



Town of  
East Gwillimbury

# Health & Active Living Master Plan

September 5, 2018

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In Association With  
John Lohuis & Associates, Dave Saad Consulting



COMMUNITY  
PARKS, RECREATION  
& CULTURE

Active By Nature

## **Acknowledgements**

We are pleased to present the Health and Active Living Master Plan. This document has been prepared with the assistance of the Mayor and members of Town Council, residents, volunteers, Council Advisory Committee members, Town staff, and representatives of local and regional agencies, organizations and government. We thank all for their thoughtful comments and suggestions.

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## Plan Highlights

The Health and Active Living Master Plan has charted a future for the next ten years in how East Gwillimbury residents will enjoy parks, recreation, culture and connections with their environment. The plan will feature challenges and opportunities inherent in the doubling of the Town's population and all that comes with rapid change.

There are many participants in this change process: Town Council, municipal staff, the development community and current and future residents. This plan is centred on the ultimate translation of how the entire community can be structured so as to provide a quality of life in East Gwillimbury seen as the best for a mid-sized community striving for providing the best health and active living options possible for its citizens.

The Town has three strategic pillars all of which apply to this plan;

- Providing balanced, quality, affordable programs and services and facilities in all areas of the municipality for a safe, accessible and livable community
- Building a complete community that provides healthy places to live, work, play and learn
- A high performance municipal organization committed to service and excellence

The Community Parks Recreation & Cultural Services Department (CPRC) Mission:

“East Gwillimbury delivers 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 department will be using a client-centred and holistic approach to service delivery focused on intended experiences of East Gwillimbury residents in concert with the implementation of a Health and Active Living Strategy, that is the underlying theme for all decision making. The department will adopt approaches that allow residents to meet their physical, spiritual, emotional and mental needs through:

- The fostering of “active living” for all ages
- Increase inclusion and access to recreation and social services
- Allow residents new and innovative ways to connect with nature
- Ensure provision of supportive physical and social environments
- Communication of and implementation of great customer experiences with CPRC

This plan has utilized extensive consultation with the broad communities of interest within all of the hamlets through:

- Online resident surveys
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Public open houses
- Extensive site visits
- Student engagements
- Public open houses

As well, primary and secondary data was gathered to apply the latest thinking in how this plan can be truly transformational and strive to create a new definition of how parks, recreation and leisure can assist in creation of a truly healthy and active community.

## Programs and Service Delivery

As the population increases over the next ten years, the resident base will become more diverse and expectations by new homeowners more challenging to meet. The capacity of the Town and particularly of the CPRC department will need to increase its capacity to reach out, to understand and deliver beyond core services traditionally offered by a municipal recreation department.

There will be more diverse interests, cultures, ages, capabilities and motivations for access to town services and the CPRC department will need to adopt more sophisticated ways to capture these diverse requirements. This study provides a demographic and psychographic basis for the department to better deliver beyond core services in both direct means and through indirect “service arranger” roles. The department can build upon its favourable perception by the community to dedicate even more effort to “find those gems” that may be hidden to enlarge the scope of potential programs and offerings, such as those offered by clubs, communities of interest and new cultures. Customer service staff should be able to provide clients information about complete ranges of programs and services offered in the community, both directly by the Town or indirectly by other service providers.

By use of strategic resources such as community agencies, partnerships, volunteerism, events by groups and service coordination with other municipal services such as libraries; a more cohesive and focussed set of leisure service delivery mechanisms can be provided. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association “National Framework for Recreation in Canada – Pathways to Wellbeing” was reviewed in the context of such service delivery and contacts a number of goal areas, principles and standards that can serve as a planning and performance guide.

Continued focus on key program areas of children and youth, families, older adults and persons from diverse socio-economic backgrounds is encouraged. The department should build on a base of successful core programs (fitness, learn-to programs, sports, social activities, arts/culture programming) with the aim of a “fill rate” of programs offered of at least 80% against budgetary and fiscal targets. As well, 10-20% of the programs offered each session should respond to the department actively responding to feedback from the community for new ways to get healthy and active. In particular, with increasing pressures on valuable discretionary time, special efforts should be made at atypical times to offer such new programs, such as evenings, weekends, and special event time frames.

Connections with libraries, culture, arts and heritage require more promotion, more awareness and more focus to bring out the incredible potential of a rich background in East Gwillimbury. More active planning, resource-sharing and promotion can be

accomplished in a unified strategic community approach to maximize these valuable assets.

The Town espouses the need for safety in provision of services and therefore, use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) has been featured through the study along with the Project for People Spaces “placemaking” philosophies that strive to makes places and spaces so attractive, that people will be drawn to activity time and time again.

## Recreation Facilities

The existing inventory of recreation facilities has serviced the Town well and can be seen as continuing to fulfill the capability of servicing the existing and short-term new population well. However in comparison with other local municipalities, East Gwillimbury is lagging in provision of indoor space on a per square foot per capita basis. With the doubling of population expected, careful consideration of facility requirements is in order. The new Health and Active Living Plaza (HALP) centre is in the planning stages and the design and construction of the facility will need to ensure that scope and scale of the facility will be appropriate against both capital and operating fiscal resources.

As well, in combination with this new central, large facility providing new services such as aquatics, for the first time within the Town, the mix of existing community centres and halls should also receive strategic resource inputs at the correct times in their life cycles. In particular, Holland Landing Community Centre, East Gwillimbury Sports Complex and Mount Albert Community Centres require expansion and enhancement to meet new demands within their defined service areas. As well, later in the study cycle, Ross Family Complex will require a feasibility study and potentially an updated redevelopment plan to continue to maintain this capital asset and identify options to expand and enhance service delivery over time.

The East Gwillimbury Sports Complex and grounds offer opportunities for expansion at the correct time when ice pad requirements warrants. Plans should be considered to utilize the efficiencies of existing servicing, parking capacity at the Sports Complex to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> arena and possible rough-in of a 4<sup>th</sup> arena that maybe required over time.

The community halls are a valuable asset to East Gwillimbury given the geographic dispersion of its hamlets and particularly at North Union and to a lesser extent at River Drive where these halls could continue to serve valuable community roles ranging from child care to community rentals for showers, parties, community events and the like. The CPRC should place renewed efforts at ensuring that every potential hour of use can be made from these spaces so that geographic and service advantages in such locations can be retained.

The Town has provided an extensive and aggressive range of outdoor facilities and should be commended for the innovation and thoughtfulness of the current inventory. The three new splash pad facilities are strategically placed to advantage at Harvest Hills Park, at Holland Landing Community Centre and at the Ross Family Complex. The Town acquisition of Mount Albert Lions Park was critical to satisfying

the growing need for soccer facilities. The provision of both a BMX and Mountain bike facilities along with a planned skateboard parks is appropriate and timely for the needs of a new active generation of youth that seek opportunities beyond traditional sports.

The Town should also continue to build on such efforts at making facilities more pleasant places to “play and stay” with increased attention to client amenities such as food and refreshments and making areas more comfortable. A great example of how indoor “placemaking” can be accomplished is represented by the beautiful “Eco Feature” window to a rainwater harvested outdoor garden space visible from with the Sports Complex lobby and the helpful customer service area and digital information boards at that location. The Town has done a good job with respect to meeting AODA requirements for required accessibility by challenged populations.

## Parks and Trails

East Gwillimbury has set in place a rigorous park classification system within its Official Plan, yielding an overall parkland provision ratio of 3.164 Ha/1000 population against a stated goal in the Official Plan of 4.0 Ha/1000. This involves a current inventory of 76.13 Ha (188.16 acres) which will, with current development plans, add another 29.07 Ha to create a total inventory of 105.20 hectares. The current level of development activity in fact, lowers the current overall active parkland yield from 3.164 Ha/1000 to 2.334 Ha/1000.

Current development processes and legislation limit the amount of active parkland that can be procured and the study features alternative land acquisition strategies. A result of this dynamic, the Town will need to acquire additional active parkland by 2028 to satisfy requirements at the larger-scale **Town Park** and **Community Park** classification levels.

If the Town wished to maintain its current provision level of 3.164 Ha/100 at a population of 46,846, an additional **43.05 hectares** would be required to bring the overall active parkland inventory up to 148.25 Ha. This gap can be partially satisfied by using an available \* 8.90 Ha of municipally-owned lands, which are suitable for eventual transfer into active parkland at land within the study period. This action would lower the active parkland requirement to **34.05 Ha**. As well, the current 2018 development charges review study may yield additional dedication of active parkland against this challenge. A total inventory of 187.38 Ha of active parkland or **additional 82.18 Ha** would be required to meet the 4.0 Ha/1000 target established in the East Gwillimbury Official Plan.

The current development plans do meet park classification standards at the Parkette and Neighbourhood levels which most closely relate to resident needs in neighbourhood subdivisions; it is the larger scale Town Park and Community Park classifications which will be challenging to satisfy.

One of the most revealing results of the community survey involved how much East Gwillimbury citizens love their trails. Over 88% of residents indicated their desire to use outdoor trails as the 1<sup>st</sup> priority for outdoor activity options. The Town has done an admirable job in setting forth a solid framework for trails with the 2012 Active



Transportation and Trails Master Plan and has steadily invested each year in trail expansions and construction of bridges to maintain trail continuity. As well, the solid partnership with the Region of York has produced excellent results with regard to several key linkages and trails best exemplified by; the dedicated cycling lanes at 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession, pedestrian/cycling trails, boardwalk and bridge at 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and the Nokiidaa Trail extending to a trailhead and parking facility at Mount Albert Road and Old Yonge Street.

In both park and trail provision, some additional attention to design and details of implementation could yield significant results. Introduction of more “people-based” amenities such as trail-head gathering spots at key trail linkages would encourage more trail use and social activity by being a “beacon” to more linked experiences which could involve more lookouts, more use of food and landscaped gardens along routes and even potential leash-free zones along linear park locations.

The Town has overcome the challenges of significant rolling topography and made these features and access to the Holland River water views and potentially the River Drive canal available to residents. The multi-use trail along Green Lane represents a properly designed, safe active transportation option and along with other active transportation plans, would offer safer and more expedient ways to get to the community amenities such as the GO Station, community centres, schools and even travel to other hamlets within East Gwillimbury.

## **Summary**

The Town is poised to increase its scope and range of municipal services to service a more digitally-connected and time-challenged population. The increased stresses of modern society, intensification of land use, residents with new homes and many within the population having increased travel times for work including travel by public transit can be offset by an ability to access and enjoy nearby parkland and trail connections, to enjoy tranquility and outdoor peacefulness along with greater ranges of activities. These activities would include upgraded service choices at existing Community Centre and Library locations or at the new planned Health & Active Living Plaza facility including such indoor and outdoor amenities such as a skate park, public gathering space, new large gym and walking track or even restful soaking in a warm whirlpool/therapy pool or laps in the main aquatic facility.

Town staff will continue with focused efforts in understanding and meeting resident leisure needs and to build meaningful partnerships carrying out the Department Mission with individuals, groups and the many caring and responsive organizations and agencies within the Town.

## Introduction

The Town of East Gwillimbury is a vibrant, progressive community that will be undergoing significant population growth due to development pressures. This growth could result in resident demands for an enhanced program, service and facility offering inclusive of an affluent, knowledgeable and culturally diverse population base.

The Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department plays a key role in building and maintaining high quality of life standard through provision and management of parks and recreation facilities, recreation programs and services and working with community groups and stakeholders. The municipality continues to support the notion that parks, facilities and recreation are a vital component in maintaining an attractive place to live, and is committed to working with community partners in their delivery of services.

To ensure that future services and facilities reflect the needs of its residents a comprehensive Health and Active Living Master Planning process was undertaken in the spring of 2017 to identify parks and recreation issues, challenges and opportunities in the communities of Holland Landing, Sharon, Mount Albert, and Queensville.

The results of the process has provided insights and solutions related to the impacts of rapid population growth, in the parks, facility, recreation, cultural and program needs, of a new and diverse population base. As the population increases and diversifies, and as needs and desires continue to build, moving from a “small town” to a “larger town” will impact the manner in which the department approaches planning service and facility delivery.

