere in the Town.*

Facilities Facilities

Indoor Aquatic Facilities

The Town of East Gwillimbury does not offer an indoor aquatic facility, although it does facilitate limited programming opportunities through the private sector. Residents, however, generally must look to other municipalities for access to higher quality indoor swimming opportunities.

Despite the lack of a municipal pool, residents appear to swim frequently; half (50%) of household survey respondents indicated that they had swam during the past year, making it the third most popular recreation activity. One of the reasons for the local popularity of swimming is because it is an activity for all ages, from toddlers to seniors, and persons of various cultural backgrounds.

Indoor aquatic centres offer a municipality the ability to provide a popular recreational activity that can be pursued by residents of all ages, either through structured programming or informal drop-in opportunities. Such facilities, however, are highly expensive and require significant outlays for capital and ongoing operational expenses.

Generally speaking, a population of 40,000 residents is a threshold at which a municipality would consider the provision of an indoor aquatic facility. Applying a service level target of 1 indoor pool per 40,000 residents is believed to be an acceptable level of service given East Gwillimbury's dispersed population base, thus, an indoor aquatic facility should be considered once this population threshold is achieved in conjunction with other indicators of demand and municipal finance.

A leisure pool template would appear to be the most ideal design for a new multi-use facility, which would allow a greater focus to be placed on child and youth programming. The leisure pool concept can allow both recreational and lane swimming opportunities and any pool concept should include zero-depth entry for accessibility purposes. Amenities such as spray jets, waterslides, etc. will also create a leisurely aquatic environment that fosters a sense of enjoyment while using the facility. As a separate tank, the inclusion of a tot or learning pool may also be beneficial for certain programs and users.

Strategic Actions

- *Provision of an indoor aquatics facility is recommended once the population reaches between 35,000 and 40,000, depending upon the facility provision strategy employed by the Town. The design, location and cost of the facility should be evaluated through a feasibility study and business planning exercise prior to development of the facility.*



Multi-Purpose Community & Program Spaces

The Town of East Gwillimbury offers a total of twelve multi-purpose rooms out of municipal facilities. Most facilities operated by the Town are open seven days per week, year-round and with daytime and evening hours.

Maximizing existing community spaces to accommodate a wider variety of uses is a preferred approach to providing the public with access to new multi-purpose community and program space. The Town's distribution of community halls is sufficient to service existing settlement areas for the time being. Halls such as the Queensville Community Centre, North Union Community Centre, Mount Albert Community Centre, etc. should be promoted as flexible spaces that can accommodate a range of activities and events ranging from banquets, meetings, active living programming (i.e. fitness programs), arts and cultural spaces, etc.

The practice of constructing new single purpose halls, however, should be discouraged in favour of providing multi-purpose spaces within multi-use facility templates. Should an opportunity present itself for the Town to acquire an existing hall-type facility, the merits of the proposal should be evaluated as should the ability of the facility to be reprogrammed to offer as many appropriate uses as possible prior to assuming non-municipal facilities.

Multi-purpose community and program spaces should be included as part of the proposed community centre. These spaces are fairly easily incorporated into the facility design and can provide a great deal of community benefit at a low marginal cost associated with construction of the larger facility. As mentioned, these spaces should be flexible enough to allow a wide range of recreation and arts/cultural uses to take place.

Lastly, at facility locations that include library branches (i.e. Holland Landing Community Centre and the Ross Family Complex), the Town should investigate opportunities for improving coordination and use of meeting/program areas for both leisure and library activities. The leisure service delivery roles of both the Community Programs & Infrastructure Department and the East Gwillimbury Public Library should be clearly defined, particularly in programming.

Strategic Actions

- *Include flexible community and program spaces as part of the design template for all appropriate community-oriented facilities, including the proposed multi-use community centre. These spaces should be designed to accommodate multiple activities, to the greatest extent possible.*
- *Investigate opportunities for improving coordination and use of meeting/program areas in facilities containing both library and leisure services. Roles of the Department and the East Gwillimbury Public Library should also be defined in this regard.*

Facilities Facilities

Child & Youth Leisure Spaces

Preschool / Early Childhood Rooms

The number of children is expected to increase by over 4,000 by the year 2018, increasing their proportion to 13% of the total population as a number of young families move to the area. As part of the new multi-use facility, the Town should offer preschool programming rooms (not licensed daycare) that can provide early childhood development opportunities for children, possibly in partnership with other providers. The provision of drop-in children's facilities is seen as a beneficial component of a community centre as the lack of child supervision can be a barrier to participation for certain facility users (i.e. parents who do not have access to child supervision services) and introduce children to a range of leisure activities and social interaction at an early age.

Youth Leisure Spaces

There are currently no dedicated spaces specifically provided for youth in East Gwillimbury, although the Town provides limited programming for youth aged 12-16. With a large number of young families that will be attracted to the municipality, the Town can expect a growing demand for safe and accessible facilities and programs for younger children and youth. The availability of leisure opportunities for youth is a critical component in providing a high quality of life for this age segment.

For these reasons, along with the high degree of public support for youth facilities, the Town should provide a dedicated youth space/lounge at a new or existing municipal facility. Youth spaces should be located in highly accessible areas (e.g. along major trail/pathway systems, along transit corridors, near schools, etc.). As discussed later in the Strategic Master Plan, the preferred option for new youth space would be in conjunction with development of a new gymnasium (this would generate a number of cross-programming opportunities) either at a new multi-use centre (provided it is in an accessible location) or an appropriate existing facility such as the Holland Landing Community Centre. Space should also be considered in Mount Albert at a suitable location.



Facilities Facilities

It is imperative that youth spaces be designed in a manner that engage youth and make them want to use the facility. Youth, therefore, should be actively engaged in the design and operation of drop-in facilities, thereby empowering them, facilitating positive leadership skills and creating a sense of ownership in the facility. For example, by understanding youth needs, some youth centres in the GTA have provided certain “non-traditional” amenities which could be offered at a new facility such as:

- urban art walls (temporary graffiti walls made of plywood);
- indoor skateboarding zones;
- indoor basketball courts
- DJ rooms / sound studio;
- multimedia areas (home theatres, video game rooms, internet stations, etc.);
- concert hall/stage;
- arts, crafts and dance studios; and
- integration with outdoor opportunities (e.g. basketball, skateparks, etc.).

It is recommended that the Town undertake broad youth consultations, such as using a formal survey instrument (or a similar tool) every five years. It is envisioned that such a tool can help to fulfil recreational requirements as well as social needs of youth (i.e. health, personal well-being, positive choices). The Town should also reactivate its Youth Advisory Committee as this group could be used as a resource to monitor the effectiveness of municipal leisure spaces in meeting the needs of youth, as well as any improvements required.

Strategic Actions

- *The provision of preschool programming rooms at new leisure facilities is encouraged so that the inability to find suitable child supervision does not become a barrier to the participation of caregivers in municipal leisure programs, while also providing opportunities for early childhood development.*
 - *The Town should incorporate dedicated youth leisure space as part of the design for the proposed multi-use community centre and/or other appropriate venues as a means to maximize cross-programming opportunities.*
 - *The Town should conduct a survey of youth (or similar consultation tool) every five years to ensure that it is well positioned to respond to youth-specific needs and concerns.*
 - *The Youth Advisory Committee should be reinstated to inform the Town about youth-specific concerns and requirements in East Gwillimbury.*
-

Older Adult & Senior Spaces

Local senior's clubs utilize space at the Holland Landing Community Centre and the Ross Family Complex (i.e. seniors being those generally over 70 years and participating in more passive/sedentary activities). The older adult segment (i.e. those over 55 years and continue to pursue active living pursuits) use municipal spaces where the Town offers programming catered to this market.

Given the tremendous growth in the older adult and seniors population, additional space will be required to adequately service the needs of this market. This may necessitate the expansion of existing multi-use spaces utilized by seniors as well as the development of new venues for older adults/seniors to congregate and participate in leisurely pursuits. It is now considered best practice to provide older adult lounge facilities which allow multiple uses and diversified programming opportunities rather than single purpose, dedicated seniors halls.

There will be a growing need for spaces at multi-use centres where older adults and seniors will likely be spending the majority of their leisure time, given the propensity to seek active living opportunities. These venues would consolidate numerous leisure opportunities such as pools, fitness studios, arts and craft spaces, older adult lounges, reading areas, etc. and provide the "one-stop shopping" atmosphere that is preferred by the public.

The Town should consult with existing senior's clubs in East Gwillimbury to find a way to provide new or improved spaces that meet the evolving needs of their membership. Through their design, new and existing facilities should be evaluated for their ability to accommodate a range of active and sedentary uses.

With regard to programming, a focus should continue to be placed upon enhancing the service delivery model for older adults through the development of innovative, inclusive and accessible programs focusing on wellness and active living. The Town has done well to offer leisure and social programs specific to older adults/seniors and should be expanded upon as necessary to provide social health opportunities for the older adult demographic.

Strategic Actions

- *The Town should continually evaluate opportunities to expand and/or add dedicated older adult and seniors areas to existing community recreation and leisure facilities. In doing so, the Town should consult with local seniors' clubs in the design of expanded or new seniors-oriented facilities in order to ensure that local needs are considered in a manner that encourages a high degree of use through principles of inclusion and accessibility.*
- *A dedicated older adult space should be included as part of the design for the proposed multi-use community centre. Spaces and services for elderly seniors should also be provided assuming the location of the facility is accessible to those without regular access to a motor vehicle.*
- *A focus should continue to be placed upon enhancing the service delivery model for older adults and seniors through the development of innovative, inclusive and accessible programs focusing on wellness and active living.*

Gymnasiums

The Town of East Gwillimbury owns and operates one municipal gymnasium at the Ross Family Complex in Mount Albert. Gymnasium sports continue to exhibit high levels of demand, especially among youth and younger adults who participate in programs such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, etc.

Based upon existing usage, the dispersed population base of the municipality, and experience in other communities, a service level target of 1 gymnasium per 30,000 is recommended. Although this would imply a second municipal gym would be necessary when the Town's population reaches 60,000, development of a new gym could be justifiable based on spatial distribution criteria since the majority of the Town's population is, and will continue to be, located in the western settlement areas (Holland Landing, Sharon and Queensville).

Since a multi-use facility is proposed for development once the population reaches between 35,000 and 40,000, it is believed that the provision of a municipal gymnasium within this complex would be an ideal complement to the types of programs that would be associated with it, particularly the indoor aquatics facility, fitness studios and/or youth/senior's areas. Including a gym would further solidify the complex's purpose as an active-living oriented facility and would generate a number of cross programming opportunities in a presently underserved area (in terms of gyms) of the Town.

As an option to the proposition articulated above, if the Town wishes to defer capital spending on this facility to a later time frame, it may also wish to consider the expansion of the Holland Landing Community Centre to include a gymnasium. As Holland Landing is expected to be one of the largest settlement areas upon build-out, a gym in this community could expect to be well utilized. Furthermore, if a gym is eventually deemed appropriate at this site, a strong case could also be made to add dedicated youth space given the cross-programming opportunities that would be offered, as well as the high degree of accessibility to a youth residing in the settlement area. This option is contingent upon further study to assess the ability the Holland Landing Community Centre's site and structure associated with for its to be expanded.

Strategic Actions

- *The provision of one new full size gymnasium is recommended to serve the western settlement areas of East Gwillimbury, either through expansion of an existing facility (subject to feasibility and structural audit) or at the proposed multi-use community centre.*



Facilities Facilities

Fitness Studios

The Town of East Gwillimbury currently does not offer a municipal fitness centre, however, there are limited private sector clubs located in the Town. For the most part, residents generally access full service fitness training clubs in other municipalities.