A balanced approach of delivery, from a town-wide and hamlet perspective, will have to be taken into consideration to ensure that resources are allocated according to need and the sequencing of population growth. Additionally, due to the diversification of the population, preservation of local culture and heritage and “building community” will become even more important in the future. Creating experiences where people can participate and socialize will be increasingly important.

The plan shows ways that the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department can “pull” people in rather than “pushing” people to participate by providing spaces, places and experiences that engage residents in healthy activities and interaction with others.

Of significant importance has been the research and development of a Health and Active Living Strategy that will provide an anchor point for all department program and facility decisions.

Taking a more holistic approach will enhance current role to that of a service arranger.

The introduction of this concept clearly indicates that the CPRC Department, while maintaining its core business of parks, recreation and cultural programs and facilities, will ensure that a variety of convenient and complimentary social and health services are also available to the residents through strategic partnerships.

It is clear from the research that Canadians' health is at a stage where considerable efforts need to be taken to provide opportunities for people to make healthy life choices. This involves a balanced, holistic approach to service delivery from physical, social, emotional and spiritual perspectives. Through this approach, the department will play a key role in influencing "preventative health behavior" in alignment with others, to reduce the dependence of people on the health system to remain healthy.

Other research has shown that there are trends in population make up that East Gwillimbury can expect to have happen which means services will need to be relevant and attractive to the psychographics<sup>1</sup> of the target market.

### Enhanced Approach

The strategy that has been developed illustrates how to integrate healthy and active living opportunities into decision making, and the involvement of other community partners in things like the proposed Health and Active Living Plaza (HALP) which will be different from a traditional community centre and deliver balanced, need-based services.

Data will continue to be important in the future. A new way of measuring the impact that the CPRC Department and partners have on changing someone's life will be the new norm. Processes and procedures to collect and analyze the data can be integrated with decision making and will continue to be an increasingly important function of staff. This all leads to a new way of doing business, one that starts on the front operating lines, and progresses through management to Council will require continual education and process improvement. Promotion of this new way of operating and involving residents and community partners in creating new approaches to a holistic service delivery will be essential.

The fundamental elements of the enhanced approach include:

### Balanced Services

- Because of rapid growth and changing make up, being continually aware of how the community is changing can be a priority.
- Community building will be increasingly important and every decision that is made for service/facility delivery requires components that encourage this, like facilitating community engagement in decisions, initiating socialization opportunities and co-programming for the family.
- The new ward system will have growing pains, so it will be important to ensure that program, service and facility development is "fairly" spread amongst the hamlets, while at same time creating a sense of "town".
- The culture and heritage of the town and in small hamlets is important to preserve in spite of the expected growth, so the CPRC Department can play a leadership role in strengthening existing Community Centre Committees to ensure local services and facilities continue to meet the needs of past, existing and future residents.

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<sup>1</sup> Psychographics – study of customers in relation to their opinions, interests and emotions.

- While ethnic diversity in population make-up is expected, there are ways to engage with the community that respects their traditions along with integrating people within the larger community.
- Expectation management will be of primary importance, particularly if new residents have moved from larger municipalities where there were high caliber services and facilities.

### Small Town to a Big Town

- The Town has an opportunity to be seen not as a “place in the burbs” rather a leader in establishing places and opportunities where people can make healthy life choices, regardless of physical condition, emotional health, spiritual beliefs or social background or status. A dedicated promotional campaign to continue to brand the Town as Green (>70% Green pre and post development) Healthy and Active will continue to differentiate East Gwillimbury and continue to promote and build upon the quality of life for its residents.
- Recognizing the Town has enjoyed a long history of stability and a certain level of service that provides a base-line of opportunities, human resources and work processes that have served the citizens well.
- Interdepartmental relationships have been informal, but effective and engagement with the community has been stable and predictable and should continue.
- Predicting what the target market will be and who it will be comprised of will be a moving target, ebbing and flowing with the type of people that are moving to the area. Needs assessment processes that continually evolve will be essential to continue to be able to “understand” what is happening in the community and what needs to change to keep up.
- Change will be continual from small town thinking to big town thinking, so staff and Councillor capacity building will be needed in the future. Understanding and coping with added pressures of changing operating processes and procedures must become an everyday practice in order to continue to be effective.
- Concentration of “community building” and strengthening of community volunteers will be essential as the need for services expands and resources are stretched.
- Organizational structure, operating processes and procedures, and the significance of cross discipline teams will need to continue to build the CPRC Department brand, and maintaining high performance standards will be essential in achieving consistent high quality results and attracting capable and dynamic staff.
- Risk taking will be an integral ingredient to break out of the mode of traditional small town programming and community engagement. Being entrepreneurial in the approach to service and facility provision will not only generate enthusiasm but will also establish the CPRC Department as a leader in the sector.

### Partnerships and Other Forms of Collaboration

- Growth obviously brings added costs to operations and more complexities in the ways to ensure affordability and access to services continues. It will change the internal dynamics of the Town, that is, the ways departments work together to plan and deliver services. Going forward, partnerships will continue to be important to extend and maximize already stretched resources.
- Sponsorships and naming rights along with other revenue generating arrangements will not only result in offsetting operational costs, but also strengthen ties to the corporate community and integrate them with community building initiatives.
- Council Committees play a valuable role in linking the Town administration with what it is actually going on in the community and if utilized effectively can provide a formal check-in point for monitoring relevance of town decisions regarding what is needed in the community.
- The Master Plan identifies ways that the CPRC Department can increase its involvement with Council committees, external partners (social service groups, private enterprise) and ways other departments could be involved with the work of the CPRC Department.

### Importance of Data

- Evidence based decision making will become the new norm, tied to defining the target market, focusing resources on it, and investing resources accordingly.
- The Master Plan not only focuses on a need to collect the data, but also for allocating staff resources to be able to effectively analyze and interpret the data as well as being able to apply it in the decision making process.
- Councillors will expect good information so that they can make the decisions that are most positive and favourable for residents. Good information will ensure that Council can see the reasons for and the benefits of the services and facilities being proposed and why they should invest in the solutions proposed.

### Consulting Team Project Vision and Mission

**Vision:** A viable and innovative sustainable Health and Active Living Plan for the Town of East Gwillimbury that meets the needs of key users and other stakeholders.

**Mission:** DAC Inc. will develop a Health and Active Living Plan through consultation with residents and key stakeholders, an assessment of current conditions, and the identification of new opportunities for delivering innovative programs, services and facilities that inspire residents to live active and healthy lifestyles.

In addition the Consulting Team used the following questions to help position input and review methodology and discussions with key stakeholders.

1. What guides what services are provided (versus not)? How have decisions such as BMX, skate parks been made in the past?
2. A high level of communication with residents is needed as well as formal input, and leveraging community engagement and volunteerism. Is this sustainable with more growth and new residents?
3. How can services and facilities be developed in the future to link the four hamlets to each other to build on a greater sense of community, avoid duplication of services, and increasing efficiency and effectiveness while at the same time respecting the uniqueness of each?
4. What groups or organizations would you identify as key stakeholders that have a strong vested interest in Healthy Active Living that could be considered potential champions in the implementation of this strategy?
5. What are the current communication methods in place with key stakeholders and service providers, and how is social media being used?
6. Population growth will increase considerably in the next five to seven years. What impact will this have on current service and facility provision and what strategies need to be in place to ensure residents can fulfill a healthy and active lifestyle?
7. How will we propose the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department measure the impact they are having in people's lives (difference they are making)?

### Terms of Reference

In early 2017, Town of EG issued an RFP for an update of the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan, completed in 2009. Process was to be overseen by a Steering Committee comprised of CPRC staff.

The planning process was to engage the public, businesses, elected officials, staff, and other key stakeholders in identifying needs and desires. The resultant plan is to outline ways to create an integrated, sustainable service environment in which residents can pursue healthy and active lifestyles that is affordable and implementable in line with town resources.

### The Components of the Health and Active Living Plan

Develop a plan that outlines the philosophical framework, strategic directions, and related strategies that the Town will take in partnership with residents, community service partners and other key stakeholders to create a healthy and active community. It is to enhance the existing 2009 plan and to define the pre-requisites and philosophies of healthy community building, anticipate needs of existing and newly located residents, propose recommendations for innovative program, service and facility delivery and the strategic direction for integrating the Health and Active Living philosophy in the planning and decision making processes.

The plan is to address the challenges of not only providing a town-wide vision, but also meet needs of those in the communities of Sharon, Queensville, Mount Albert and Holland Landing, and provide insights and solutions related to the impacts of rapid population growth, anticipate the parks, recreation and cultural needs of a new and diverse population base.

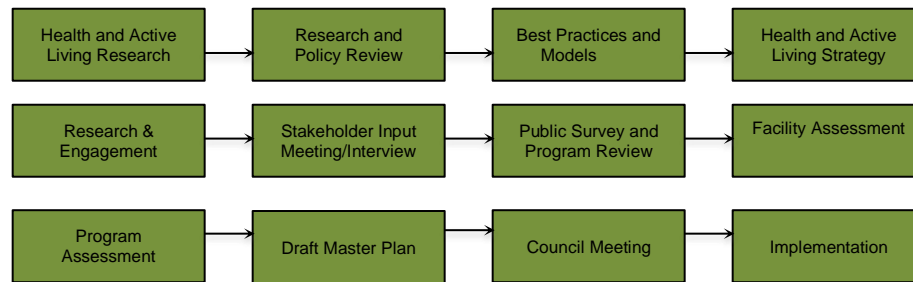
### Concepts Integral to the Planning Process

- Taking an innovative approach to substantiating future services and facilities through assessment and analysis of existing and future residents.
- Blending existing community values and traditions with those of larger and more diverse population base.
- Defining the concept of Health and Active Living and cataloguing innovative approaches other agencies and organizations take to create opportunities for Health and Active Living.
- Creating a Health and Active Living operating philosophy as the anchor point for all CPRC decision making that can be easily understood by those with an interest in parks and recreation services.
- Identifying opportunities for partnerships with other social, health and community service organizations to deliver a variety of community services.
- Create a direct link to CPRA Pathways to Wellbeing Framework.
- Financial modeling linked to recommendations and identifies future revenue generating ways to offset the costs of operation.

### Planning Process

1. Health and Active Living Strategy
  - a) Meeting with Steering Committee, best practices, policy and program research in consultation with stakeholders in health, recreation and social service sectors, health and social service trends analysis.
2. Research and Community Engagement
  - a) Document and research review and analysis, researching sector trends, consultations with community groups, residents and agencies, sport groups and service clubs, agencies, and an electronic survey and point of contact personal survey completion.
  - b) Mayor and Councillor, CAO/General Manager interviews, CPRC Department staff interviews and Branch input meetings.
  - c) Program review and analysis, competitive analysis of programs in adjacent municipalities, sector trends, and performance measurement linked to CPRA Framework.
  - d) Assessment of indoor and outdoor facilities condition, service partnerships, and the same for trails, parks, sport fields and natural areas.
  - e) Evaluation of existing relationships with other facility providers like the school boards, conservation authority, and Region of York, etc.
  - f) Review of current and preferred facility provision standards and recommendations to ensure sufficient numbers and sizes of parkland and facilities are in place as the population increases.
  - g) A challenges and opportunities report to identify key areas that could be addressed in the final plan.
  - h) Financial modeling linked to building permits and rates of residential occupancy, and Development Charge and tax revenue inflows.
  - i) Implementation Plan identifying short (1-3 year), medium (4-7 years) and longer term (8-10 years) priorities tied to recommendations and financial modeling.
3. Health and Active Living Plan Report

The final plan with the results of input, analysis and recommendations to integrate Health and Active Living into day-to-day operational and longer term program and facility planning decisions and the financial considerations to ensure sustainability over the longer term.



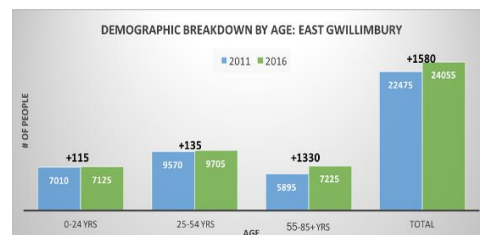
## Community Profile

### Population – Past and Future Growth

Understanding the composition of the population and ages within the population is crucial to determining the types and level of service and facility provision. According to Census Canada information, the population in East Gwillimbury is highly dispersed in rural areas with larger concentrations in the hamlets of Holland Landing to the west, Sharon to the south, Queensville in the north/central, and Mount Albert in the East.

The table that follows shows that between 2011 and 2016 there was a population increase of 1.6% in 0-24years, 1.4% in 25-54 years, and a substantial increase of 22.5% in 55-85+ years in the Town of East Gwillimbury, with a total population increase of about 7%.<sup>2</sup>

There are slightly more 25-54 year olds than the other two age groups, and of particular note is the moderate increases in the 0-24 and the 25–54 year age levels, as compared to a significant growth increase in the 55-85+ age group.



The table that follows shows the number of people living in East Gwillimbury in 2016 and a forecasted population based on the York Durham Sewer Capacity of 46,846 by 2028. Growth will take place through the policies of the official plan and the subdivision approval process.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Statistics Canada - 2016 Census. Catalogue Number 98-400-X2016005. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released June 27 2012.



Hamlet	2016 Population	New Residents 2028	New Growth Total
River Drive/N.	4,070 of 24,055 Total	No new residents 4,070	4,070 (9.5%)
Harvest Hills and Holland Landing	7,200 of 24,055 Total	5,793	12,993 (30.5%)
Sharon and Queensville	4,510 of 24,055 Total	11,469 Total of 15,979	15,979 (37.5%)
Mount Albert	8,275 of 24,055 Total	1,356 Total of 9,631	9,631 (22.5)
Total Town of East Gwillimbury			42,673

East Gwillimbury is expected to double by 2028 and it is difficult to determine the age composition of the population, as this will depend on the types of dwellings that are built and related costs, factors that ultimately determine the types of people likely to take residency in the Town.

To establish a “planning baseline” of information, a similar review was made of surrounding municipalities (Whitchurch Stouffville, Newmarket, Aurora, Georgina), all of which have experienced considerable and rapid growth over the last five years. Whitchurch Stouffville experienced major growth in all three age categories, while the other three generally had modest increases and in some cases, decreases in the age range of 0-54 years. However, all had significant increases in the 55+ population, an overall average of 23%.

It is a known fact that growth will occur in all three age groups, but sufficient background is not available to accurately assess where the most growth will occur. Whitchurch Stouffville population changes in past growth period and continued recent growth surge (about 21%), provide a relative starting point for analysis of potential growth in East Gwillimbury.

#### Implications for East Gwillimbury

Program, service and facility planning can evolve as the population increases and with expected older population concentration, decision makers will have to be mindful of the types of programs offered, the time or day they are offered, and the price of programs and events.

Extrapolating the population shifts to what could happen in East Gwillimbury during periods of escalated growth provides a realistic starting point to begin the development of a long-term service framework. The new growth generates considerable Development Charge revenue that will be fundamentally important to being able to adequately service the facility needs of the new population. Tax revenues also will increase creating other options for ongoing operational funding.

#### Median After-Tax Income of Households 2015

After-tax income is a key decision factor in a person’s choices of parks and recreation activities. Generally speaking larger incomes increase a person’s ability to participate, which may increase expectations for a higher level of service.

The table to the right shows that 14.9% of households in East Gwillimbury have a median after-tax income of \$100,000 or more, only W/S has a greater percentage (15.2%). Newmarket is at 13.8% and Georgina at 12.6%, and have the highest percentage of households making \$29,999 or less after-tax-income. All municipalities have between 1.3% and 2.0% of the current population with an income under \$10,000.

Income Level	EG	Nmkt.	WS	Aurora	Geor.
Under \$5,000	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.7%	1.0%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	2.3%	4.1%	2.8%	3.2%	5.0%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	5.0%	6.3%	4.6%	5.0%	7.5%
\$30,000 to \$59,999	18.2%	21.5%	19.9%	19.0%	25.8%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	29.2%	28.1%	29.6%	27.2%	32.3%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	14.9%	13.8%	15.2%	13.5%	12.6%
\$125,000 and over	27.3%	24.2%	26.3%	30.3%	14.3%

### Implications for East Gwillimbury

The data shows that disposable income will be an influencer in residents’ decisions to participate. The cost of living in East Gwillimbury based on current housing prices, is considerably high in relationship to other adjoining municipalities, which in all likelihood means that a considerable amount of after-tax income may be needed for debt servicing and other housing operating costs.

Low income families (3.8% under \$20,000) will likely require some form of assistance in order to participate, ideally through direct fee subsidies from social service partners, Youth and Community Initiatives Fund or the CPRC operating budget.

A high number of households in East Gwillimbury have a median after-tax income of \$100,000 or more, therefore likely will have the ability to be able to pay to participate and fees could be set accordingly.

If seeking to attract residents from neighbouring municipalities, decision-makers need to be mindful of pricing – Newmarket and Georgina have the highest percentage of lower-income family households, making less than \$30,000 (Newmarket 12.4%, Georgina 14.8%). Although, the other municipalities have a similar ratio of higher after-tax income which may offset those in the lower percentage level.

### Education Attainment

Education can have an impact on leisure participation. The higher the education an individual has the more likely they will participate in recreation. Those who have a lower level of education, could be unemployed or underemployed and as a result, will lack both the freedom and disposable income required to take part in community recreation and leisure activities and events.<sup>3</sup> The table following illustrates the

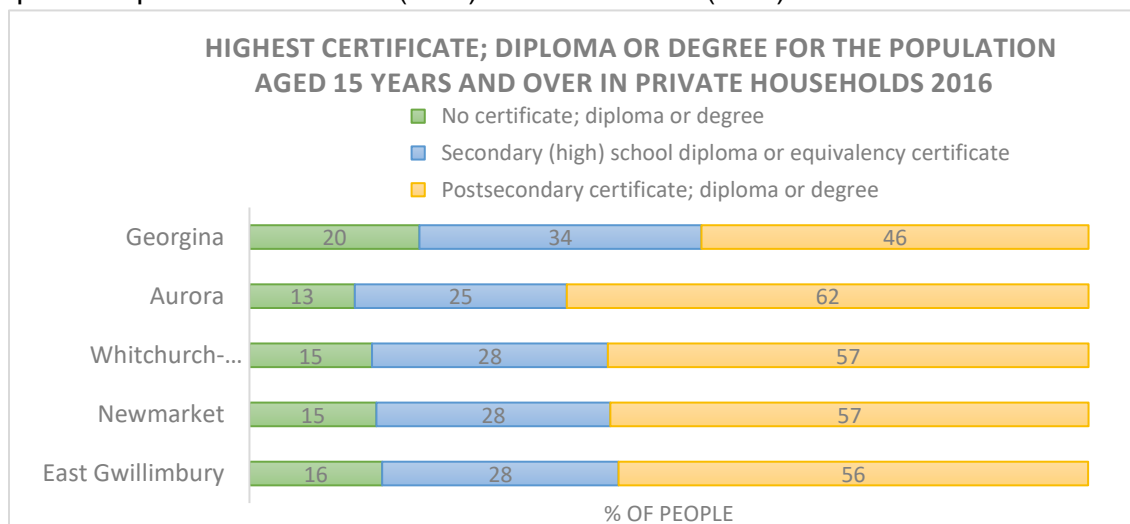
<sup>3</sup> Stodolska, Monika. Race, Ethnicity, and Leisure. Human Kinetics 2013.

changes in attainment of educational certificates of the East Gwillimbury population between 2011 and 2016.

	Attainment (%) 2011	Attainment (%) 2016	% Change
<b>Secondary (High) School Diploma Or Equivalency Certificate</b>	25%	28%	3% Increase
<b>Postsecondary Certificate; Diploma Or Degree</b>	62%	56%	6% Increase

It is of interest to compare certificate, diploma and degree attainment in neighbouring municipalities to gain insights to what may be occurring in the future as the Town of East Gwillimbury continues to grow.

The following table<sup>4</sup> shows that East Gwillimbury is on a par with Aurora, Whitchurch Stouffville and Newmarket with respect to education attainment. Georgina has the lowest percentage (46%) of individuals with a post-secondary certificate, while also having the highest percentage of individuals with only a high school diploma/equivalent certificate (34%) or no certificate (20%).



### Implications for East Gwillimbury

As the population increased in each of the surrounding municipalities there was a downward trend in the percentage of residents with post-secondary education. This should be noted by CPRC decision-makers, as the literature suggests that leisure and recreation participation is positively correlated with higher levels of educational attainment.

While current higher levels of education indicate more potential for participation, there will be an ongoing need to monitor education attainment in new residents to ensure that the trends do not change. Any change will necessitate offsetting changes in program delivery.

<sup>4</sup> 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

There will continue to be a need to provide opportunities for learning, self-improvement and enhancement of leisure understanding in residents with no certificate, diploma or degree.

### Employment

Research has shown that a greater number of professional occupations taking place in an office setting were generally more likely to participate in recreation activities, compared to more labour intensive industries that require more physical activity at work.<sup>5</sup>

The table<sup>6</sup> below shows of those working in East Gwillimbury, as reported by Statistics Canada, there has been a 13% decrease between 2011 and 2016 in those working in Natural and Applied Sciences Field, an employment sector that provides strong middle-class wages and salaries. Sales/service occupations have decreased slightly as have Business, Finance and Administration. In the surrounding municipalities the occupation statistics are closely aligned with East Gwillimbury.

Type of Occupations	2011	2016	% Change
Management	1850	1990	7.6% +
Business; Finance And Administration	2375	2360	0.6 -
Natural And Applied Sciences And Related	940	815	13% -
Healthcare	610	680	11.5% +
Education; Law/Social; Community & Gov't.	1580	1600	1.3% +
Art; Culture; Recreation And Sport	N/A	475	N/A
Sales And Service Occupations	2865	2705	5.6% -
Trades; Transport & Operator Related Occupations	2115	2090	1.2% -
Nat. Resources; Agriculture And Related Production	N/A	390	N/A
Manufacturing And Utilities	1030	465	55.0% -

### Location of Work

The Town of East Gwillimbury is not unlike other York Region municipalities with a high rate of residents spending 30 minutes or more commuting to work. 54% of residents commute, lower than Whitchurch Stouffville (61%), Georgina (60%), and Aurora (57%). Newmarket is lowest at 50%. The majority of the population in 2016 used a car, truck or a van (as a driver) as compared to only 705 were a passenger in these vehicles, 550 used public transit, 180 walked, 20 used a bicycle, and 100 had other ways to get to work.

### Implications for East Gwillimbury

There has been an increase (11.5%) in residents working in the healthcare sector, and the high rate of shiftwork will affect program and event scheduling. Decreases in the manufacturing and utility sector (55%) could suggest a reduction in disposable income for low-skilled workers who need to seek employment in less stable and/or lucrative sectors. More people with low income will affect fees and charges and accessibility to some programming.

<sup>5</sup> National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics, Motivators and Constraints to Participation 2007.

<sup>6</sup> 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011, 99-004-XWE2011001.

Commuting greatly reduces the ability to participate in recreation and leisure pursuits, either formally or informally planned. The Town will need to adjust program days, and start/end times to allow for commuters to integrate participation into already busy schedules. More informal opportunities for exercise, enjoying nature and the outdoors could be incorporated into trail and facility design, extended seasons for trails and open space areas.