Through its community centres, the Town presently offers fitness opportunities (but not fitness equipment) for adults and seniors. Given trends towards active living (i.e. the integration of physical activities into an individual's daily routine), the Town should continue to expand its focus, over time, on such programs that facilitate health benefits associated with physically active lifestyles. Existing hall/multi-purpose room facilities and the municipal gym at the Ross Family Complex are ideally positioned to accommodate these types of programming.

At present, it is suggested that no new municipal equipment-based training clubs be provided as the Town has an existing presence (with studio-type multi-use rooms) and the private sector will likely be able to meet any new demand for these services (they are also the best indicator of demand for these services). The provision of fitness studios, however, would be an ideal complement to any new municipal leisure facility that is developed in the future and would ideally focus on active living programming and encouraging holistic health opportunities. A fitness studio should be designed to accommodate multiple uses and program options (e.g. a range of active living and wellness programs), but would not offer equipment-based training opportunities. An indoor walking track is also deemed to be a complementary amenity for fitness activities and could be integrated within a gymnasium or arena design.

The aging population will result in a greater demand for fitness programming for the older adult market, thus the Town will have to position itself to respond to these specific needs. In addition to the older adult market, however, active living opportunities also appeal to a great number of younger adults and even the teenage market. The Town should also consider active living opportunities in outdoor spaces such as parks by incorporating appropriate features (e.g. stretching stations, exercise zones, jogging loops, self guided walking trails, etc.) in those particular settings through park design.

Strategic Actions

- *The Town should provide a fitness studio as part of the proposed multi-use community centre. This space should not contain intensive training club equipment as it is intended to serve municipal program delivery of active living and wellness opportunities.*
- *Towards the end of the master planning period, the Town should review its role in providing training club facilities to serve future populations.*



Arts, Culture & Heritage Needs

There are a number of arts and cultural organizations present in East Gwillimbury who have many facility-specific demands, ranging from simple gathering places to exhibition and sophisticated performance spaces. Given that the arts are an “experience”, sensory components (e.g. audio-visual, multimedia, etc.) are generally required in creative spaces; for example, musical organizations may require rooms that are designed to enhance acoustics while artistic groups may require spaces equipped with sinks and work benches.

To meet the demand for a range of interests, the provision of flexible, multi-use spaces is key to accommodating the arts and culture sector. It is recommended that the Town evaluate its existing meeting/gathering spaces for their ability to accommodate arts and cultural needs; for example, gallery spaces could ideally complement appropriate public facilities such as the East Gwillimbury Civic Centre, community centres or Public Library branches, while sinks and storage could be added in appropriate meeting spaces contained in the local community centres.

Additionally, the design of new meeting/gathering spaces should be flexible enough, where feasible, to allow certain arts and cultural activities to take place within their confines (e.g. sinks, studios, stages, etc.); this particularly applies to the new multi-use community centre that is proposed through this Strategic Master Plan.

At this time, demand for major arts and cultural facilities such as performing arts centre, museum or art gallery is neither apparent nor justified by the current population base. Although respondents of the survey visited a number of arts and cultural facilities, they did not place considerable importance on them, nor did they request additional municipal investment in such facilities. Smaller-scale, community-level facilities of this nature are viewed as a more plausible demand. Any stakeholders interested in the day-to-day operations of such a facility should present a business plan to the Town of East Gwillimbury for review and consideration of aspects pertaining to funding, roles and responsibilities (among other criteria). The Town may also wish to follow a process similar to that discussed on Page 48 to deal with such requests.



Facilities Facilities

Finally, consultations have identified the community of Sharon as a potential hub for arts and cultural activity in East Gwillimbury. The presence of the historic Sharon Temple and a number of creative organizations in Sharon would appear to support this concept, as well as the civic presence associated with the municipal offices. That being said, arts and cultural elements should also be incorporated in other settlement areas to build upon the sense of community that exists in other settlement areas.

Outdoor civic spaces

Outdoor spaces form important parts of cultural and nature-based tourism infrastructure whereby residents and non-residents alike are drawn to destinations offering opportunities for family leisure, personal reflection and enjoyment. 62% of household survey respondents, for example, attended local community festivals and special events (such as the Santa Clause Parade, Mount Albert Sports Day, Fall Festival, etc.) while 79% stated these types of community activities are important to them.

Outdoor areas such as parks, plazas, gardens, horticultural displays, etc. provide an opportunity to offer a differentiated experience in the summer months, as well as facilitating participation in unstructured cultural activities. Spaces such as outdoor amphitheatres, stages, band shells, arts venues, dance areas, etc. can accommodate programmed and unprogrammed usage and can effectively complement natural areas such as the riverfront or civic spaces (as has been done at the Civic Centre).

Public Art

The emergence of the “Creative City” phenomenon has been given much attention in recent years, and municipalities are embracing many concepts associated with the arts. Numerous studies have articulated the wide range of intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that arts, culture and heritage contribute to a community; for example, these sectors encourage social interaction, stimulate creativity and personal thought, contribute to economic development and tourism, facilitate healthy lifestyles and understanding of others, etc.



Strategic Actions

- *The Town should continually work with the arts and cultural community to optimize the utilization of existing meeting/gathering spaces for their potential to accommodate specific needs of these groups.*
- *When including meeting spaces at the proposed multi-use community centre (and at any other new community facilities), consideration should be given to accommodating certain needs of the arts and culture sector through the design of the facilities.*

Wherever appropriate, the Town should incorporate public art within the urban realm, largely through the land development process. This would ideally involve the drafting of a Public Art Policy which would contain provisions for public art and mandate contributions for applications falling under the *Planning Act* or corporate actions (e.g. devoting 1% of the cost for proposed major development towards public art).

Heritage

Where possible, appropriate heritage elements should be incorporated into the design of indoor and outdoor public spaces in order help define a sense of history and place. Incorporation of heritage assets through municipal spaces also fosters a greater appreciation through understanding among residents, particularly those who are new to East Gwillimbury. The Town would benefit from working with local heritage conservation organizations in this regard.

Strategic Actions

- *The development of a Public Art Policy is recommended to encourage the provision and promotion of public art in East Gwillimbury. Policies governing public art should also be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Review and Update to provide municipal direction in this matter.*
 - *The creation of a funding strategy to support the development of arts and cultural programs would be of great benefit in developing and expanding the creative infrastructure of East Gwillimbury.*
-

Outdoor Facility Needs

The table below summarizes the supply and demand (as quantified by service level targets) for outdoor leisure facilities in East Gwillimbury.

Outdoor Facility Type	Recommended Provision Target	Current Pop. (22,000)			Future Pop. (50,000)	
		Municipal Supply	Current Demand	Surplus (Deficit)	Future Demand	Surplus (Deficit)
Trails & Pathways	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	See analysis contained in this Section				
Soccer Fields*	1 Soccer Field per 80 registered participants	23.5 [^]	11.5	5.5	23.2	6.2
Ball Diamonds	1 Ball Diamond per 100 registered participants	13	7.3	5.7	16.6	(3.6)
Multi-Use Courts	1 Tennis Court per 5,000 residents and 1 basketball court per 800 youth (10-19)	13.5 ^{**}	9.2	4.3	17.9	(4.4)
Skateboard Parks	1 Skateboard Park per 5,000 youth (10-19)	0	0.7	(0.7)	1.1	(1.1)
Bike Parks	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	2	See analysis contained in this Section			
Splash Pads	1 Splash Pad per 5,000 children (0-14)	1	0.8	0.2	1.8	(0.8)
Playgrounds	1 Playground per 800 metre radius	20 locations	See analysis contained in this Section			
Off-Leash Dog Parks	Market Dependent (no target recommended)	0	See analysis contained in this Section			

**denotes full size, unlit equivalent as defined in the respective subsection of the Strategic Master Plan and, therefore, totals do not reflect physical supply/demand or surplus/deficits as identified*

***combined total of basketball and tennis courts*

[^]soccer field supply includes mini fields at Queensville Public School

Facilities Facilities

Trails & Pathways

The Town of East Gwillimbury has a number of local trails that serve a range of recreational and conservation uses. Key trails include:

- Simcoe Trail
- Holland River Trail
- Vivian Creek Trail
- Anchor Park Trail
- Sutton-Zephyr Rail Trail
- Roger's Reservoir

Trends research and surveys undertaken in other municipalities indicate that walking is the second most popular leisure activity, behind only reading. Although bicycling and walking are limited as modes of inter-county transportation, they are important parts of a sustainable and efficient transportation system and will function effectively in the individual communities.

The Town should continue to place a high importance on its trail facilities by making multi-use trail development a high priority. They are multi-seasonal facilities, particularly if they can accommodate winter activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc. and return to designated hiking / cycling trails in the spring, summer and fall months. Trails should be seen as a key facility that promotes sustainability through the protection of areas of environmental interest and significance, encouraging physical activity and promoting active transportation opportunities. For example, provision of a variety of trail types (e.g. nature trails, soft surface and paved trails, on-road and boulevard trails, etc.) are all important in a leisure and active transportation trail system. It will be important for the Town to consider the integration of trails routes, connections and related amenities (e.g. parking, benches, washrooms, etc.) during land development processes such as plan of subdivision approvals, secondary plans, etc.

The focus on active transportation has been increasing in recent years due to awareness of the health benefits of physical activity as well as the rising cost of transportation (driven largely by prices in energy commodities). Active transportation can be broadly defined as human powered modes of non-motorized transportation (e.g. walking, cycling, canoeing, skiing, etc.) and promotes overall sustainability and personal wellness goals such as emission-free transport, increased fitness, social interaction, etc.



Strategic Actions

- *The Town should undertake the development of a comprehensive Trails Master Plan to articulate key trail development priorities and policies in order to effectively guide trail-related decision-making. It is recommended that this initiative be tendered to a qualified consultant unless the Town deems that it has sufficient internal capacity to undertake the project in-house.*

Facilities Facilities



Municipalities are attempting to incorporate active transportation infrastructure in the hopes of providing residents with a way to access employment and essential services that does not necessarily involve driving. As mentioned, the development of an interconnected walking and cycling network which serves basic transportation needs, as well as a leisure purpose, is beneficial for residents ranging from the everyday commuter to the grocery shopper to the park enthusiast.

Although a Trails Advisory Committee exists, the Town should redefine the mandate of this group in order to create an “Active Transportation Committee.” An Active Transportation Committee would also advocate non-recreational uses of the trail system (i.e. for commuting both on and off the road, accessing retail areas, etc.) in addition to traditional trail usage and could be a valuable resource in facilitating public awareness and education regarding use of active transportation infrastructure.

Development of a Trails Master Plan is seen as being a critical component in developing an effective and sustainable trails system. The Trails Master Plan would provide policies pertaining to trail development, management and permitted uses, and would embrace many of the physical activity concepts articulated in this Strategic Master Plan. The Trails Master Plan should also build off studies pertaining to the natural heritage system and suggest appropriate trail developments (if any) in ecologically significant areas found throughout East Gwillimbury. Development of a Trails Master Plan should be developed with the input of the proposed Active Transportation Committee.

Strategic Actions

Future subdivisions should continue to be designed to accommodate trail networks and active transportation systems, especially those that have the potential to connect to the major trail networks present in East Gwillimbury.