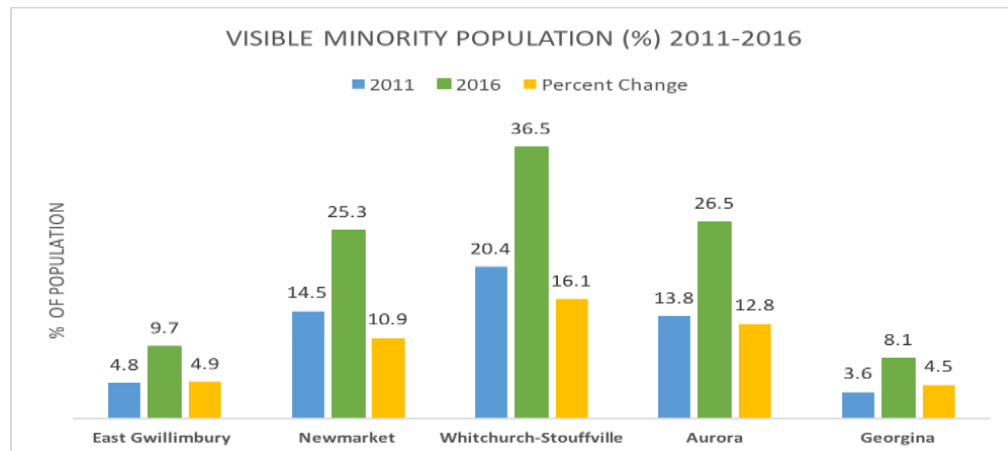
Active Transportation planning and policies could be adjusted/expanded to encourage people to get out of their cars hike or cycle. Connectivity between parks, facilities and communities by extending trails and sidewalk/roadway lanes will continue to facilitate more activity.

### Ethnicity

The table<sup>7</sup> below shows the diversity in non-official language spoken in the home in East Gwillimbury and Newmarket (a municipality that has gone through similar rapid growth) and changes over the past 5 years.

EG	2011	2016	Newmarket	2011	2016
1 <sup>ST</sup>	Spanish (85)	Russian (230)	1 <sup>ST</sup>	Russian (710)	Mandarin (1925)
2 <sup>ND</sup>	Cantonese (60)	Mandarin (165)	2 <sup>ND</sup>	Spanish (435)	Russian (1320)
3 <sup>RD</sup>	Russian (60)	Cantonese (130)	3 <sup>RD</sup>	Chinese (Unspecified) (345)	Farsi/Persian (1195)
4 <sup>TH</sup>	Chinese (Unspecified) (35)	Farsi/Persian (115)	4 <sup>TH</sup>	Mandarin (255)	Cantonese (1155)
5 <sup>TH</sup>	Italian & Polish (30)	Spanish (90)	5 <sup>TH</sup>	Farsi/Persian (230)	Spanish (520)

Visible minorities comprise about 10% of the current East Gwillimbury population. It is expected that the visible minority population will continue to change exponentially with the rate of population growth. Between 2011 and 2016 in the surrounding municipalities, also having experienced growth these populations have changed as outlined in the following table<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> 2016 Census. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-316-x2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017

<sup>8</sup> 2016 Census. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-316-x2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

### **Implications for East Gwillimbury**

East Gwillimbury’s non-official language spoken at home is tracking nearly identical to Newmarket and Whitchurch Stouffville – providing evidence for the theory of a south to north linear migration of residents. East Gwillimbury saw the second largest growth in the number of residents speaking a non-official language in the household – 170% increase between 2011-2016.

Past experience in York Region has shown that immigration will continue to grow, and East Gwillimbury will also likely become more diverse. This will require in some cases a re-design, and/or realignment of park and facility planning and enhancement in program delivery. Accessibility and adaptation to cultural customs and traditions will continue to impact design, and New Canadians will influence new ways of communication.

### **Psychographics of East Gwillimbury**

Analyzing the demographics of East Gwillimbury in the short and longer term, as the population increases, will be critically important in the service and facility planning and budgeting process. As important will be the profiling of residents in relationship to country of origin and/or cultural background as the population changes. This profiling should be done in the context of defining the psychographics of this target market.

Based on the analysis of the 2011 and 2016 Census, it can be expected that persons of Chinese, South Asian, and Latino (Mexican American) backgrounds will be the predominant visible minority groups in East Gwillimbury as the community grows.

*The following abbreviated profiles have been prepared to aid in the targeting of program content and facility features during the implementation of this plan. Additional detail and sources of information references are contained in the original document authored by Researcher Michael Pahor, a contract staff member of the Town of East Gwillimbury.*

#### **Chinese**

Quick Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2013 – Chinese Canadian households reported to have a five per cent growth in consumer spending, compared to two per cent for the average Canadian.</li> <li>2016 – Second largest visible minority population in Canada (20.5% of the visible min. population).</li> </ul>
Attitude/Behaviour Towards Rec./Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditionally Chinese society places a high value on work, less on leisure time.</li> <li>Enjoyment of leisure time is associated with a sense of guilt.</li> <li>Chinese Canadian youth express less satisfaction with their leisure, and less value on it.</li> <li>Older adult Chinese woman place high value on the traditional role of wife, mother, grandmother, and daughter and limited value on leisure, taking care of children/grandchildren as forms of leisure.</li> </ul>
Leisure Needs and Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in leisure activities that they are familiar with prior to immigration - passive leisure.</li> <li>Older adults find enjoyment in passive leisure activities such as mah-jong, watching television, walking, reading, gardening, sewing.</li> <li>Passive leisure is also enjoyed by younger Chinese populations.</li> <li>Swimming and Tai Chi are popular forms of physical exercise.</li> </ul>
Leisure Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited understanding of the English language.</li> <li>Discrimination and perceived discrimination.</li> <li>Physical activity is constrained by traditional Chinese culture, as physical strength is often associated with poor intellectual capacity – “<i>Strong limbs, simple mind.</i>”</li> </ul>

## South Asian

Quick Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Asia – Includes the following nations: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.</li> <li>2016 – Largest visible minority group in Canada 5.6% of the entire Canadian population.</li> </ul>
Attitude/Behaviour Towards Rec./Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A case-control study found that South Asians engaged in significantly less physical activity.</li> <li>Women are largely responsible for caring for family, thus have little time for leisure and recreation.</li> <li>Recreation and physical activities do not often include the entire family.</li> <li>Compared to total Canadian youth population, South Asian youth were less likely to participate in arts and music and sports and recreation.</li> </ul>
Leisure Needs and Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure is used as a means for personal identity development by helping bridge Canadian and South Asian Culture. Example of bridging the cultures – 61% of South Asians surveyed in 2010 considered themselves hockey fans, it being a conduit for understanding Canadian culture.</li> <li>Facilities that are sensitive to South Asian culture, women only private from men.</li> <li>South Asian youth were less likely to participate in arts and music and sports and recreation.</li> </ul>
Leisure Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Asian women have reported to not have the motivation to take part in physical activity.</li> <li>Lack of confidence and lack of time have also been highlighted as constraints.</li> <li>The most widely reported a lack of female only facilities.</li> <li>Dress codes for Muslim women are barriers to community recreation/physical activities.</li> </ul>

## Latino

Quick Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2008-2013 – Latino Canadian household spending growth rates exceeded 100%, compared to 13% for non-visible minority spending.</li> </ul>
Attitude/Behaviour Towards Rec./Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure behavior driven by strong family values, shared experiences and bonding with family.</li> <li>Emphasis on group and family oriented activities where social interaction is of importance.</li> <li>Domestic work/chores are considered leisure activities because of strong family ties.</li> <li>Latinos working in labour industries lean towards passive leisure activities.</li> </ul>
Leisure Needs and Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preference for family oriented social activities – picnicking, relaxing, playing with children.</li> <li>Multi-generational family oriented gatherings are more common than individual/group activities.</li> <li>Preferred outdoor amenities – developed/maintained parks, fire pits, washrooms on site.</li> <li>Community gathering places used to celebrate family events like birthdays and graduations.</li> </ul>
Leisure Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient access to park amenities.</li> <li>Lack of free time, limited social network, limited knowledge of programs and facilities.</li> <li>Discrimination, unwelcoming environment considered an insult to Latino cultures.</li> <li>Socioeconomic status – lack of disposable income, restrict child participation in exclusive programs.</li> </ul>

## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Trends<sup>9</sup>

It is a fact that there has been a decline in physical activity nationwide, that obesity and resultant diseases like diabetes are on the rise, and a substantial number of Canadians still smoke and have high blood pressure, all reasons for concern. External pressures from government policy changes, financial restrictions, and the changing nature of the health care system and communities that are rapidly expanding like East Gwillimbury, creates a sense of urgency, in making sure the proper services and supports are available in the community for those who need them, not only for treatment of illness, but programs to help prevent it.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Index of Wellbeing, 2016 Annual Report University of Waterloo

### What the Data Suggests

The statistical data outlined in this document provides the justification for the CPRC Department extending its traditional role of sport, arts, cultural, physical activity, and general programming, arena, and community centre facilities, parks, trails and open spaces to the broader context of facilitating the creation of an environment that encourages and facilitates healthy active living.

While the CPRC should not try to be “all things to all people”, it is in the unique position of being able to be a “service catalyst” for convenient and complimentary services delivered through a series of partnerships with community organizations, the private sector, agencies and other levels of government to further the holistic health and active living agenda.

Knowing and understanding current and emerging trends that influence programs, services and facilities will ensure that the Town is able to make “informed” decisions on best approaches to addressing community needs. The information following has been selected to provide a “snapshot” of those trends that are the most visible.

### What Canadians Say About Parks and Recreation<sup>10</sup>

The people in Canada place value on parks, recreation and culture services and facilities:

- 98% say it benefits the community and it is an essential service.
- 75% say it helps children and youth lead healthy lifestyles.
- 77% say it is a major factor in crime reduction.
- 93% say it improves health.
- 89% say it boosts social cohesion.

Canada’s population continues to change in ways that will influence public health in the future.

#### Older Adults

- People 65 years old and over represent Canada’s fastest growing age group. This trend is expected to continue for decades.
- In Canada<sup>11</sup>
  - Demographic shifts have brought societal change with implications for health including changes to work, retirement, pensions, families, caregiving and intergenerational relations.
  - At age 65, about one in three Canadians have developed a disability and the likelihood continues to increase with age.
  - Today’s seniors face chronic, mental health and neurological conditions as well as injuries and concerning trends are also evident among younger age groups.

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<sup>10</sup> Framework for Recreation in Canada 2016

<sup>11</sup> The State of Seniors Health Care in Canada September 2016 (CMA) <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/150929/dq150929b-eng.htm>



- In 2014/15 the growth rate of the population aged 65 years and older was 3.5%, approximately four times the growth rate of the total population. The annual growth rate of this age group was accelerated since 2011 when the first members of the baby boom generation (persons born between 1946 & 1965) turned 65. On July 1, 2015, 18.2% of baby boomers were aged 65 years and older.
- In Ontario
  - 14.9% of Ontarians are 65 and older, yet account for nearly half of all health and social care spending (census 2011).
  - Canada and Ontario's older population is set to double over the next twenty years, while its 85 and older population is set to quadruple (Snha, Healthcare Papers 2011).
  - In 2017 for the first time Ontario will be home to more people over 65 than children under 15 years of age.

### Being Active

- From the early 1930's to the mid-1960's, about 60% of Canadians were working age, but the baby boom population increased this proportion to nearly 70%. In the future, this proportion is expected to decline rapidly and the number of working-age Canadians will fall from about 5 for every senior in 2012 to about 2.7 for every senior by 2030.
- The Canadian Parks Council<sup>12</sup> and the Canadian Institute on Well-Being have collected specific data that shows how Canadians spend their time and emphasizes the need to get people more active, including:
  - 90% is the amount of time it is estimated we spend indoors.
  - 90% decline in the radius of play for a nine year old since the 1970's.
  - 43 minutes versus 30 minutes in time spent per day by Canadians playing computer and video games since the late 90's compared to the decrease in the time (minutes) spent socializing.
  - 28% versus 58% proportion of today's students that walk to school compared to their parents.
  - The amount of time spent on social leisure activities has dropped about 3% (3/4 hour per day) since 1998, time spent in arts and culture has dropped considerably since 1994 and Canadians are spending less time volunteering (29%), are taking fewer nights away on vacation, and spend less on recreation and culture (only 4% currently).

Other data from the 2015 Canadian community health survey<sup>13</sup> provides a view of the health condition of Canadians 12+ years from a more clinical point of view.

- 18.1% of Canadians were smokers,
- 17.9% are heavy drinkers,
- 17.7% have high blood pressure,
- 54% of adults and 23.1% of youth 12-17 years are overweight or obese.

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<sup>12</sup> Connecting People With Nature 2014, Canadian Parks Council

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/health/index>

### Governance, Funding and Demand Trends

In addition to the health statistics, it is important to be aware of governance, funding and demand trends that impact the manner in which services and facilities are delivered in the both the short and long term. These trends are best captured in the Active Living Strategy of the Municipality of the District of Chester<sup>14</sup> and have been adapted for use in this Health and Active Living Strategy.

1. Fundamental shifts in the directions regarding health delivery being taken by governments at the federal, provincial, regional and local level.
2. Directions and priorities being increasingly driven by the health agenda.
3. A broadening and more complex set of expectations and responsibilities from politicians and constituents for recreation departments in general.
4. A challenging fiscal environment and other competing interests and the impact on infrastructure.
5. The changing nature of communities/municipalities, particularly with the escalation of new home development.
6. A changing social/demographic landscape as a result of anticipated growth.
7. Increasing influence of technology as both an enabler and competitor for healthy and physically active lifestyle.

### Top Five Recreational Activities in Ontario's Greenbelt

1. Hiking, climbing, and horseback riding – 26% of Ontarians.
2. Canoeing, swimming, and paddle boarding.
3. Cycling and mountain biking.
4. Birding.
5. Fishing.

### Overriding Trends<sup>1516</sup>

The obesity crisis and children's nature deficit (to name only two) and the health trends referred to earlier are significant influences that are causing parks, recreation and culture departments, along with health and social service providers, to re-think approaches to future delivery. It is difficult to imagine how these trends will shape the future makeup of the Town of East Gwillimbury.

Recreation practitioners will need to re-think their roles in helping people be more active and healthy so they can participate, but also in the way in which they collaborate with a broader range of health, social and cultural organizations and institutions. Health and well-being, accessibility, diversity and engaging people in making choices to live healthier and longer, will need to be included in discussions and decision making processes when planning services and facilities.

Technology, is everywhere and is embedded into daily lives and has had a profound impact on society and the health and wellness of all people. It has raised awareness of fitness and nutrition tracking, and increased awareness of overall health, but also has led to sedentary behaviours that can be detrimental to the overall health of

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<sup>14</sup> Active Living Strategy - A Partnership between the Parks Department and the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion (Now Health and Wellness)  
<http://www.chester.ca/explore/active-transportation-living/active-living-strategy/file>

<sup>15</sup> Future Trends in Health and Wellness, NRPA, Z. Bashir, K. May, August 2015;

<sup>16</sup> NRPA's Top 5 Predictions for Parks and Recreation in 2017, R. Dolesh, January 2017

Canadians. This means that people want “real time” information, fitness and wellness opportunities on social platforms, all in one place and quickly accessed. As a result, recreation practitioners need to be effective and relevant communicators, and community health providers of evidence based programs in the context of well-defined policies and strategies and sound measurement principles. Virtual Reality (VR), augmented reality and virtual tours will replace printed programs and brochures that describe program and facility offerings. Drones will be utilized more and more for search and rescue operations, surveillance of illegal activity, and tracking spread of invasive species.

Data-driven analysis will factor in when preparing and justifying budgets and expenditures and will be essential to justify large-scale projects and ongoing service provision.

Conservation of wildlife and landscapes, the natural areas of parks and trails will be one of the most important community-based means of adapting to climate-change conditions. Parks reduce urban temperatures, provide habitats for protecting nature and biodiversity, have landscapes that naturally manage storm water, and are places that preserve clean air and open water.

As the population ages, addressing social, economic, and environmental factors and the conditions in which we live will be partially responsible for why some people are healthier than others. Improving health of residents in East Gwillimbury can be influenced by “creating physical and social environments that promote good health for all”. This can be done through designing places and spaces and participation opportunities based on input from the community, improving facilities in low income neighbourhoods, addressing quality and safety standards and evolving in the context of the health, environmental, socioeconomic, cultural and technological forces and trends.

The concept of sustainability is influencing parks and recreation systems. Recreation centers and park maintenance services require considerable quantities of energy and water resources. In future years many recreation budgets will be focused on remote and automatic heating and air conditioning controls, retro fitting, renovation, and new buildings that include sustainable design. Parks systems will be using more computerized systems to monitor functions like irrigation to control water loss and usage based on weather and evaporation rates and will install remote lighting controls to maximize human resources.

In small communities, the push is often towards efficiency and cost savings, but not leaving a carbon foot print behind is just as important. In most cases sustainable design is justified when seeking Council support and external funding.

Creating connection means enticing people out into the community to take advantage of recreation and leisure opportunities not just by car, but via trails, walkways and bike paths. Walking and biking have emerged as two of the most popular fitness trends. Trail systems offer communities a way to re-create and commute to work without having to start up a car.

Health care workers will increasingly refer patients to evidence-based health activities in parks, there will be more cooperation between parks and recreation agencies and school systems, and more agencies will develop “Rec2Tech” initiatives using things like 3D technology.

### Implications for East Gwillimbury

It is an opportune time for East Gwillimbury to strengthen its capacity to provide meaningful and accessible venues and opportunities for leisure and culture for all its residents. To reverse worsening trends, and narrow the gaps, there needs to be an understanding that well-being is a system of interconnected systems.

*If well-being is positioned at the centre of decision making, there will be the beginning of new possibilities for solutions that cut across those systems. If well-being is at the heart of policy development, then comprehensive, innovative and evidence based policy will emerge that can benefit the community in multiple ways.*

Some of the programs, services and design features that could be considered:

- Build on older adults' interest in being more active, longer.
- Re-focus delivery on creating a superior customer experience centred on being able to make healthy life participation choices and that builds community.
- Build momentum for spontaneous, both formal and informal, programming targeted to multiple age groups based on motivating interests.
- Increase opportunities for cultural shifts in programming directly related to the cultures that exist in the community, bring people together to celebrate diversity.
- Build on the high interest expressed for being active through walking, cycling and hiking in nature and active transportation initiatives.
- Introduce ways to celebrate local culture and heritage while at the same time create ways to integrate ways to also celebrate new cultures.
- Establish partnerships with agencies, organizations, service clubs and businesses to enhance the availability of services and facilities that encourage healthy and active living.
- Longer facility operating hours and flexible scheduling of services.
- Creatively integrate technology into facility design and approach to health and active living.
- Introduce "placemaking" into facility and program design and delivery ensuring public spaces are multi-use and diversified.
- Build places and create special events through which people can celebrate their community diversity.
- Create a mechanism for ensuring that facilities and services are accessible regardless of economic status or ability.

### Community Survey<sup>17</sup>

An on-line survey consisting of 15 questions, was developed and posted on the Town's web site and promoted to the residents through social media, posters and electronic billboards. Staff of the CPRC Department attended community events and programs and completed point of contact surveys through personal interviews using mobile devices.

A total of 721 responses were generated (3.5% of population) which can be considered a reasonable sampling of the population for this type of project. The respondents provided input on the ages, place of residence, program and facility preferences, where people like to spend their time and what they spend it doing, willingness to travel and pay for services, and other recreation interests they may have, etc.

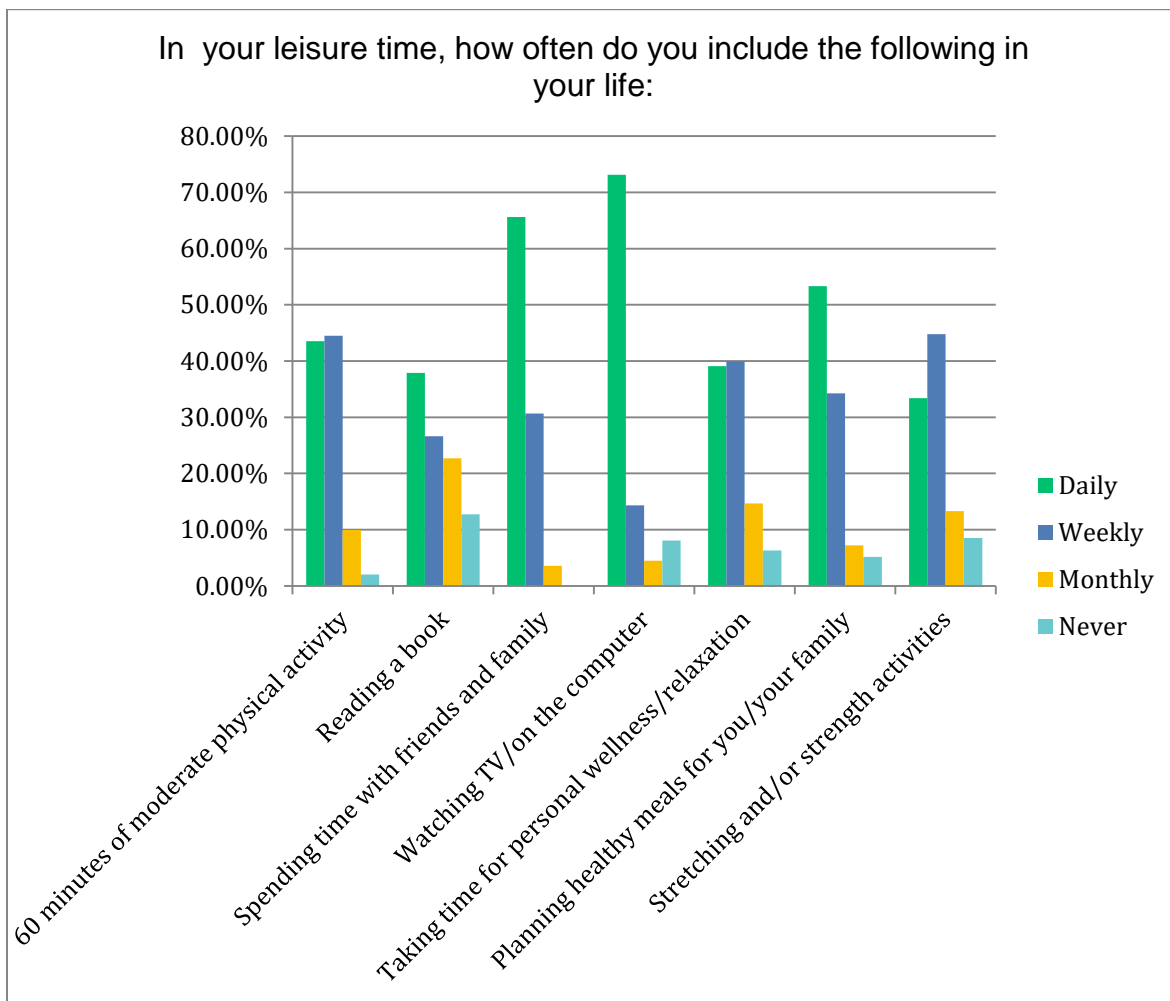
Fifty six percent of respondents were 35 through 55+ years, 20% were 45-54 years with the remaining 23% being between 18 and 34 years. 480 were from East Gwillimbury communities including Holland Landing (211), Mount Albert (173), Sharon and Queensville (96), and the remaining 205 were spread out over Georgina, Newmarket, Innisfil, Toronto and Markham, etc. There was a good sampling of needs, desires and general interests.