- *The Town, in reviewing plans of subdivision, should make every effort in acquiring adequate parking at suitable access points in the trail system.*
- *The Town should design trails to become multi-seasonal facilities which can provide a range of opportunities in the summer and winter months. The types of permitted uses should be evaluated on a trail-by-trail basis.*
- *The Town should establish an Active Transportation Committee to advocate recreational and functional transportation topics associated with the trail system, as well as to provide input into the development of the proposed Trails Master Plan.*

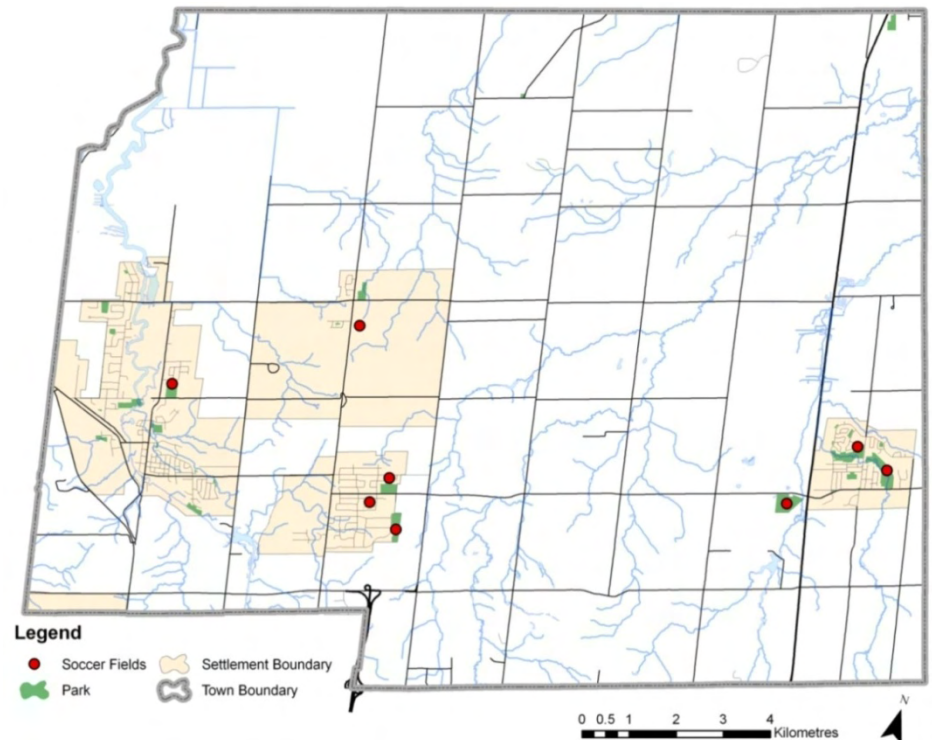
Soccer Fields

The Town maintains a supply of 23 soccer fields, consisting of mini, junior and senior fields. At present, there is one lit soccer field that can be used for evening play; the supply considers the lit field to be equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields in terms of the additional usage it can accommodate through evening play. For the purposes of the Strategic Master Plan, the effective supply of soccer fields is considered to be 23.5 unlit field equivalents.

A market-driven target based upon generally accepted standards of play has been developed for East Gwillimbury. A provision target of 1 soccer field per 80 registered participants is deemed to be appropriate; at present, there are approximately 1,230 players registered in leagues in the Town. According to present demand calculations and utilization statistics, the Town presently appears to have surplus capacity in its soccer field supply. There are pressures, however, on the supply of lit fields and mini fields and possibly could restrict future growth in adult and child programs if not addressed.

The demand for additional fields will become apparent around a population threshold of 40,000, and almost ten unlit equivalent fields will likely be required by the end of the planning period (if the population reaches 50,000). When considering needs to the year 2021, however, the Town will need to be prepared to provide eight additional field equivalents (in addition to the fields proposed during this planning period) if current capture rates remain constant.

To adequately satisfy the need for both mini field and full field requirements, it is recommended that the Town develop the equivalent of 7.4 mini fields (3.7 full field equivalents if each mini field is considered equivalent to 0.5 full fields) and 2.5 full size fields. The resulting total of 6 new full size fields would likely fulfill soccer field requirements by the end of the planning period. This figure is represented in unlit equivalents meaning that six unlit fields or four lit



fields (or some combination in between) should be sufficient to reconcile demand.

The preferred location for these new fields is at Mount Albert Lions Park, particularly if the Town is in a position to acquire this property (based on early discussions with the Lions Club through the community consultation process), as it already is a major soccer complex. The creation of a soccer “hub” at this site is seen as being beneficial in facilitating high quality local soccer opportunities, offering operational efficiencies through staffing and maintenance, as well as developing tournament potential within East Gwillimbury. Local soccer clubs should be engaged to help with operational elements of the new soccer complex, and possibly include capital contributions as well.

Ideally, new field development would include at least one lit field (considered to be equal to 1.5 unlit fields) to provide an opportunity for adult play. Similarly, the Town may also wish to light an existing field which would raise the effective supply by 0.5; a field at the Mount Albert Lions Park would seem to be appropriate given that there are very few surrounding residences and the fact that there is already one lit field available, thus it would provide tournament potential.

The timing of the initial field development strategy is proposed as follows:

- two unlit field equivalents by the time the population reaches 40,000 (either at the Mount Albert Lions Club or the proposed multi-use community centre site); and
- four unlit field equivalents as the population reaches 50,000 (either at the proposed multi-use community centre site or a site secured for a future sports field complex).

Furthermore, the Town should program new fields (as well as appropriate existing fields) to hold simultaneous mini field games/practices rather than develop dedicated mini fields; (i.e. running two mini field programs across the width of one full sized field). It is important that any mini field programming across full fields employs a temporary net system in order to avoid sideline collisions during use of the field for junior/senior programs. Adequate storage for temporary nets, therefore, should be a consideration in the design of soccer parks.

Strategic Actions

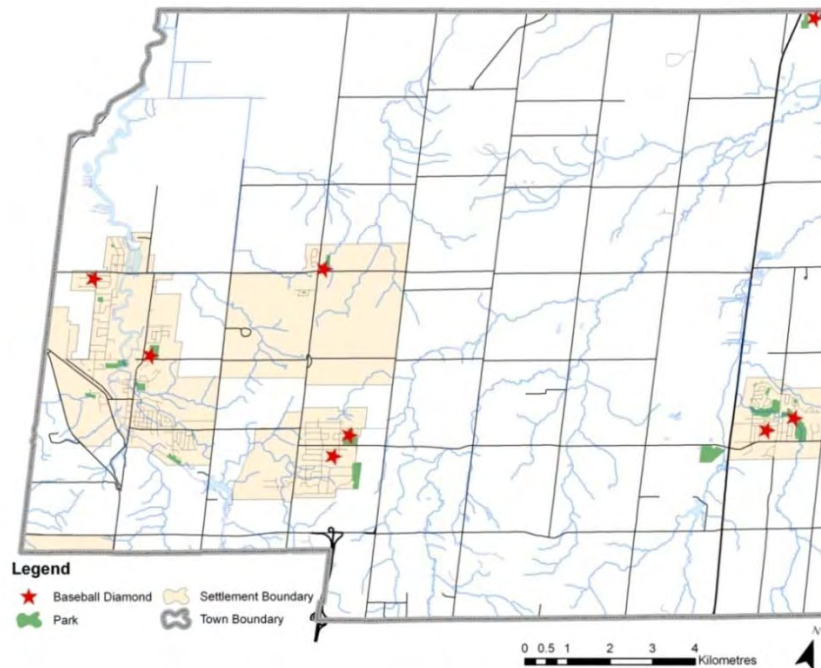
- *The Town should proceed with the development of six new full size soccer fields (unlit equivalents) by the time the population approaches 50,000. At least one field (new or existing) should employ a field lighting system in addition to the current supply of lit fields.*
- *It is recommended that the Town pursue the acquisition of the Mount Albert Lions Club property and develop the site as a soccer-oriented complex. In recognition of long-term soccer field demands beyond the planning period of this Master Plan, the Town should also evaluate opportunities to acquire other parcels of land capable of accommodating multiple soccer fields.*
- *The site which is acquired for the proposed multi-use community centre should be large enough to accommodate multiple soccer fields to allow for future additions to the supply, when warranted by demand.*

Ball Diamonds

The Town of East Gwillimbury maintains a supply of 10 ball diamonds, consisting of junior, senior and practice fields. At present, there are four lit diamonds that can be used for evening play; the supply considers each lit diamond to be equivalent to 2.0 unlit diamonds in terms of the additional usage a lit field can accommodate through evening play. For the purposes of this report, the effective supply of ball diamonds is considered to be 14 unlit diamond equivalents.

Inventory data collected as part of the Strategic Master Plan process does not differentiate between hardball and softball diamonds, therefore, a blended standard of 1 ball diamond per 3,000 residents is deemed to be appropriate.

Application of the per capita target suggests that there are sufficient ball diamonds to meet needs until the population reaches 40,000. By the end of the planning period, a total of three new ball diamonds are required (either as three unlit diamonds or one lit and one unlit diamonds).



Strategic Actions

- A total of three new ball diamonds (unlit equivalents) are required by the end of the planning period. If land is available at the site, at least one ball diamond is recommended at the site of the proposed multi-use community centre.



Multi-Use Courts

The Town of East Gwillimbury maintains a supply of 9 tennis courts and 6 basketball courts (3 of which are half courts for basketball). Each half basketball court is considered to be the equivalent of 0.5 full courts and, therefore, the effective supply is considered to be 4.5 half basketball court equivalents.

Outdoor tennis and basketball can often be played on courts of similar size and material, therefore, a multi-use court template that combines these two uses (as well as others such as ball hockey) is preferred for neighbourhood-level facilities. User-conflicts between the sports is generally not an issue at the neighbourhood level, as the most passionate enthusiasts of these sports tend to utilize higher-quality community or competitive facilities dedicated to a particular sport.

Nonetheless, provision targets for tennis and basketball courts are applied as they are the primary indicator for demand for multi-use courts. A service target of 1 tennis court per 4,500 residents and 1 basketball court per 800 youth (users aged 10-19 are the primary market) is deemed appropriate for East Gwillimbury.

The number of tennis and basketball courts should be sufficient until the population reaches about 43,000 based upon the service target, however, new residential areas without reasonable access to such facilities may require consideration notwithstanding this target.

It is recommended that the Town provide four additional playing courts by the time the population reaches 50,000; additional courts may be desirable to reconcile distribution concerns in residential areas. It is preferred that the Town utilize a multi-use court provision model that combines these two facilities together in a single template. Doing so will offer efficiencies associated with capital investment, maintenance, land requirements and the number of unstructured uses that can take place (basketball, tennis, ball hockey, outdoor ice, etc.). Additional courts may be provided by way of opportunity in future parks (to address distribution considerations, etc.).



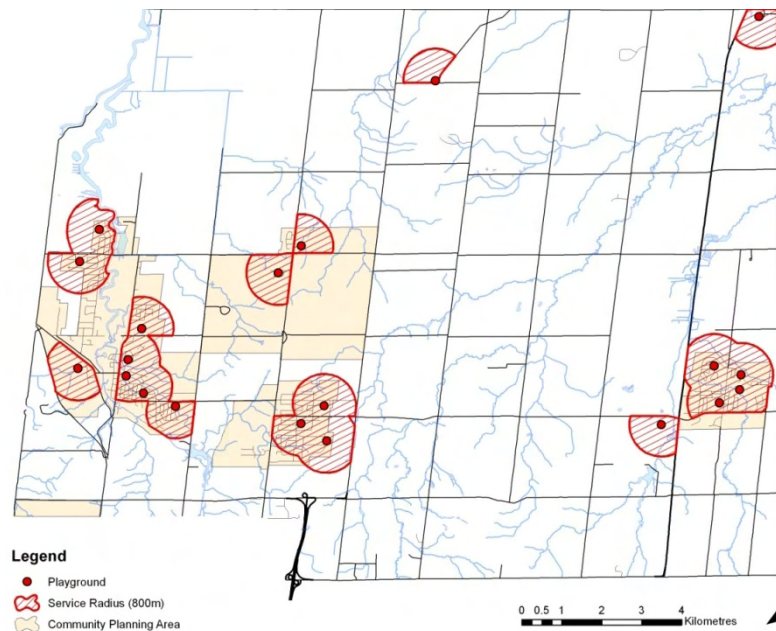
Strategic Actions

- *The Town should provide a minimum of four new multi-use courts to offer newly developing residential areas sufficient access to these facilities.*
- *The Town should employ a multi-use court design template (as described in the Parkland Standards Design Manual) for all future neighbourhood-level courts to offer flexible and varied uses.*

Playgrounds

The Town maintains playgrounds across 20 municipal parks. Most of these sites employ a standard creative playground with swings.