### Findings

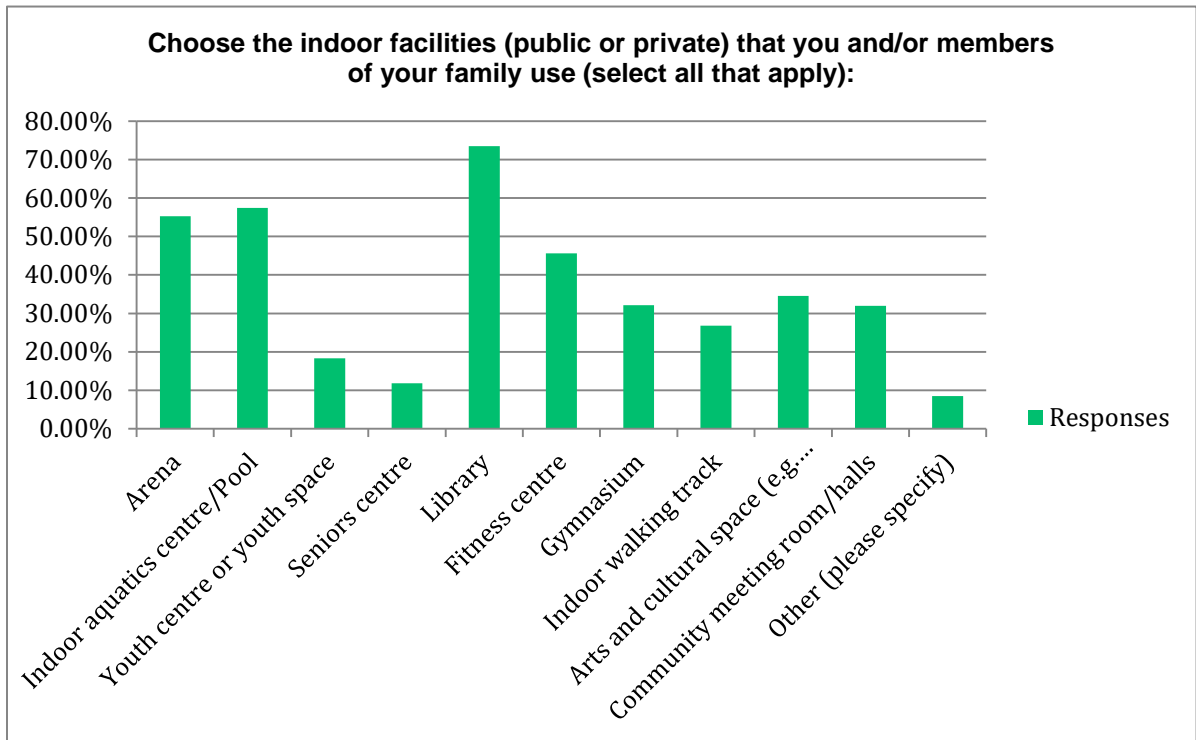
Following are a number of key findings from the survey, a more detailed analysis is contained in the Electronic Survey Results Summary included in the Appendix.

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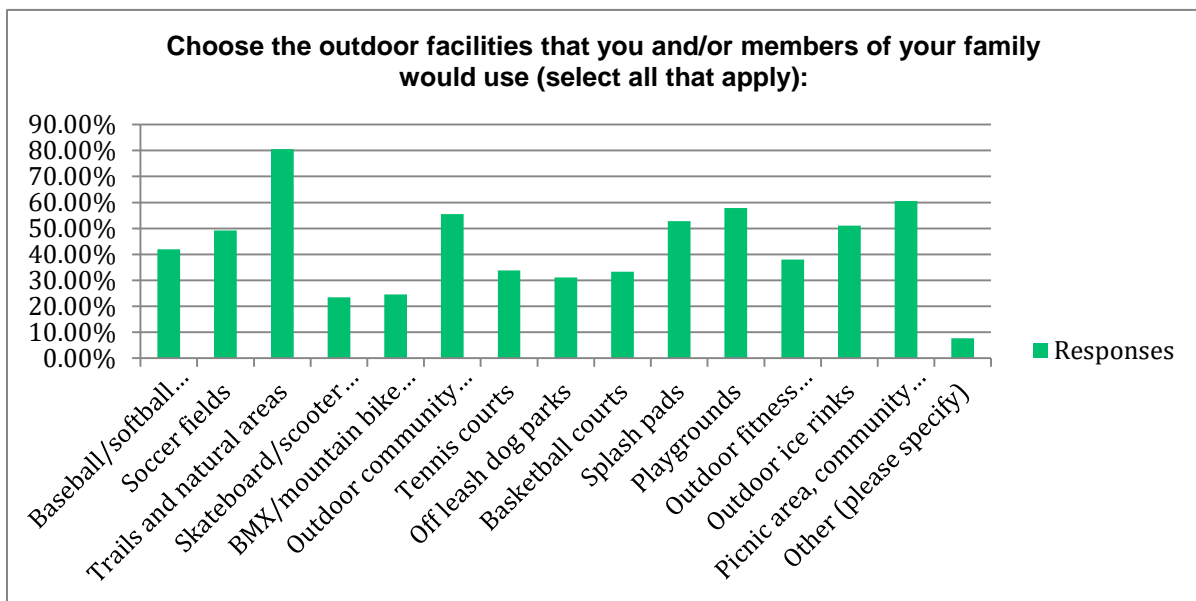
<sup>17</sup> Survey created and administered by the CPRC Department Staff with assistance from DAC Inc.



- Respondents spend a considerable amount of time daily in front of screens and being with family (73%), just over half spend time planning healthy meals, but only about a third spent time being active and took time for personal wellness. Weekly results were similar but there was a significant decrease to 14% of people who watched T.V. or used their computer.
- As the figure above shows, the three most popular activities included outdoor place where people can be active all year (91%), fitness, yoga, exercise, and staying healthy (84%), and Hiking and walking (84%). Activities that received 66% or more responses included arts and cultural events, programs and aquatic activities, and pre-registered programs, drop-in programs and non-competitive sports.
- The three most popular indoor facilities were a library (74%), followed by indoor aquatics/pool and arena. These were followed by fitness centre, arts and cultural spaces, gymnasium community meeting rooms and halls and indoor walking track etc., as shown below.

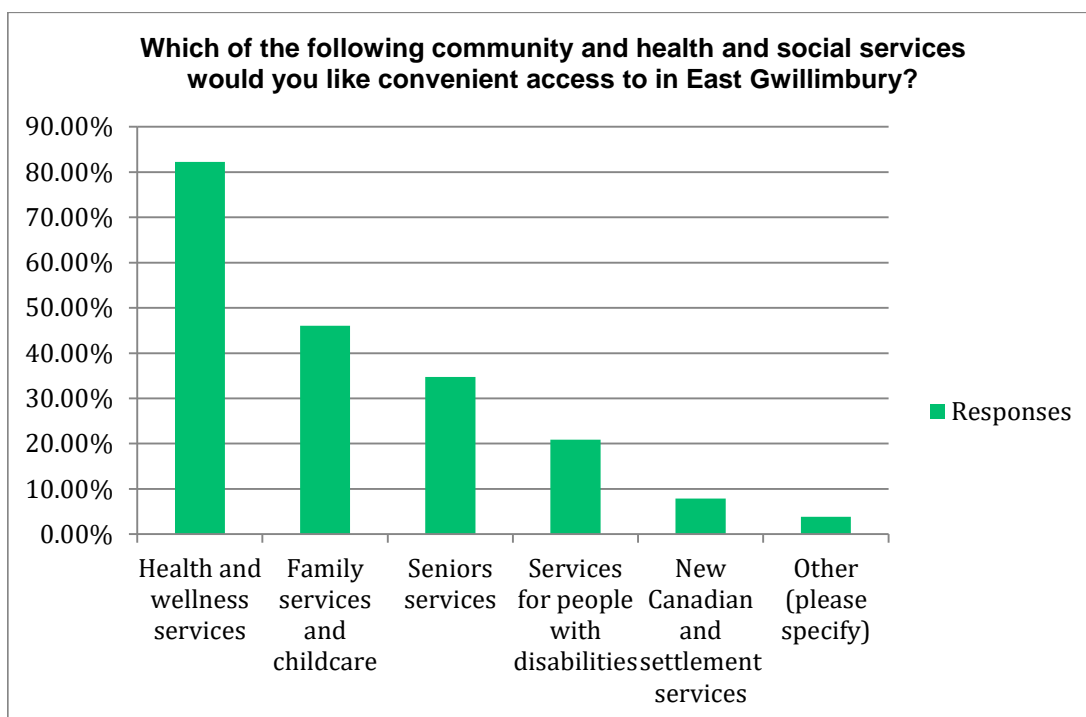


The four most popular outdoor facilities were in order of importance trails and natural areas, picnic area/community garden/gathering place, playgrounds and outdoor community event places.



There was considerable interest in fitness and wellness programs, swimming, hiking, sports and arts and culture programs. Lower ranking interests of just under half of respondents included skating, nutrition programs, summer camps and educational programs. Seniors programs were seen as interesting to 22% which corresponds to the 29% of survey respondents over 55 years, so can be considered of a high interest in the community.

- The majority of people in East Gwillimbury use personal vehicles to get to programs and services and about 1/3 would be willing to drive 16-20 minutes. The other two thirds range from 5-15 minutes.
- Health and wellness services are important to over 2/3 of respondents with seniors and family services have significant interest. Services for persons with varying abilities is seen to be important to over 1/5, see figure below.



- Location of facility or services and affordability are highly important when selecting programs and services, along with quality of space and operating hours.
- People are most willing to pay \$5/visit for lane and leisure swim, and drop in sports per visit. Just over half are willing to pay \$10-\$20/month for pool membership and only a 1/3 the same for a fitness membership. Over 1/3, 36% were interested in swimming lessons and would prefer to pay between \$80- and \$90 for a 8-12 week lesson block.

### Implications for East Gwillimbury

Survey response sample is relevant and satisfactory, particularly in that there was representation from each of the hamlets and from surrounding municipalities that touch the Town borders. Knowing that the Town will likely draw residents from these



municipalities to facilities and programs, the survey results provide a baseline of information from which to plan. While too specific for this stage in the planning process, survey results lists individual responses, so further breakdown of the information could provide a cross section of what residents in each hamlet felt to be important to them in their leisure time if needed in the future.

It is clear from the results that respondents spend a considerable amount of time each day in front of screens. Health and physical activity is important to all respondents in varying degrees, but nonetheless was a part of daily and weekly life. Technology could be easily integrated with program and facility planning so that people can continue their involvement and at the same time have opportunities and places that emphasize the integration of healthy life choices. The CPRC Department can play a key leadership role in providing programs and facility experiences to encourage residents to spend less time in front of screens and more being active in physical activity and personal wellness.

Respondents also indicated that they like to relax, read books, and plan healthy meals. An important component of programming in the future could be to provide spaces in community centres and rinks where people could pursue their “quiet time” activities, in conjunction with some of the more active pursuits they may have.

The majority of respondents indicated a high interest in being active in the outdoors and other physical activities. Sports also are important along with ice-based activities. This information provides a snapshot of perhaps where to begin to increase resident participation in physical activity. Building and consistently maintaining trails that encourage healthy participation through 4 seasons could create “quick wins” in the short term and building on existing physical activity programs already in place would create the same momentum. Also important will be the creation of flexibility in the type of experiences people can have, that is both informal/drop in and pre-registered to guarantee spaces.

There is significant interest in having a library facility that is open to the community as was there in an arena, pool and fitness facilities. While questions were not asked to determine specific types of uses and activities, it will be prudent for the Town to more accurately assess specific needs during implementation of this plan.

Arts and cultural, and youth and seniors space were used by a significantly lower number of people, but nonetheless will be important in the future as new residents move to the area and those that already are residents gradually become older. Further needs analysis can be done during planning and budget processes during the implementation cycle.

Being in nature and having community gathering places to be active and socialize are important as are playgrounds. Each of these interests can be addressed through the expansion of an already robust trail system, the inclusion of a community garden in the proposed Health and Active Living Plaza, and by creating socialization spaces in renovations to existing facilities. By applying playground and park design standards during the implementation of this plan assurances will be created to ensure facilities continue to be adapted to changing community needs.

While fitness, hiking, swimming and wellness programs are of high interest to the top third of respondents, sports programs and skating have significant interest levels as well. This is in alignment with the underlying strategy of health and active living that

will form the core of the master plan. Additionally, the comparatively high interest in arts and culture, education and learning, and nutrition, also provide insights into other elements of service delivery that may have the potential for growth in the future. While senior services, preschool day care programs and adaptive programming were expressed as needed by fewer respondents, further research may be appropriate, particularly as it relates to the anticipated population growth in these two age cohorts.

At the present time a clear majority of respondents use cars to drive to programs and services, and few public transit, walking and use of a bicycle. This could be influenced by the significant lack of public transportation in the Town and longer travel distances between parks and recreation facilities and program venues. Transportation has been identified as a priority in the future, and the Town is currently updating its Transportation Master Plan. The update process provides an opportunity to thoroughly identify transportation routing that enhances access to parks and recreation facilities throughout the Town and linkages to other services and facilities in adjacent municipalities.

A significant part of the master planning process included researching and validating the potential for Town involvement in delivery of other social and health services. It is evident in the survey results that respondents see the value in having a variety of health, wellness, family services and child care and support, and senior services located in the community, perhaps in unison with parks and recreation. Additionally, there was a clear indication that health and social services are important for persons with varying abilities. Engagement with agencies and other levels of government to facilitate the integration of opportunities will extend traditional parks and recreation core services to a more holistic approach in provision.

It is clear that location of facilities, accessibility and quality of space are of importance to 2/3 of respondents. It is interesting that facility operating hours and good customer service are of importance to a fewer number. This information is good validation of what will continue to be important to attract and retain the greatest number of participants and users, particularly as the population grows and diversifies. These factors can easily be integrated with program and facility business models and operating standards.

This survey information provides a base upon which to complete further research during annual fee reviews and establishment. As many Town residents participate in programs in surrounding municipalities, it is advisable that regular analysis of competing fees is completed to ensure that the Town remains competitive from year to year.

#### Suggestions for Innovative Programs

222 respondents provided their ideas for programs and services that they would like to see offered in the Town of East Gwillimbury. These ideas are listed in the electronics survey results summary dated January 26, 2018 and are also attached as an Appendix to this report. Suggestions were grouped in fitness, teen programming, active transportation and trails, community centre facility ideas, seniors programs, arts and culture and heritage and general programming.

## **Council Committee Input**

### Process

An integral segment of the consultation process included meetings with Council Appointed Advisory Committees to obtain their input related to: the most important things the Town needs to focus on in order to provide high quality recreation facilities; the barriers that need to be addressed to enhance opportunities for health and active living; ways the committee and the CPRC department can work together in the future to achieve their mandates.

### Observations

As the population grows and becomes more diverse, there will be a growing need to know and understand the new target markets. People moving into the area from municipalities in the GTA etc. may have expectations for service levels that the Town typically in the past may not have provided. New cultures and ethnic groups could also be potentially marginalized if not understood.

Without a comprehensive public transportation system in place, residents will continue to rely on personal vehicles to access services and facilities. Those without the resources to afford personal transportation will have to rely on public transit and/or not be able to participate.

Presenting “healthy and active living” in a new context will require a specialized communication and public awareness campaign supported by benefits and proven results on an ongoing basis.

Blending past with the future new cultural backgrounds and traditions will be increasingly important to ensure that a “sense of community” is developed and maintained. Local culture and heritage take a back seat to the new people moving to East Gwillimbury. Innovative approaches to cultural preservation, and defining changing cultural needs and customs will be important in creating and building community.

As new people take residency in the Town, it will be important to make efforts to increase the number of opportunities for getting involved in community events and activities. This could include more involvement in decision making, volunteering for community groups and events, and engaging new residents in ways that are familiar in the cultures that they are familiar with. Succession planning for existing boards, executives, and committees will be essential if existing groups are to be able continue their meaningful community work.

It will be important to balance the needs of the existing and new communities, particularly as it relates to geographical differences, accessibility and proximity to transportation. The northerly communities could be isolated and specific strategies are needed to formally integrate with service delivery. There is fear that the ward system will create parochialism and minimize the balance in how resources are allocated.

Trails and natural areas are an important component of community life as most people can use them, as long as they remain accessible to all abilities and ages. Trails create linkages to different points in the community and a mechanism through which heritage/points of interest in the community could be explained and/or presented.

Accessibility will continue to be a challenge for residents, particularly those with varying abilities, in challenging economic situations, and/or are Newcomers to Canada. Without a comprehensive transportation system in place, residents will continue to rely on personal vehicles to access services and facilities. Those without the resources to afford personal transportation will have to rely on public transit and/or not be able to participate.

### Committee Involvement

These committees appointed annually by Town Council, are charged with the overall responsibility of providing advice and guidance and informed opinions to Town Council and staff, on matters related to the environment, accessibility, economic development, trails and active transportation, the Farmers Market, and heritage. Committees have a member of Council liaison members, a staff member and a number of residents, appointed as a result of a keen interest and/or expertise and experience in the work of a specific committee. Through the consultation process, it became evident that these committees have interest in continuing to work with the CPRC Department to enhance service and facility delivery. Examples of this involvement, in the context of Committee Protocols and Procedures include:

- Accessibility Committee – Involve in park audits, park layout and planning in relationship to International Design Standards at initiation of subdivision planning, input to annual program plan, helping to ensure programs are accessible to all abilities, advertising of committee initiatives and importance of accessible facilities and programs.
- Active Transportation and Trails Committee – setting annual trail development priorities, identifying improvements for the trail system, determining appropriate trail head amenities, coordination of information for special events, etc.
- Economic Development Committee – review of Health and Active Living Plan, develop a senior citizens service policy, policy development during implementation of the Health and Active Living Plan, promote related businesses that impact parks and recreation activities, review policies that help committee work, explore tourism as a revenue generator.
- Environmental Committee – advising the CPRC Department on the planning and design of indoor and outdoor facilities from an environmental perspective, Implementing the Sustainable Events Guide (2014).
- Farmers Market Committee – helping to recruit volunteers, determine and maintain a centralized location with upgraded amenities like covered stalls, certified kitchen and storage, cooking and food production workshops and seminars, etc. Assist with development of a long term strategy for future of market and its relevance to the Town.
- Heritage Advisory Committee – Input to park, facility and trail development from a heritage perspective, identification of ways to preserve as built heritage and special venues.
- North Union RCC – expanded departmental programming of space, and new ideas for events developed with the Committee, and use of the Committee as a clearing house for information, equipment and program supplies to the

community. Increased funding and help with succession planning and volunteer recruitment for Committee sponsored events.

### Recommendations

1. Define and initiate a community engagement strategy and align appropriate resources. Continue and increase efforts by CPRC Department staff with Council Committees.
2. Establish a well defined data collection/analysis system and assign staff to maintain alignment with market need. Define the changing market through collection of current user preference and interest information (demographics/psychographics), and apply data decision-making processes.
3. Develop creative approaches to enhance transportation in the municipality with York Region Transit or private/public partnership options (ie fee subsidy for application based transportation services). Balance needs of the existing and new communities, particularly as it relates to accessibility and proximity to transportation.
4. Develop ways to ensure equitable access to facilities by adopting Universal Design Standards and take into consideration cultural needs and customs.
5. Adopt a philosophy that “no child will be turned away”, and develop policies to increase access to recreation.

## **Council Input**

### Process

Interviews were held with the Mayor and Members of Council to obtain their views on the community needs for parks, recreation, culture and facilities and programs. Questions included: what things are going well; favorite places in the Town; key issues, solutions and priorities related to accelerated growth; needed programs, special events and facilities; who should be involved in the planning process; and improvements required of the CPRC Department.

### Observations

One stop service access will continue to be important in the future, therefore alignment with other agencies, organizations and service providers through partnership development will continue to maximize and stretch resources. The needs of a fast growing and diverse community will continue to be the biggest challenge facing the Town and ensuring that needs are met in systematic ways.

Persons with a disability and senior citizens should be considered a service priority in the future. These demographics will continue to be impacted by the growth, and indicators show that people over the age of 55 years will continue to grow steadily in numbers. Ensuring facilities and services are accessible both from a physical and financial perspectives is important as the municipality grows.

Trails, parks and natural areas seem to be the most popular places for people to be. The top four clearest priorities in facilities are for a pool, recreation programs and parks/trails/open spaces.

Indoor facilities generally meet current needs of the community, but as the population grows new facilities will be required and upgrades to existing community centres, particularly at Holland Landing and Mount Albert Community Centres. A flexible performing arts “space”, not necessarily a stand alone, would provide options and opportunities to promote and increase the capacity of the arts community.

Facility builds and renovations need to “fit” the communities in which they will be located and resources shared as equitably as possible between the four hamlets. Financial planning will be essential to ensure that capital and operational expenditures are done in direct relationship to occupancy of homes and MPAC property assessment timelines.

Joint development and use agreements, along with cooperative servicing partnerships should be pursued with both Boards of Education to ensure that resources are used effectively in the community, and duplication is eliminated.

Reviewing the manner in which fees are established and levied along with the municipality’s compliance with AODA regulations will provide a baseline of information to ensure all persons have the opportunity to participate in parks, recreation, and culture programs and facilities.

### Recommendations

6. Initiate an evidenced based facility and program planning process, tied to collection of community needs and demographic and psychographic data.
7. Wherever possible negotiate joint development and use agreements with the Boards of Education and other agencies and organizations.
8. Conduct routine registration and facility use fee review and develop a user fee policy.
9. Development of facilities and programs that increase the accessibility for persons of varying abilities, residents over the age of 55 years and youth.
10. Where practical create one-stop centralized Town customer services at larger community centres. Review pilot of Region services at a digital kiosk located at the Health & Active Living Plaza.

## **Senior Management Input**

### Process

Interviews were held with the Chief Administrative Officer and members of the Senior Management Team to obtain their views on the community needs for parks, recreation, culture and facilities and programs. Questions included: what things are

going well; key issues, solutions and priorities related to accelerated growth; needed programs, special events and facilities; ways departments could work closely with the CPRC Department; who should be involved in the planning process; and improvements required to the CPRC Department.

### Observations

Growth creates the need for increasing fees for use, flexible type programming and facility phasing, connecting communities with bike paths, trails, bike lanes and other forms of creative transportation alternatives. Upgrades to the Mt. Albert and Holland Landing C.C., expansion of the Sharon Sports Complex will be needed along with new outdoor field houses with multi-use facilities for pickle ball and basketball attached. Provision of adapted seniors benches and tables at all facilities, portable park washrooms, gathering places, an indoor pool, and some form of arts and cultural instructional and small performance spaces will be needed as well.

Residents' expectations could be higher as a result of the places they have previously lived, creating pressures on the existing delivery system and process. Demographics will change as the population grows therefore, there will be a need to continually research and update data bases to understand the changes as they take place.

A key target group will be seniors due to expected population shifts in an aging demographic. A pilot program approach is an effective way to measure initial community interest and ability to participate in such programs. In the future there will be a need to have balance between education and life long learning so the department should be arranging for the delivery of more "skill based" programs, partnering with other community agencies and groups to offer things like transition to retirement, photography, cooking, dietary planning, hobbies, etc.

The composition of the population will require that we revise old standards of facility provision so that existing and future facilities meet the needs of new residents. There will be a continual challenge balancing the residents' needs for services with the Town's ability to pay and Council's expectation for the degree of annual tax levy that will be invested.

Establishing a formal process of community engagement that encompasses not only public meetings, but working liaisons with Boards, committees and community organizations will result in a solid relationship with the community and yield significantly richer and relevant information on the needs of residents.

Partnerships will be fundamentally important in the future for program and facility delivery. Some changes that could be considered are senior task force partnerships, central entry point for culture, new programming partnerships for things like horseback riding, public art programs and installations, performing arts venues, and increased number of special events that compliment existing. Examples of private partnership with business could be partnering with a local grocer for a cooking class, a winery for wine education etc. supplementing programming with a municipal kitchen. These partnerships, as long as they are win/win, will result in more effective use of financial and human resources and establish a spirit of cooperation important to building community spirit.

Elevating the profile of culture could be achieved through increased number of festivals and providing spaces for public gatherings, centred on cultural traditions

and events. Showing community art is another way to provide opportunities for creative expression. While there is currently no museum, heritage and artifacts could be housed/placed in public facilities and at heritage sites (like the Sharon Temple at the present time).

An emerging trend is cohabitating programming (different family members at same time at the same facility) and for multiple segment programming in the same time block. The current Fire and Emergency Services Camp is a good illustration of cooperative image building and providing educational experiences.

Providing programs for children at times they require them is important. For instance when people have young children they need corresponding facilities to suit their physical activity needs and as they get older need different spaces like trails, cycling areas, and areas to explore. Allowing for flexible program times accommodates the children in child care, of commuting parents, and in the care of nannies

Communicating in many languages (those that relate to the demographics of the Town) will ensure that the right people, get the right information, at the right time, in the right format.

### Recommendations

11. Ensure cohabitating programming and lifelong learning are prerequisites in service delivery.
12. Develop policies and processes that promote culture and heritage preservation and special events expansion.
13. Continue to develop and initiate mutually beneficial partnerships with agencies, organizations, institutions and the private sector.