It is recommended that a playground be provided within 800 metres (roughly a ten minute walk time) of all built up residential areas (excluding rural lands). The service radius should be unobstructed by major barriers such as waterways, railway lines, highways, etc. The Town should address gaps in newly developing residential areas by installing playgrounds within new parks located in these communities. At present, gap areas in existing urban settlement areas appear in the central area of Holland Landing (west of the river) and the south-west area of Sharon. Existing playgrounds at school locations should also be considered when evaluating gaps.



Strategic Actions

- *Playgrounds should be provided in newly developing or existing residential areas that offer access unobstructed by major barriers within an 800 metre radius.*
- *The Town should continue to follow CSA guidelines for playground construction and ensure that all playgrounds are regularly inspected and maintained by trained staff.*
- *In considering the needs of children with special needs and disabilities, the Town should construct one fully accessible, barrier-free playground preferably at the site of the proposed multi-use community centre. Furthermore, the Town should set a long-term goal of continuing to provide other barrier-free playgrounds dispersed across East Gwillimbury.*

The provision of barrier-free playground equipment would be a good practice for the Town to implement. It is preferable that a fully accessible playground be provided at a major park and if met with success, the provision of similar facilities should be considered in the future. The future multi-use community centre site may be an ideal location for such a play structure. Existing playground equipment should also be reviewed for the ability to incorporate barrier-free elements.

Outdoor Aquatic Facilities

The Town of East Gwillimbury operates one splash pad at the Ross Family Complex site in Mount Albert. Trends in municipal service delivery suggest that investment in outdoor pool construction is giving way to the provision of more cost-effective waterplay (e.g. splash / spray pad) templates.

This assessment will utilize an age-specific service target. A service level target of 1 splash pad per 5,000 children (ages 0-14) is recommended since splash pads are typically used by this age group. Based upon this target, the need for another full splash pad would not likely be required (in terms of capacity) until shortly after the master planning period.

This standard does not account for spatial distribution, which in this instance would override the capacity target. As a result, the Town should provide a new splash pad in the short-term since the western settlement areas are not presently serviced. Given the success of the Mount Albert splash pad, there is ample reason to assume that a second splash pad would also be well utilized. Initial site options may include the Holland Landing Community Centre, Queensville Community Centre, East Gwillimbury Sports Complex and/or the site chosen for the new multi-use community centre.

Furthermore, the Town should consider basic splash pad amenities at selected park locations (i.e. in smaller communities, underserved areas, etc.) to provide a cooling feature for young children (these basic facilities would not be included in the application of the age-specific service level target). These 'minor' splash pads could form the basis of parkland redevelopment initiatives at the neighbourhood level.

Strategic Actions

- *The Town provide one new major splash pad to serve its western settlement areas in the short-term to address gaps in distribution.*
- *The Town should consider providing minor splash pads at strategic locations to offer a neighbourhood-level cooling amenity.*



Skateboard Parks

Although once considered a fad, skateboarding has demonstrated sustained longevity and appears to have become a mainstream pursuit among children, youth, and to a lesser extent, young adults. Skateboard parks are increasingly being viewed as positive venues that respond to the interests of a number of youth; this includes skateboarders, trick cyclists and inline skaters.

A service target of 1 skateboard park per 5,000 youth aged 10 to 19 is deemed to be sufficient, however, spatial distribution of these facilities is also key given the fact that youth have limited transportation opportunities. Demand calculations suggest that the Town will need to construct one new skateboard park once the population reaches 50,000 to meet the needs of local youth.

Since skateboard parks are youth facilities, they should be located in highly accessible areas such as around residential areas, schools, or along transit routes. At first glance, the most ideal location for a new skateboard park would be at the site chosen for the new multi-use community centre assuming that it is readily accessible by transit. If the future community centre site is not accessible to youth, the skateboard park could be located at or near parks with existing BMX or Mountain Bike parks (i.e. Anchor Park, Vivian Creek Park). The Holland Landing Community Centre may also be an option, particularly if a gymnasium and/or youth space is added to the existing facility as discussed in previous sections.

In order to encourage children and youth, particularly those who are learning to skateboard, to make use of the casual opportunities offered by neighbourhood-level parks, the Town should consider incorporating smaller-scale introductory-level skateboard features (e.g. fun boxes, rails, etc.). Known as “skate zones”, these amenities are ideally added in during park development and redevelopment projects and appeal to a market that may not be ready for the advanced skill set required at major skateboard parks.

Strategic Actions

- *Based upon the recommended target, growth in the youth population and usage at existing facilities, the provision of one new skateboard park is required.*
- *The Town should consult with the local skateboarding community and other youth interested in the design and redesign of new and existing skateboard parks to ensure that skateboarding facilities are cost-effective and responsive to current design trends and user preferences.*
- *The provision of introductory-level skate zones is encouraged at the neighbourhood park level through the park development or renewal process to facilitate casual use of the park by those who want basic skate features.*



Facilities Facilities

BMX / Mountain Bike Parks

The Town of East Gwillimbury offers two parks for bicycle enthusiasts. A Mountain Bike Park is located at Anchor Park while a BMX Park is provided at Vivian Creek Park. While not yet a common practice, the provision of BMX and Mountain Bike Parks are becoming more frequent in the public sector. There is increased demand for purpose-built facilities, in addition to the desire to reduce riding in inappropriate locations (i.e. ecologically sensitive areas) and ad-hoc construction of bike facilities. The result is that parks and recreation departments are often under heavy pressure from both landowners and sport participants to provide authorized, safe facilities.

Trail overcrowding and user incompatibilities, combined with mountain biker's desire to have more purpose-built facilities, has initiated the creation of parks designed and designated specifically for mountain biking. The mountain biking facility at Anchor Park appears to be well utilized and also likely serves to discourage informal mountain biking that may otherwise take place in ecologically sensitive areas. Given the amount of environmentally significant areas in the Town's eastern areas, the Town should explore the provision of a mountain bike park to serve eastern settlement areas (i.e. Mount Albert, Brown Hill, etc.), particularly as the western areas of the Town are served by the facility in Holland Landing.

BMX racers, on the other hand, compete on a dirt track that features jumps, berms and other obstacles within a few hundred meters to test the bike handling skills of the riders. The Town should observe the success and utilization rate of the new BMX track at Vivian Creek Park prior to considering investment in additional facilities. The most plausible location for a new BMX track is believed to be within the western settlement areas (Holland Landing, Sharon and/or Queensville) to better provide access to users in these communities.

The location and design of bike parks should be developed in consultation with local biking enthusiasts as well as input from other environmentally focused organizations such as the Trails Advisory Committee, local conservation authorities, etc.



Strategic Actions

- Based upon the observed usage, successes and challenges at the newly opened Vivian Creek Park facility, the Town should decide whether investment is required in additional BMX tracks elsewhere in East Gwillimbury.
- In consultation with appropriate stakeholders, the Town should explore the possibility of providing a second mountain bike park to serve residents living in the eastern areas of East Gwillimbury.

Off-Leash Dog Parks

There presently no municipal off-leash dog parks in East Gwillimbury, however, it should be noted that such facilities are generally found in urban areas with higher densities. With municipal by-laws regulating the use of leashes, dedicated off-leash areas provide pet owners with the opportunity to exercise and socialize their dogs in a controlled area; these parks also facilitate interaction between pet owners.

As a relatively new level of service, a provision target has not been established for leash-free dog parks. These types of parks are best established by way of opportunity and are ideally developed when an affiliated organization is willing to take responsibility for their operation and/or enforcement.



Dog parks should not be viewed as being facilities strictly facilities for pets; observations in other municipalities suggest that they are much a venue for exercise and social interaction for residents. The Town should be prepared to respond to requests for these types of facilities and should consider the following criteria, at a minimum, in location and design:

- safety of other park users and residents;
- an appropriate buffer from residences, schools and environmentally areas;
- provision of benches, lighting, water fountains, waste containers, etc.

Off-leash areas can be designed as traditional open space parks or as natural park areas with trails and corridors for walking.

Strategic Actions

- *The Town should engage community groups interested in the establishment, general maintenance and ongoing operation when considering the development of off-leash dog parks.*

Outdoor Skating Rinks

The provision of outdoor skating venues is one way to alleviate pressures on arena demand, as it can facilitate public skating and pickup shinny opportunities. The Town has recently initiated a program to encourage interested community volunteers to flood and maintain a neighbourhood rink in exchange for the municipality preparing the ice surface, and providing water, hose and snow removal supplies. This approach would also appear to work well at multi-use courts, as rinks can be installed in nearby parks or other sufficient open areas. This program appears to be a cost-effective way to pool municipal and community resources in providing and maintaining natural ice surfaces.

The multi-use court template (as recommended in previous pages) can be used to frame an outdoor rink in the winter season, and would thus require planning in advance to determine suitable locations. Considerations as to where to locate future rinks would include (but not be limited to) interest of volunteers to maintain the rink, proximity to other outdoor rinks, ability of the park to safely accommodate the activity, etc.

It is recommended that the Town explore the possibility of providing an artificial ice surface at a future multi-use court(s) in order to determine the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of this amenity in the context of evolving climatic conditions (i.e. warmer winters recently observed in the region). The development of artificial ice surfaces should be justified by a business plan articulating capital and ongoing costs, potential partners in construction and operation, etc.



Strategic Actions

- *The Town should continue to encourage residents to maintain natural ice rinks on municipal land for public use, particularly at future multi-use courts and existing parks and open spaces which are suitable to accommodate the use.*
-

Facilities Facilities

Other Facilities (Indoor or Outdoor)

The Town of East Gwillimbury may be pressed for additional indoor and outdoor facilities which are not part of the scope of the Strategic Master Plan and, therefore, the Town must be prepared to appropriately respond to such requests. These demands may arise for existing activities / facilities or for those that evolve according to future trends and preferences. Examples may include, but not be limited to: bocce courts, lawn bowling, cricket pitches, fields for Ultimate Frisbee, multi-media arts venues, museums, etc.

It should be noted that the examples noted above were not highly requested during the consultation process for the Strategic Master Plan and, therefore, sufficient demand for their provision is not currently warranted.

When requests are brought forward for investment in non-traditional, emerging and/or non-core municipal services, the Town should evaluate the need for these pursuits on a case-by-case basis. This should involve an examination into (but not be limited to):

- local/regional/provincial trends pertaining to usage and popularity of the activity/facility;
- examples of delivery models in other municipalities;
- local demand for the activity / facility;
- the ability of existing municipal facilities to accommodate the new service;
- the feasibility for the Town to reasonably provide the service / facility as a core service and in a cost-effective manner;
- the willingness and ability of the requesting organization to provide the service if provided with appropriate municipal supports.

Strategic Actions

- *The Town should respond to requests for facilities presently not part of the core mandate on a case-by-case basis by evaluating the municipality's role in providing the service in relation to quantified market demand and cost-effectiveness of such services, while also identifying potential strategies to address long-term need for such requests should a sufficient level of demand be expressed.*



Parkland Supply

The Town of East Gwillimbury provides over 174 hectares (430 acres) across thirty-five park sites. Parks are defined according to a classification set out in the Town's Official Plan and can be described as follows:

- Town-wide Parkland – provided as required to meet special Town-wide needs and serving a Town-wide function such as a fairgrounds or major indoor and outdoor recreation complex.
- Community Parkland – provided at a rate of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 residents and generally range in size between 2 to 8 hectares. These parks may provide indoor and/or outdoor passive or active recreational facilities.
- Neighbourhood Parks – provided at a rate of 1.0 hectares per 1,000 residents and generally are a minimum of 1.6 hectares in size. The parks provide for both passive and active outdoor recreational facilities, as well as limited indoor facilities.

The present parkland classification system appears to remain appropriate for the community profile and new residents forecasted through the planning period, however, a few considerations should be examined pertaining to the current classification system. Primary considerations of the parks system as a whole include (but are not limited to):

- Planning the appropriate function and use for each park;
- Achieving a satisfactory distribution and quantity of parks to provide access to residents and maintain the integrity of the natural heritage system; and
- Ensuring a high degree of “walkability” or ability to access parks by other forms of non-motorized transportation.



Proposed Official Plan Policies

General Considerations

It is recommended that the Town adopt an overall parkland provision target for its supply of active parkland (this would exclude larger passive open spaces, environmental protection areas, hazard lands, etc.). Doing so would ensure sufficient lands are available to meet the future needs of the population as they pertain to sports fields, outdoor aquatic facilities, areas for informal play, playgrounds, etc.

An overall parkland provision target of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 residents should be encouraged to ensure that residents have ample opportunity to access parkland and associated facilities. This target is deemed to be appropriate as it is also consistent with the standard proposed in other facility planning documents, and will continue to be achieved given the existing supply of parkland in relation to population forecasted throughout the planning period. It is recommended that the following language (or similar wording) be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Update & Review:

“It is the intent of the Town to provide Neighbourhood Parks, Community Parks and Town-wide Parkland at a combined rate of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 people in order to enhance the quality of life for Town residents.”

It is recommended that a service radius be applied to providing parkland in order to ensure all “built-up” residential areas are within reasonable walking distance of a park (regardless of park typology), unobstructed by major barriers such as highways, riverways, etc. As such, the Town should encourage the provision of parkland within 800 metres (approximately a five to ten minute walk time) of all major “built-up” residential areas.



Parkland Parkland

It is recommended that the following language (or similar wording) be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Update & Review:

“The majority of residences within a built-up residential area shall be served by either a Neighbourhood Park, Community Park or Town-wide Parkland within an 800 metre radius.”

Town-Wide Parkland

The following language (or similar wording) may be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Update & Review as it pertains to Town-wide Parkland:

- *Town-wide parks shall serve a Town-wide function which provides Town-wide facilities and/or features to attract residents of East Gwillimbury and visitors from beyond the boundaries of the Town.*
- *Are distinguished by uniqueness of their function or special feature(s) which add to the diversity of the parks system.*
- *Connect the community both as a focal point as well as through trail/open space linkage.*
- *Shall include adequate parking and may contain major indoor and/or outdoor recreation facilities, arts and cultural facilities, community and special event facilities, horticultural attractions and/or be oriented to natural features.*
- *The size and provision standard applicable for this park shall be determined through future studies undertaken by the Town.*



Community Parkland

The following language (or similar wording) may be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Update & Review as it pertains to Community Parks:

- *Community Parks shall serve individual communities and abutting rural areas within the Town.*
- *Encouraged at a rate of provision of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 persons and are generally between 2 hectares and 8 hectares in size.*
- *Where possible, provide linkages to major trail systems and open space corridors.*
- *Intended to provide indoor and outdoor space for recreation for all age groups including organized sporting activities, or to serve as focal points for promoting ecological stewardship. Community Parks shall include adequate parking and may incorporate various components of the Town's natural heritage inventory.*

Neighbourhood Parkland

The following language (or similar wording) may be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Update & Review as it pertains to Neighbourhood Parks:

- *Neighbourhood Parks shall serve residential neighbourhoods within each community.*
- *Encouraged at a rate of provision of 1.0 hectares per 1,000 persons and are a minimum of 1.6 hectares in size.*
- *Where possible, provide linkages to major trail systems and open space corridors.*
- *Shall generally be designed for passive and active recreational facilities such as field sports, playgrounds and the recreational needs of neighbourhood residential areas. Neighbourhood Parks may serve to enhance any adjacent parcels of the Town's natural heritage inventory.*

Strategic Actions

- *The Consolidated Official Plan Review & Update should encourage overall parkland provision at a rate of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 residents as a target.*
- *The descriptions of Neighbourhood, Community Parks and Town-wide should be differentiated in the Consolidated Official Plan Review & Update in terms of clarifying their scope in serving active sports field and other major facility needs.*
- *The Town should strive to provide parkland within an 800 metre radius of all major residential areas.*

Parkland Needs

In order to achieve a parkland provision rate of 4.0 hectares, the Town will need to acquire an additional 26 hectares by the time the population reaches 50,000. It is anticipated that this amount of land will nearly be sufficient to accommodate all proposed new *outdoor facility* recommendations, however, additional lands would be required if including the site for the proposed multi-use community centre.

Forecasted Population	22,000	27,295	42,895	49,795	59,695
Parkland Supply	174 hectares				
Parkland Required (@ 4.0 ha/1,000)	88 hectares	109 hectares	172 hectares	199 hectares	239 hectares
Surplus (Deficit)	86 hectares	65 hectares	2 hectares	(25 hectares)	(65 hectares)

Although beyond the current master planning period, an additional 10,000 residents are forecasted to arrive in East Gwillimbury between the years 2018-2021 and will create a demand for another 40 hectares by this time.

Given the fact that a new multi-use community centre site will be required once the population reaches 35,000 to 40,000 (as discussed in previous Sections), the Town could allocate parkland dedications towards a new Town-wide park as well. Furthermore, with a total of five new soccer fields and three ball diamonds required by the time the population reaches 50,000 (and possibly another five soccer fields once the population reaches 60,000), there will likely be demand for a community/Town-wide level park just beyond the planning period for this Master Plan unless additional sports fields can be accommodated within existing park supplies.

As such, the Town could be proactive and secure two larger parcels for higher-order parks. It is believed that Community Parks, if designed properly can also meet a number of neighbourhood-level demands so long as they are provided in close enough and unobstructed proximity to residential areas. This is why it would be necessary for the Town to procure sufficient parkland in future growth areas prior to the onset of full-scale development activity.

Strategic Actions

- *To meet long-term demand for parkland as recommended through the provision standards in the Official Plan and anticipated outdoor facility requirements, the Town will have to acquire at least 26 hectares of parkland by the time the population reaches 50,000.*

Parkland Parkland

Furthermore, discussions have been held surrounding the provision of a Central Park concept, thus sports fields could form a part of this park; it should be noted, however, proper design and intended uses/functions of the central park concept should be defined prior to the development of sports fields and other major facilities.

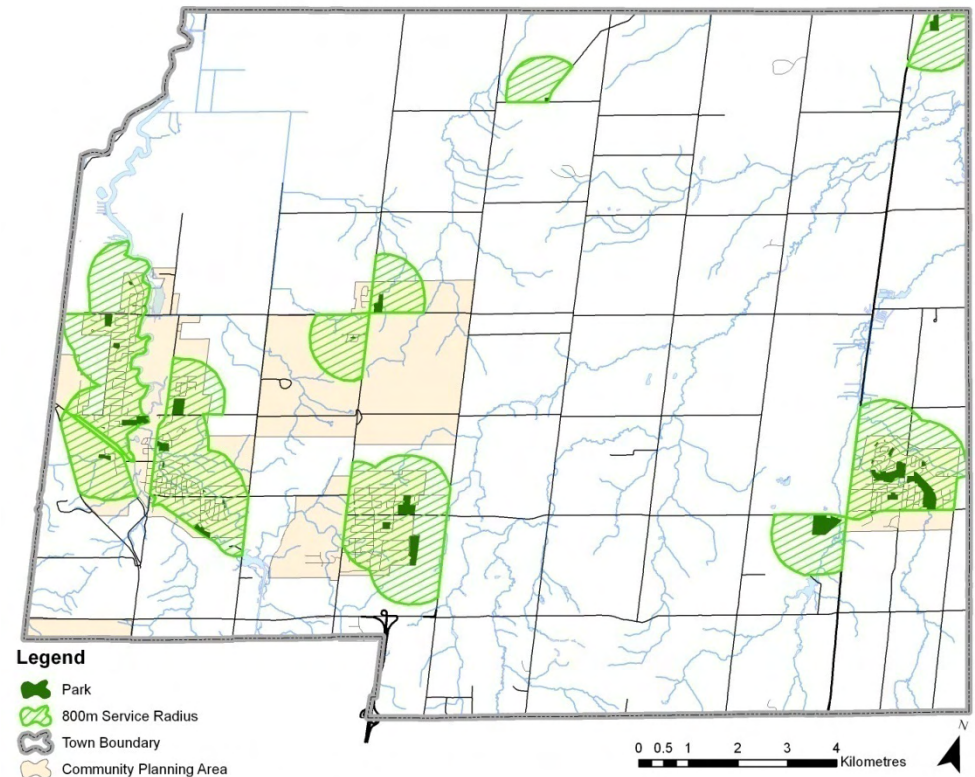
As shown in the adjacent figure, parkland distribution according to the service level of one park within an 800 metre radius of all major “built-up” residential areas (as established in previous pages) appears to highlight sufficient park coverage across the municipality. It is important to note, however, that some of these parks are limited in their ability to service leisure needs of the surrounding due to their size, quality and/or function.

Considerations for Existing Parks

Parkland of varying degrees of quality is presently provided within the Town of East Gwillimbury. Successful parks such as Anchor Park, Vivian Creek Park and Sharon Hills Park consolidate multiple active and passive activities within their boundaries while certain other parks are more limited in the types of uses permitted and their general appeal. The following are general observations pertaining to parkland design and improvements:

Certain parks are situated away from the street and are locked within residential blocks, with walkways functioning as their primary points of access.

- Such a template is discouraged in the future as visibility from the street is a key factor in creating safe parks. In this regard, parks should be designed with safety in mind, considering Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Examples of parks falling under this category include Brenner Park, Toll Road Open Space, and Grant Park.



Some parks are too small/irregularly shaped to permit many active and passive uses.

- Parks which are too small may not be of great leisure benefit in relation to the cost of their maintenance. These types of parks are typically unable to accommodate demands for many current and future uses, thus limiting their ability/flexibility to respond to emerging trends.
- To provide opportunities for additional/enhanced use, the Town may wish to consider acquisition of adjacent lands to expand the park, where feasible and where it would be of most benefit to do so. Similarly, the Town should consider reducing maintenance operations at parks offering little or no leisure function in favour of naturalization.
- Small park templates (generally less than an acre in size) are largely discouraged unless they are required to fill gap areas in parkland service or if the density of the surrounding residential area is sufficient to warrant its provision.
- Parham Crescent Park and Royal Cedar Court Park are examples of parks in this category.

Diversifying the focus and target demographic among existing parks through redevelopment or revitalization is encouraged at appropriate sites.

- Certain parks are targeted only to a particular age group (e.g. the only amenity may be a playground apparatus), which is often a result of the size of the park.
- Parks should be designed to fulfill as many leisure needs as possible for all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Examples of age/interest specific facilities include updated playground equipment, minor splash pads, skate zones, seating/picnic areas, pathways, gardens, etc.
- Ideal candidates for redevelopment/revitalization include Brenner Park, Gristmill Park, River Drive Park, Parkway Park and others that may be identified by municipal staff and the public.

It is worth noting that some parks of 'less-than-ideal' size, quality or function may serve a certain environmental benefit by linking green spaces. A great deal of literature, however, generally suggests that larger naturalized areas maximize environmental benefit by allowing a diverse range of ecological processes to transpire (as opposed to small 'island-type' parks).

Nonetheless, some of these parks can play a role in augmenting the overall connectivity of the community if they link neighbourhoods together or connect to a larger municipal trail route.



Parkland Acquisition

Under the terms of the *Planning Act*, the Town's Official Plan is able to levy parkland dedications at a rate of 5% of developed land or at 1.0 hectares per 300 dwelling units, whichever is greater. Furthermore, the Town should continue to require 2% of developed commercial and industrial lands for parkland (or cash-in-lieu). The standard which conveys the Town the most favourable supply of parkland should be utilized in cases where the Town intends to develop lands for park purposes. Where additional parkland is not required, cash-in-lieu should continue to be collected. Lands within Environmental Protection Areas and storm water detention ponds are not, and should not be, included as part of the 5% dedication of parkland.

In addition to parkland conveyances, the Town should consider employing a number of alternative acquisition initiatives to maintain an acceptable supply of parkland. A few alternative acquisition measures to consider, among others, may include municipal purchase or lease of land, land exchanges or swaps, partnership / joint provision of lands with community partners, reallocating surplus municipal lands to parks use, etc.

With an ample supply of passive open spaces and environmentally significant areas, as well as the demands for recreational facilities and services, the Town should continue obtaining active and passive recreational lands. Passive lands (e.g. woodlots, valley lands and/or hazard lands) should continue to be obtained by way of opportunity rather than through the development process. Furthermore, the Town should not accept parkland that is negatively impacted by storm water management facilities except in situations where the Town deems such integration as being acceptable.

In addition to the park land acquisition process, the Town should also investigate parkland renewal and redevelopment opportunities at its existing parks. For example, redevelopment opportunities at urban parks (i.e. Anchor Park, Sharon Park, or any lands becoming available in other urban areas, etc.) can be oriented to respond to neighbourhood and community-specific demands such as urban parks, plazas and squares in addition to traditional parkland facilities.

"The focus in recent years on upgrading our parks and creating new parks in the area has been appreciated."

- Online Survey Respondent

Strategic Actions

- *Where shortfalls may occur in parkland acquisition through the development process, the Town should employ a range of alternative parkland acquisition mechanisms to obtain the necessary amount of acreage.*
- *The Town should refrain from accepting parkland conveyances which are negatively impacted by storm water management facilities, except in situations where the Town deems such integration as being acceptable.*

Parkland Design & Amenities

Through park design, a number of amenities are provided at municipal parks which enhance the user experience and allow the parks to be used for different functions. The Parks Design Standards Manual (contained under separate cover) provides detailed information pertaining to the design of municipal parks. A few key examples are articulated in the following pages.

Design & Operational Considerations

A greater emphasis should be placed on providing more informal space in new parks in order to promote unstructured and organized activities, as well as emerging interests. The design of active and passive parks should also incorporate elements that cater to individual physical activity and wellness. In selecting potential park sites, a number of factors will influence the decision-making process including, but not limited to:

- topographical and geological and considerations
- potential to protect ecological functions, wildlife and native plant species abutting parks
- location and access to the area , particularly relative to other land uses
- the ability to support the desired recreational infrastructure
- visibility/public frontage
- role in the cultural and recreational fabric of the community
- potential for trail or natural system linkages

New and existing parks should continue to be designed with patrons' safety in mind through the application of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) and other design principles. High volume areas should be well lit, limited visibility areas should be minimized, and neighbourhood level parks should be designed so that surrounding residents and streets have visibility into the park, thus discouraging illicit activities. The Town would benefit from formalizing adherence to the principles of CPTED within the Consolidated Official Plan Review and the update of related planning documents.

Strategic Actions

- Provisions to incorporate spaces and amenities encouraging physical activity, wellness and informal use opportunities should be paramount considerations in the design of parks in order to encourage use and facilitate activity levels.
- The Town should continue to design parks that incorporate natural, indigenous vegetation features in order to foster an appreciation for such areas and maintain crucial ecological functions.
- To ensure that safety concerns do not become a barrier to park usage, the Town should continue to incorporate CPTED principles in park design and facilitate ambassador programs in consultation with the local police department to encourage civic participation in keeping local parks free of undesirable behaviours.

Environmental Integration

East Gwillimbury has a number of significant ecological areas, particularly riparian zones along the creek systems draining from the Holland River and Oak Ridges Moraine area. Given the natural function of the parks system, municipal parkland inherently plays a key role in the protection of natural landscapes and allows for the interpretation of key features. Incorporating natural heritage areas within the parks system can expose residents to natural features and can facilitate their awareness of key environmental topics.

Comfort Facilities

Regarding more active use parks, wherever possible, the Town should cluster the same type of playing fields together to increase a sense of form and function. Such parks should also include washrooms, electrical outlets, benches and safe, pedestrian-friendly pathways, etc. The Town should continue to consider permanent or portable washroom facilities at heavily utilized park and trail locations as these conveniences can attract a greater use by individuals and families.

Unstructured Recreation Areas

People are seeking areas where they can enjoy park uses at their own time and convenience. Informal open spaces have been observed to be popular, particularly at the neighbourhood-level for activities such as pickup field sports, picnicking, playing musical instruments, kite flying, sunbathing, etc. The key to the success of unstructured recreational areas is the flexibility that is afforded for the uses that can be pursued. These types of parks can bring people together to participate in physical activity, showcase cultural diversity through festivals and special events.

Signage

The provision of appropriate signage is a key component of good park and trail design as it promotes recognition of parks among residents and plays an important part of the tourism infrastructure. Signs develop a sense of place and combined with good urban design, can create unique districts and improve aesthetics. They also provide interpretive information that may connect and encourage the park user to take further interest in their surroundings.



Strategic Actions (continued)

- *Public washroom facilities (through a combination of permanent and portable facilities) should continue to be provided at heavily utilized parks and key trailheads along the greenway systems.*
 - *Ensure that adequate signage exists at all municipal parks, trailheads (with appropriate identification and routing information) and recreation and cultural facilities. These signs should be restored or replaced when they deteriorate.*
-

Natural Environment Lands

With an ever-increasing amount of public attention being cast to environmental issues, Canadians are becoming more informed regarding their roles in environmental stewardship and generally desire parks and open spaces near the places in which they live. Opinion polls and other forms of research suggest that parks play an important role in community development, public safety, tourism and overall quality of life.

The success of developing a sustainable parks system is achieved on both a governmental and an individual level, therefore, educating the public and promoting the benefits of parks is key to facilitating environmental stewardship. The Town, in conjunction with local conservation authorities, should continue to develop environmental education initiatives that inform the community about the role of the individual in enhancing ecological processes and teach them how to live sustainably within their immediate environment.

The Town should give credence to the actions and policies articulated in the Natural Heritage System component² of the Consolidated Official Plan Review, currently underway. Preservation of environmentally significant areas and integrating natural environment features into active parkland design will contribute greatly to the quality of life for residents and further the Town's efforts in contributing towards effective sustainable development policy.

Strategic Actions

- *Implement the relevant directions of the Natural Heritage Strategy and Sustainable Development Policy presently being prepared as part of the Consolidated Official Plan Review.*
 - *Continue to expand upon the existing natural parks and trail systems as a means to develop corridors that serve ecological, passive recreational and active transportation purposes.*
 - *Continually develop innovative and engaging initiatives, in partnership with local conservation authorities and other experts in environmental management, that encourage environmental stewardship and the role of individuals in maintaining and enhancing ecological systems in East Gwillimbury.*
-

² Beacon Environmental. Consolidated Official Plan Review and Update: Natural Heritage System. Draft. March 2008.

Delivering Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

The Town of East Gwillimbury provides a wide variety of choices in the delivery of parks, recreation and cultural programs and services. Council and the community support the provision of quality and resident driven services in that they provide significant health and wellness benefits to both the community as a whole and to individual participants.

The work of the Town's Community Programs and Infrastructure Department's is critical to the social fabric and health and wellbeing of the community. The Department delivers programs and services by understanding what programs and services are needed by the community and developing the right mix in providing a wide variety of choice. The strategic actions arising from the service review will assist the Department in providing quality assurance, inclusion of all residents, transparency in its operations and accountability for its work.

Town of East Gwillimbury Community Vision Statement

The Community Vision statement describes the Town's current context and outlines a strategic outlook for the future

"Our Town, we are known for our strong community values and invigorating mix of residential, employment, recreational, agricultural and natural environment areas.

Our Future, we will work together to plan for a thriving community, today and tomorrow."

Strategic Actions

- *Develop/refine its own mission statement to synthesize what it does for the residents of East Gwillimbury and what it emphasizes in the delivery of services. Further that the mission statement be posted on the website, in facilities and in the Leisure Services Guide.*
- *Share the elements of the corporate strategic planning process with all staff and implement annual planning sessions that would develop plans with a three to five year timeframe. Further to develop individual objectives for each employee. Individual objectives should be aligned with Corporate and Departmental priorities and be part of the annual performance review discussions.*
- *Produce an annual report whereby the residents and stakeholders can share in the successes and new developments within the Department.*
- *Ensure that all external service provision standards are developed (facilities, services and programs) are articulated and posted on the website for the public to be aware of. This will ensure that services are transparent and further that the department is accountable for its work.*

Mission Statement for Parks, Recreation & Culture

Mission statements specify what the organization is setting about to achieve, who the target audience or stakeholders are, and also describes how the organization will go about its work. The Department's purpose or mission is clearly aligned with the vision for the East Gwillimbury community in that it provides choice, embraces diversity, includes all citizens and strives to provide quality, safe and fun experiences.

Based upon the goals and objectives identified starting on page 4 of the Strategic Master Plan, the following mission statement is offered for consideration as it pertains to parks, recreation and cultural services:

"East Gwillimbury provides parks, recreation and cultural services to offer the residents choices in their leisure time, promote community pride and spirit and to encourage healthy and active lifestyles."

The Current Delivery Model

The current program and service delivery model takes a two pronged approach. Services primarily provided directly, meaning that the full and part time staff determine needs and accordingly develop and implement respective parks, recreation and cultural programs and services. Other programs, services, sports and leisure opportunities are provided through community groups, non profit organizations and the private sector.

Through a combination of both direct program delivery and staff support of community organization initiatives, the Community Programs and Infrastructure Department strives to ensure a diverse and accessible menu of programs and/or opportunities for all ages, genders regardless of background.

Strategic Actions

- *Develop a formalized communications plan that will serve to educate the public in embracing active lifestyles. The plan should articulate the key messages, the audience, timing and the methods of communication. The plan should have at least a two year horizon and should seek to increase the communications reach over time.*
- *Review all approaches to include under-represented groups with a view to providing greater outreach in order ensure services and programs are accessible to all residents of East Gwillimbury.*
- *Encourage a quick departmental review (utilizing internal focus groups) with a cross section of staff of the newly implemented departmental structure to ensure that the structure is successful at the improvements that it set about to achieve. Focus should be placed on communications and clarity of processes and functions. It is suggested that the naming of the divisions be reconsidered as the current names cause public confusion.*

Service Delivery Service Delivery

The Service Delivery Review

The Consulting Team has developed a service delivery review tool that serves as a common template for leisure service providers that presents a number of key result areas and subsequent success factors to describe high performing service delivery for the Community Programs and Infrastructure Department. The Key Success Factors for service delivery include:

- Service Focus of the Department
- Effective Leadership Practices
- Program and Service Delivery
- Partners and Stakeholders

This audit helps an organization become aware of possible areas where changes could lead to improved results and, as important, create a cycle of continuous improvement. The process is not about passing or failing, but rather about continuous improvement – regular evaluation and prioritized action plans should accomplish this.

Service Focus of the Department

Effective organizations are driven by a crystal clear focus about all aspects of their business. Individuals working for, or served by the organization, understand what it stands for because its values, vision and philosophies are evident in everything the organization does. This is only possible if the organization allocates time and resources to developing elements and tools that will guide decision-making, policy development and operating policies.

Strategic Actions

- *Implement a simple set of performance measures that would serve to measure the inputs, outputs, efficiencies and effectiveness of the Department. Further that the results be compared year over year to see if different approaches need to be taken to report out and keep stakeholders informed.*
- *Post all service and program provision standards on the website in order to promote transparency in the provision of service and to demonstrate accountability to provide at a prescribed standard.*
- *Adopt a community development approach to engaging under-represented groups such as residents with low incomes, culturally diverse populations, females, and persons with disabilities at a minimum.*
- *Develop and adopt a quality assurance program not unlike the High 5 Program as provided through Parks and Recreation Ontario for the delivery of programs and services and as a prerequisite for those who will be working with children and youth.*

Service Delivery Service Delivery

Effective Leadership Practices

The ultimate purpose of the Community Programs and Infrastructure Department and within the three divisions is to contribute to the quality of life of its constituents. Senior management must provide a sense of purpose and clear direction to the entire organization so that it is positioned to fulfill this purpose. Leadership has a responsibility to share decision-making and to ensure that members of the entire organization understand their role in achieving results and each contributor is supported and recognized. Management makes certain that the organization is strategically sound, adapts well to change and is capable of facilitating the exchange of ideas and information between staff and stakeholders.

Program and Service Delivery

Effective municipal parks and leisure departments provide high-quality programs and services that are customer driven. Programs that are included in the organization's inventory are accessible, equitable, imaginative, inspiring and innovative. Collectively, programs and services respond to the needs and interests of all community members while meeting the quality and service delivery standards of the Corporation. The organization's vision, mission and values are clearly visible in the manner in which programs and services are designed, delivered and evaluated.

Strategic Actions

- *Complete an annual audit of compliance (directly or in concert with other departments) of the applicable legislative requirements in managing the Department and its assets.*
- *Obtain police reference checks for all staff members who will be working with children, youth and vulnerable adults.*
- *Develop a pricing policy that uses the costs of providing programs and services as a base and seeks to recover a percentage of the direct costs based on the value of the program and service to the community.*
- *Expand the "Thinking Green" program to include initiatives in parks, recreation and cultural programs and services*
- *Develop an annual approach to testing participant satisfaction including, but not limited to, the use of the leisure guide, forms within facilities, after program completion, focus groups to test changes etc.*

Service Delivery Service Delivery

Partners and Stakeholders

Effective parks, recreation and cultural organizations consider partners and stakeholders as an important part of the service planning and delivery process. As such, the organization treats partners and stakeholders in a fashion consistent with the manner in which it deals with its professional staff. The organization's goals in the areas of child and youth development, lifelong health and wellness for all and environmental stewardship are seen as a mutually beneficial to partners and stakeholders. The organization ensures that partnership processes are implemented and that agreements are in place. For clarity, the organization considers that a partnership exists when two or more persons or groups recognize that working together towards a common goal is more productive than working independently. Volunteers are considered partners.



Strategic Actions

- *Ensure that all program areas develop plans as a result of the recommendations in the Strategic Master Plan, emerging trends and specific issues.*
 - *Develop a simple plan that would serve to attract an increased number of volunteers and improve training, supervision, evaluation and recognition of volunteers.*
 - *Complete a listing of all public, not for profit and private providers of parks, recreation and cultural programming be developed and kept current. Further that at least an annual meeting occur to share the Department's priorities and share other organizations plans with a view to developing greater responsibility for the overall and collective provision of service and to possibly develop greater cohesion and partnerships.*
 - *Review the existing agreements to ensure that the deliverables are captured and are reflective of community needs.*
-

Implementation Implementation

Implementation Schedule

The following pages contain a summary of strategic actions contained within this Master Plan. They are organized broadly in terms of the park or type of facility in which they are expected to occur. Furthermore, these action plans are differentiated into facility-specific and programming/policy-related tables. The timing of the action plans fall into three categories:

- **Short-Term** – 2008 to 2011 (or a population threshold of 22,000 to 27,000)
- **Mid-Term** – 2012 to 2015 (or a population threshold of 27,001 to 43,000)
- **Long-Term** – 2016 to 2018 (or a population threshold of 43,001 to 50,000)
- **Ongoing** – over the entire course of the planning period (2008-2018)

It should be noted that timing figures assigned to individual strategic actions are considered to be estimates and largely rely upon the Town achieving forecasted population thresholds as identified in the Strategic Master Plan. It is not the intent of this Plan to recommend timing of strategic actions but rather to provide a general indication of when the need to implement the actions could be considered along with other variables in the future.

Prioritization of Action Plans falls under three broad categories:

- **High Priority** items necessitate immediate attention (within the prescribed time period)
- **Medium Priority** items necessitate attention when high priority actions have been initiated or completed, or when suitable partners have been identified for funding.
- **Low Priority** items require attention when all other priority actions have been initiated or completed.

Costs are identified in 2008 dollar estimates and include costs associated with construction, contingencies, design fees, common spaces, furnishings and equipment, and site development. Identified costs are considered to be preliminary and subject to change given future market conditions. Figures do not reflect cost of land acquisition.



Monitoring

The Town should continue to review and assess the Strategic Actions set out in this document in order to ensure that they remain relevant. This will require monitoring of recreation and cultural activity patterns, conducting annual review of the achievements of the plan, tracking satisfaction levels of residents and customers, and undertaking a new Master Plan at the end of the planning period (and/or an update to this Plan within the next five to seven years).

Strategic Actions

- The Town should update this Strategic Master Plan after five years and initiate a new Strategic Master Plan process at the end of the planning period in 2018.

Short-Term Strategic Actions

The following strategic actions are proposed for the years 2008 to 2011. Costs are identified in 2008 dollars and are

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
Indoor Facility Recommendations				
1.	The Youth Advisory Committee should be reinstated to inform the Town about youth-specific concerns and requirements in East Gwillimbury.	2009	High	Not applicable
Arts, Culture & Heritage Recommendations				
2.	The development of a Public Art Policy is recommended to encourage the provision and promotion of public art in East Gwillimbury. Policies governing public art should also be included in the Consolidated Official Plan Review and Update to provide municipal direction in this matter.	2010	High	Not applicable
3.	The creation of a funding strategy to support the development of arts and cultural programs would be of great benefit in developing and expanding the creative infrastructure of East Gwillimbury.	2010	High	Not applicable
Outdoor Facility Recommendations				
4.	The Town should establish an Active Transportation Committee to advocate recreational and functional transportation topics associated with the trail system, as well as to provide input into the development of the proposed Trails Master Plan.	2008	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
5.	It is recommended that the Town pursue the acquisition of the Mount Albert Lions Club property and develop the site as a soccer-oriented complex. In recognition of long-term soccer field demands beyond the planning period of this Master Plan, the Town should also evaluate opportunities to acquire other parcels of land capable of accommodating multiple soccer fields.	2008	High	Contingent upon future study
6.	The Town should undertake the development of a comprehensive Trails Master Plan to articulate key trail development priorities and policies in order to effectively guide trail-related decision-making. It is recommended that this initiative be tendered to a qualified consultant unless the Town deems that it has sufficient internal capacity to undertake the project in-house.	2009	High	Not applicable
7.	The Town should proceed with the development of six new full size soccer fields (unlit equivalents) by the time the population reaches 50,000. At least one field (new or existing) should employ a field lighting system in addition to the current supply of lit fields. (Also see ID #47)	2009 (1 lit field) 2010 (1 unlit field)	High	\$500,000 (@ \$350,000 per lit irrigated field and \$150,000 per unlit irrigated field)
8.	The Town provide one new major splash pad to serve its western settlement areas in the short-term to address gaps in distribution.	Between 2009 and 2016	High	\$254,000
9.	Based upon the recommended target, growth in the youth population and usage at existing facilities, the provision of one new skateboard park is required.	Between 2009 and 2016	High	\$250,000
Parkland Recommendations				
10.	The Consolidated Official Plan Review & Update should encourage overall parkland provision at a rate of 4.0 hectares per 1,000 residents as a target.	2008	High	Not applicable
11.	The descriptions of Neighbourhood, Community Parks and Town-wide should be differentiated in the Consolidated Official Plan Review & Update in terms of clarifying their scope in serving active sports field and other major facility needs.	2008	High	Not applicable
Service Delivery Recommendations				
12.	Develop/refine its own mission statement to synthesize what it does for the residents of East Gwillimbury and what it emphasizes in the delivery of services. Further that the mission statement be posted on the website, in facilities and in the Leisure Services Guide.	2009	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
13.	Share the elements of the corporate strategic planning process with all staff and implement annual planning sessions that would develop plans with a three to five year timeframe. Further to develop individual objectives for each employee. Individual objectives should be aligned with Corporate and Departmental priorities and be part of the annual performance review discussions.	2010	Medium	Not applicable
14.	Produce an annual report whereby the residents and stakeholders can share in the successes and new developments within the Department.	2011	Low	Cost of production and/or distribution
15.	Develop a formalized communications plan that will serve to educate the public in embracing active lifestyles. The plan should articulate the key messages, the audience, timing and the methods of communication. The plan should have at least a two year horizon and should seek to increase the communications reach over time.	2010	High	Not applicable
16.	Ensure that all external service provision standards are developed (facilities, services and programs) are articulated and posted on the website for the public to be aware of. This will ensure that services are transparent and further that the department is accountable for its work.	2010	Medium	Not applicable
17.	Review all approaches to include under-represented groups with a view to providing greater outreach in order ensure services and programs are accessible to <i>all</i> residents of East Gwillimbury.	2011	High	Not applicable
18.	Encourage a quick departmental review (utilizing internal focus groups) with a cross section of staff of the newly implemented departmental structure to ensure that the structure is successful at the improvements that it set about to achieve. Focus should be placed on communications and clarity of processes and functions. It is suggested that the naming of the divisions be reconsidered as the current names cause public confusion.	2009	High	Not applicable
19.	Implement a simple set of performance measures that would serve to measure the inputs, outputs, efficiencies and effectiveness of the Department. Further that the results be compared year over year to see if different approaches need to be taken to report out and keep stakeholders informed.	2010	Medium	Not applicable
20.	Post all service and program provision standards on the website in order to promote transparency in the provision of service and to demonstrate accountability to provide at a prescribed standard.	2009	Medium	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
21.	Adopt a community development approach to engaging under-represented groups such as residents with low incomes, culturally diverse populations, females, and persons with disabilities at a minimum.	2011	High	Marketing/outreach costs
22.	Develop and adopt a quality assurance program not unlike the High 5 Program as provided through Parks and Recreation Ontario for the delivery of programs and services and as a prerequisite for those who will be working with children and youth.	2010	Medium	Not applicable
23.	Complete an annual audit of compliance (directly or in concert with other departments) of the applicable legislative requirements in managing the Department and its assets.	2009	High	Not applicable
24.	Obtain police reference checks for all staff members who will be working with children, youth and vulnerable adults.	2010	High	Cost of police check
25.	Develop a pricing policy that uses the costs of providing programs and services as a base and seeks to recover a percentage of the direct costs based on the value of the program and service to the community.	2011	High	Not applicable
26.	Expand the “Thinking Green” program to include initiatives in parks, recreation and cultural programs and services.	2010	Medium	Not applicable
27.	Ensure that all program areas develop plans as a result of the recommendations in the Strategic Master Plan, emerging trends and specific issues.	2011	High	Not applicable
28.	Complete a listing of all public, not for profit and private providers of parks, recreation and cultural programming be developed and kept current. Further that at least an annual meeting occur to share the Department’s priorities and share other organizations plans with a view to developing greater responsibility for the overall and collective provision of service and to possibly develop greater cohesion and partnerships.	2011	Medium	Not applicable

Medium Term Strategic Actions

The following strategic actions are proposed for the years 2012 to 2015.

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
Indoor Facility Recommendations				
29.	Based upon facility assessments conducted as part of the Strategic Master Plan, one new multi-use community centre will be required once the population reaches between 35,000 and 40,000, depending on the facility development strategy chosen by the Town. The new facility should preferably be located within the western settlement areas of East Gwillimbury (i.e. Holland Landing, Sharon or Queensville).	Between 2013 and 2016	High	Cost dependent upon final design
30.	The Town should conduct a feasibility study, business plan and design concept to verify that all the components recommended for the facility through this Strategic Master Plan are justified given the community characteristics and level of demand present at that time.	2012	High	\$50,000 for Consulting Fees
31.	In anticipation of land acquisition challenges associated with the Town's forthcoming projected build-out, this multi-use facility should be sited and designed in a manner that allows future expansion should additional recreation or leisure components be required in the long-term.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	Not applicable
32.	The provision of an additional two ice pads should be considered once the population reaches 35,000. Prior to development, the Town should undertake a study as to the feasibility of the East Gwillimbury Sports Centre to potentially accommodate an additional two ice pads at its current site versus providing a twin-pad facility elsewhere in the Town.	2013	High	\$16.7 million (@ 77,000 ft ²)
33.	Provision of an indoor aquatics facility is recommended once the population reaches between 35,000 and 40,000, depending upon the facility provision strategy employed by the Town. The design, location and cost of the facility should be evaluated through a feasibility study and business planning exercise prior to development of the facility.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	\$10.8 million (@ 29,000 ft ²)
34.	The Town should incorporate dedicated youth leisure space as part of the design for the proposed multi-use community centre and/or other appropriate venues as a means to maximize cross-programming opportunities.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	\$600,000 (@ 3,000 ft ²)

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
35.	A dedicated older adult space should be included as part of the design for the proposed multi-use community centre. Spaces and services for elderly seniors should also be provided assuming the location of the facility is accessible to those without regular access to a motor vehicle.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	\$400,000 (@ 2,000 ft ²)
36.	The provision of one new full size gymnasium is recommended to serve the western settlement areas of East Gwillimbury, either through expansion of an existing facility (subject to feasibility and structural audit) or at the proposed multi-use community centre.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	\$3.1 million (@ 10,500 ft ²)
37.	The Town should provide a fitness studio as part of the proposed multi-use community centre. This space should not contain intensive training club equipment as it is intended to serve municipal program delivery of active living and wellness opportunities.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	\$900,000 (@ 4,000 ft ²)
Outdoor Facility Needs				
38.	The site which is acquired for the proposed multi-use community centre should be large enough to accommodate multiple soccer fields to allow for future additions to the supply, when warranted by demand.	Between 2013 and 2016	High	Not applicable
39.	In considering the needs of children with special needs and disabilities, the Town should construct one fully accessible, barrier-free playground preferably at the site of the proposed multi-use community centre. Furthermore, the Town should set a long-term goal of continuing to provide other barrier-free playgrounds dispersed across East Gwillimbury.	2013 (fully accessible playground)	High	\$300,000
40.	In consultation with appropriate stakeholders, the Town should explore the possibility of providing a second mountain bike park to serve residents living in the eastern areas of East Gwillimbury.	Between 2012 and 2018	Medium	Cost dependent upon final design
41.	Based upon the observed usage, successes and challenges at the newly opened Vivian Creek Park facility, the Town should decide whether investment is required in additional BMX tracks elsewhere in East Gwillimbury.	Between 2013 and 2018	Medium	\$68,900
Service Delivery Recommendations				
42.	The Town should update this Strategic Master Plan after five years and initiate a new Strategic Master Plan process at the end of the planning period in 2018. (Also see ID #50)	2014	High	\$60,000 for Consulting Fees

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
43.	Develop an annual approach to testing participant satisfaction including, but not limited to, the use of the leisure guide, forms within facilities, after program completion, focus groups to test changes etc.	2012	High	Not applicable
44.	Develop a simple plan that would serve to attract an increased number of volunteers and improve training, supervision, evaluation and recognition of volunteers.	2012	High	Not applicable
45.	Review the existing agreements to ensure that the deliverables are captured and are reflective of community needs.	2012	High	Not applicable

Long-Term Strategic Actions

The following strategic actions are proposed for the years 2016 to 2018.

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
Indoor Facility Recommendations				
46.	Towards the end of the master planning period, the Town should review its role in providing training club facilities to serve future populations.	2017	Medium	Not applicable
Outdoor Facility Recommendations				
47.	The Town should proceed with the development of six new full size soccer fields (unlit equivalents) by the time the population reaches 50,000. At least one field (new or existing) should employ a field lighting system in addition to the current supply of lit fields. (Also see ID # 7)	2016 (1 lit field and 1 unlit field) 2018 (1 lit field and 1 unlit field)	High	\$1 million (@ \$350,000 per lit irrigated field and \$150,000 per unlit irrigated field)

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
48.	A total of three new ball diamonds (unlit equivalents) are required by the end of the planning period. If land is available at the site, at least one ball diamond is recommended at the site of the proposed multi-use community centre.	2016 (1 lit diamond) 2017 (1 unlit diamond)	Medium	\$477,000 (@ \$265,000 per lit field and \$212,000 per unlit irrigated field)
49.	The Town should provide a minimum of four new multi-use courts to offer newly developing residential areas sufficient access to these facilities.	2016 (2 courts) 2018 (2 courts)	High	\$127,200 (@ \$31,800 per court)
Service Delivery Recommendations				
50.	The Town should update this Strategic Master Plan after five years and initiate a new Strategic Master Plan process at the end of the planning period in 2018. (Also see ID #42)	2018	High	\$100,000 for Consulting Fees

Ongoing Strategic Actions

The following strategic actions are proposed to be implemented over the entire course of the Strategic Master Plan period.

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
Indoor Facility Recommendations				
51.	The Town should utilize targets in conjunction with other important factors, including trends, spatial and usage data, degree of “pent-up” demand, and population growth in respective age groups to make informed decisions pertaining to facility-based demand and before finalizing capital investment.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
52.	The Town should collect registration data from local organized facility user groups (including but not limited to ice sports, sports field users, etc.) in order to better understand current market conditions and demand for activities.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
53.	New facilities should continue to be designed according to LEED Silver standards as per Corporate Policy, and also incorporate other “green” technologies to showcase the Town’s leadership role in energy efficiency, innovation and environmental stewardship.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design
54.	Ensure that new public leisure facilities are designed with the user’s safety in mind, through use of CPTED or similar principles.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design
55.	Include flexible community and program spaces as part of the design template for all appropriate community-oriented facilities, including the proposed multi-use community centre. These spaces should be designed to accommodate multiple activities, to the greatest extent possible.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design (@\$225 per ft ²)
56.	Investigate opportunities for improving coordination and use of meeting/program areas in facilities containing both library and leisure services. Roles of the Department and the East Gwillimbury Public Library should also be defined in this regard.	Ongoing	Medium	Not applicable
57.	The provision of preschool programming rooms at new leisure facilities is encouraged so that the inability to find suitable child supervision does not become a barrier to the participation of caregivers in municipal leisure programs, while also providing opportunities for early childhood development.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design (@\$225 per ft ²)
58.	The Town should conduct a survey of youth (or similar consultation tool) every five years to ensure that it is well positioned to respond to youth-specific needs and concerns.	2009, 2014, 2019	High	Not applicable
59.	The Town should continually evaluate opportunities to expand and/or add dedicated older adult and seniors areas to existing community recreation and leisure facilities. In doing so, the Town should consult with local seniors’ clubs in the design of expanded or new seniors-oriented facilities in order to ensure that local needs are considered in a manner that encourages a high degree of use through principles of inclusion and accessibility.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design (@\$200 per ft ²)
60.	A focus should continue to be placed upon enhancing the service delivery model for older adults and seniors through the development of innovative, inclusive and accessible programs focusing on wellness and active living.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
Arts, Culture & Heritage Recommendations				
61.	The Town should continually work with the arts and cultural community to optimize the utilization of existing meeting/gathering spaces for their potential to accommodate specific needs of these groups.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design
62.	When including meeting spaces at the proposed multi-use community centre (and at any other new community facilities), consideration should be given to accommodating certain needs of the arts and culture sector through the design of the facilities.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon final design
Outdoor Facility Recommendations				
63.	Future subdivisions should continue to be designed to accommodate trail networks and active transportation systems, especially those that have the potential to connect to the major trail networks present in East Gwillimbury.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon trail design.
64.	The Town, in reviewing plans of subdivision, should make every effort in acquiring adequate parking at suitable access points in the trail system.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon location, design, etc.
65.	The Town should design trails to become multi-seasonal facilities which can provide a range of opportunities in the summer and winter months. The types of permitted uses should be evaluated on a trail-by-trail basis.	Ongoing	High	Cost dependent upon location, design, etc.
66.	The Town should employ a multi-use court design template (as described in the Parkland Standards Design Manual) for all future neighbourhood-level courts to offer flexible and varied uses.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
67.	Playgrounds should be provided in newly developing or existing residential areas that offer access unobstructed by major barriers within an 800 metre radius.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
68.	The Town should continue to follow CSA guidelines for playground construction and ensure that all playgrounds are regularly inspected and maintained by trained staff.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
69.	The Town should consider providing minor splash pads at strategic locations to offer a neighbourhood-level cooling amenity.	Ongoing	Medium	Cost dependent upon site
70.	The Town should consult with the local skateboarding community and other youth interested in the design and redesign of new and existing skateboard parks to ensure that skateboarding facilities are cost-effective and responsive to current design trends and user preferences.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
71.	The provision of introductory-level skate zones is encouraged at the neighbourhood park level through the park development or renewal process to facilitate casual use of the park by those who want basic skate features.	Ongoing	Medium	Cost dependent upon site
72.	The Town should engage community groups interested in the establishment, general maintenance and ongoing operation when considering the development of off-leash dog parks.	Ongoing	Medium	Not applicable
73.	The Town should continue to encourage residents to maintain natural ice rinks on municipal land for public use, particularly at future multi-use courts and existing parks and open spaces which are suitable to accommodate the use.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
Parkland Recommendations				
74.	The Town should strive to provide parkland within an 800 metre radius of all major residential areas.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
75.	Provisions to incorporate spaces and amenities encouraging physical activity, wellness and informal use opportunities should be paramount considerations in the design of parks in order to encourage use and facilitate activity levels.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
76.	The Town should continue to design parks that incorporate natural, indigenous vegetation features in order to foster an appreciation for such areas and maintain crucial ecological functions.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
77.	To ensure that safety concerns do not become a barrier to park usage, the Town should continue to incorporate CPTED principles in park design and facilitate ambassador programs in consultation with the local police department to encourage civic participation in keeping local parks free of undesirable behaviours.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
78.	Public washroom facilities (through a combination of permanent and portable facilities) should continue to be provided at heavily utilized parks and key trailheads along the greenway systems.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
79.	Ensure that adequate signage exists at all municipal parks, trailheads (with appropriate identification and routing information) and recreation and cultural facilities. These signs should be restored or replaced when they deteriorate.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
80.	Implement the relevant directions of the Natural Heritage Strategy and Sustainable Development Policy presently being prepared as part of the Consolidated Official Plan Review.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable

Implementation Implementation

ID #	Strategic Actions	Estimated Timing	Priority	Capital Cost Implications
81.	Continue to expand upon the existing natural parks and trail systems as a means to develop corridors that serve ecological, passive recreational and active transportation purposes.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
82.	Continually develop innovative and engaging initiatives, in partnership with local conservation authorities and other experts in environmental management, that encourage environmental stewardship and the role of individuals in maintaining and enhancing ecological systems in East Gwillimbury.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable
Service Delivery Recommendations				
83.	The Town should respond to requests for facilities presently not part of the core mandate on a case-by-case basis by evaluating the municipality's role in providing the service in relation to quantified market demand and cost-effectiveness of such services, while also identifying potential strategies to address long-term need for such requests should a sufficient level of demand be expressed.	Ongoing	High	Not applicable