### Interdepartmental Cooperation

Building on the existing good planning and service delivery relationships between departments, of note the Fire Department in EMS camp for kids, will ensure that internal resources are effectively utilized and maximum benefit is achieved for dollars spent. Encouraging staff to “think outside the box” will ensure that innovation and risk taking become a part of everyday operations and management. Making a concerted effort to jointly find creative solutions to problems and new ways to deliver services, will consolidate resources and result in increased efficiencies

Some of the ways that this can occur as suggested by the Senior Managers:

**Development Services** - Integrated planning with, setting standards and establishing checklists, and taking each facility development through a formal and complete planning process which involves all departments, the community and external agencies part of which could include bringing all parties together at the same time.

**Economic Development** - It has a quality of life component that the Development Services Department could contribute to facility design and promotion, special event promotion and/or other tourism related initiatives.

**Developers** - Contact could be maintained for continuing the dialogue on who is moving in to East Gwillimbury and their preferences for service as well as providing the development community with promotional information regarding quality of life of the Town.



**CIES** - Integrated infrastructure short and long term planning, arranging for rough grading of parks done in preliminary works, contributing to things like the Transportation Master Plan update, planning and implementing active transportation initiatives both at the Town and Regional level, continued shared-use of facilities and equipment, and building maintenance services.

**EGPL** - Emphasis on coordinated planning and service development, technology purchase and use, and advertising and promotion to eliminate competition and improve overall quality of programming, expanding some existing services through resource and equipment sharing, integration of the ActiveNet registration/permit system to work effectively for the Library, cooperatively plan the renovation & expansion that is needed at the Holland Landing Library and CC, jointly offer learning labs, and create performance space at the new HAL Plaza.

**Region of York and East Gwillimbury EMS** - Input to trails, mileage markings, emergency access/egress plans etc.

## **Social Service Agency Input**

### Process

A meeting was held with representatives from social service organizations that provide a variety of services and/or supports in the Town as well as throughout the Region of York. Questions guided discussion to obtain their views on important areas of future focus for the CPRC Department, barriers to health and active living, ways their organizations could work with the Department to support delivery of health and active living initiatives, and partnership opportunities.

### Observations

The most important areas of focus for service and facility delivery: ensure diversity and inclusion are considered in decision-making and delivery, make services and facilities accessible, preserve local culture/heritage and those of newcomers to the community, an “all modes transportation hub at the Health and Active Living Plaza, multiple locations for one-stop service access, healthy and active events and activities for middle aged and older people, and better understand target audience, services to support and communicate in relevant ways.

The barriers to be addressed through relevant service delivery: accessible and convenient transportation, ability to address core social service and health issues and partnering to decrease costs and maximize impact, maintaining a local feel and at same time creating a Town identity, engaging people locally and attracting new participants.

Following are the highlights of the examples provided for collaboration and working together, during the meeting. These can be supplemented with other collaborative ideas that are being negotiated with potential partners at the Health and Active Living Plaza.

Co-operative planning and programming (all groups), promoting safe and active routes to school and dovetailing programming (school boards), communicating with the elderly for opportunities and personal support (Community and Home Assistance to Seniors), marketing of the arts to create a sense of identity, increasing capacity of

artists through career development and housing and exhibits and shows that bring people together (York Region Arts Council), convening partners and funders around issues and services/navigate service offerings (Region of York), promotion of volunteerism through events and networking (Neighbourhood Network), regular sharing of information on services, research and facilities. The social service organizations all expressed a desire and commitment to work collaboratively with the CPRC Department to enhance services throughout the Town.

Recommendation

14. Continue to dialogue with social service organizations to identify opportunities to collaboratively plan and deliver health and active living programs that are relevant to community needs, incorporate the social determinants of health, and increase resident's capacity in healthy and active living.

## Health and Active Living Strategy

Healthy Cities/Communities create and improve the physical and social environments and community resources, which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential. Several cities and communities in Canada have adopted Healthy City strategies. *WHO Healthy Settings* (accessed September 2014)<sup>18</sup>.

To be a part of this growing trend, the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has decided to develop strategies, policies and initiatives to create an environment in which people can pursue healthy and active lives, establish their sense of community and safely interact with others and their environment. This change in direction will also encourage people to test their limits, develop their skills, achieve their optimal level of self-health actualization and revitalize themselves from other pressures and stresses of daily living.

The department will create opportunities for health excellence, encourage a culture of collaboration, build on the strengths of the community, and empower patrons and partners.

To help people achieve their health goals the CPRC Department will use a holistic approach so that people can experience convenient and complimentary health, social, recreation and cultural services and facilities. *The CPRC Department is committed to continue to deliver on its core business of parks, recreation and culture services and facilities as well as engaging key community stakeholders and residents in service delivery.*

### Why a Health and Active Living Strategy in East Gwillimbury?

The underlying theme in the Health and Active Living Plan and is the thread binding all future decisions.

Governments at the federal, provincial, regional and local levels are becoming increasingly concerned with the health of Canadians. There are numerous statistics that point to decreases in individual health<sup>19</sup>:

- 90% decline in the radius of play for a nine year old since the 1970's.
- 28% versus 58% proportion of today's students that walk to school compared to their parents.
- One in 4 Canadians are obese and rates are climbing, and due to obesity and health issues, today's children may in fact have shorter and lower quality lives than their parents.

In a Report of the Chief Public Health Officer on the Health Status of Canadians 2016<sup>20</sup> it was noted that the proportion of Canadians who reported a strong sense of community belonging in 2014 was lowest among those aged 20-34 years. Most Canadians (70%) considered their mental health to be either very good or excellent, but people living in lower income households had lower perceived health. The proportion of Canadians saying they had been diagnosed with a mood disorder increased from 5% in 2003 to 8% in 2014. In the same report, it was noted that the proportion of Canadians 20 years and older with diabetes almost doubled between

<sup>18</sup> World Health Organization [http://www.who.int/healthy\\_settings/types/cities/en/](http://www.who.int/healthy_settings/types/cities/en/)

<sup>19</sup> Connecting People With Nature 2014, Canadian Parks Council

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/publications/departement-ministere/state-public-health-status-2016-etat-sante-publique-statut/alt/pdf-eng.pdf>

2000 and 2011, up from 6% to 10% with cancer as the leading cause of death in Canada.

A significant finding was that the vast majority of Canadians do not meet the recommended levels of physical activity and of special note was that 9 out of 10 children and youth do not meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines. During the period of 2011-2013, more than 1 million, or just under 1 in 10 Canadian households were living with moderate to severe food security.

Obese people are more likely than people with healthy weights to develop type 2 diabetes (WHO 2002); cancer (Calle et al. 2003); coronary heart disease and stroke (Health Canada 2003). Taking immediate action on a plan for healthy eating and physical activity will help to create a healthier Ontario.<sup>21</sup>

According to the Active Living Strategy of the Municipality of the District of Chester (Nova Scotia), the following governance and funding trends will greatly influence in the manner in which a community will approach health and active living.

Physical inactivity, poor nutrition and being overweight are the leading causes of chronic health problems in Ontarians and in Canada the increasing prevalence of obesity is the fastest growing epidemic of our time.

1. Fundamental shifts in the directions regarding health delivery being taken by governments at the federal, provincial, regional and local level.
2. Directions and priorities being increasingly driven by the health agenda.
3. A broadening and more complex set of expectations and responsibilities from politicians and constituents for recreation departments in general.
4. A challenging fiscal environment and other competing interests and the impact on infrastructure.
5. The changing nature of communities/municipalities, particularly with the escalation of new home development.
6. A changing social/demographic landscape as a result of anticipated growth.
7. Increasing influence of technology as both an enabler and competitor for healthy and physically active lifestyle.

### **The Impact of Rapid Growth**

The new growth that is anticipated in East Gwillimbury will bring people to the community who have needs specific to their cultural background and sources of origin. Active 2010 (a Province of Ontario initiative) states that newcomers to Canada face a special set of barriers to an active lifestyle. Even though they may know that they should be physically active, people from other parts of the world sometimes find it difficult to become involved.

This difficulty could be due to: customs, a lack of familiar activities, not having social support or others with whom to be active, not being able to afford some activities or transportation to the activity, lack of awareness as to what is available and/or not having time because of competing priorities.

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<sup>21</sup> Ontario Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy Consultation Document 2008  
[http://www.ocdpa.ca/sites/default/files/publications/OCDPA\\_MovingHEALForward.pdf](http://www.ocdpa.ca/sites/default/files/publications/OCDPA_MovingHEALForward.pdf)

Newcomers may become isolated. Instead of being able to participate and feel part of their community, they may feel that they are on the outside looking in. Physical activity that considers cultural context can be an important tool for both health and inclusion, and begin the process of building community in these diverse populations.

The CPRA Framework for Recreation In Canada 2015 has identified a number of key challenges and opportunities facing the recreation sector that have *direct relevance to East Gwillimbury because of the changes that will take place*, so special attention will need to be given to the impacts and influences of these outside factors on the creation of a healthy active community.

- Demographic Changes: Aging of the population, increasingly rich diversity, more immigration due to government policy changes, and a younger Indigenous community.
- Economic Inequities: While visible minority groups face some of the worst effects of Canada's growing economic inequality, this trend affects all Canadians.
- Social Challenges: Rapid changes like increasing inequities, unemployment, rapid development, use of social media instead of face-to-face interaction etc. compounded feelings of social isolation and social connectivity.
- New and Emerging Technologies: The recreation field is challenged by rapidly changing technologies and the resultant increasing amounts of time people spend in sedentary and solitary digital pursuits.
- Infrastructure Deficit: Most communities have deficiencies of walking and cycling routes, facilities and green spaces and need to make facilities more functional and easy to access.
- Threats to the Natural Environment: Failing fish stocks, extreme weather, decreasing biodiversity, new invasive species, the loss of green spaces to urban sprawl and the warming of northern regions are indicators of environmental stress, as well as more frequent and more violent weather events that has the opportunity to present costly damage or elimination of many natural and purpose-built amenities.

### What the Data Suggests

The Health and Active Living Strategy provides justification and the approach for the CPRC Department to extend its traditional role as a provider of sport, cultural, general recreation programming and community centre facilities, parks, trails and open spaces, to the broader context of *facilitating the creation of an environment that encourages and facilitates healthy active living*. External pressures from government policy changes, financial restrictions, and the changing nature of the

A holistic approach with partners will broaden the base and raise the peaks towards a healthy and active community.

health care system and communities that are rapidly expanding like East Gwillimbury, creates a sense of urgency, in making sure the proper services and supports are available in the community for those who need them.

While the CPRC Department should not try to be “all things to all people” it is in the unique position of being able to be a “*service catalyst*” for *convenient and complimentary services* delivered through a series of partnerships

with community organizations, the private sector, agencies and other levels of government to further the health agenda. This initiative will work towards eliminating duplication of services, maximizing resources and make for prudent use of financial and physical resources. These partnerships are essential to ensure that a wide range of health, safety, recreation and other related services are available in the Town of East Gwillimbury, all focused on creating a healthy and active community environment.

### **Moving Forward – The Strategy**<sup>22</sup>

**The Strategy** embraces the fundamental values and principles of the CPRA Framework for Recreation and positions programs, services and facilities in such a way as to create an environment in which people can make healthy choices in order to achieve their life goals. It is rooted in creating an engaging, holistic experience for people to actualize a healthy and active lifestyle. *Programming and facilities will be focal points* for all CPRC initiatives, but the department will also *play a key role in working with community partners* to create access for residents and visitors to a variety of learning, social and health services, one stop government services and linkages to opportunities for personal growth development.

There will be a variety of service opportunities for health excellence, collaboration, building on the strengths of the community, and empowering patrons and partners. There will be increased awareness and knowledge of personal health and happiness, access to health information and benefits of healthy life choices, exposure to health supporting physical and social environments, and engagement in healthy behaviours. This voluntary participation and contributions by others is just as important as financial tax support for core services. To this end, the CPRC will:

- Work to secure grants, bequests, and donations.
- Work to find leisure activities already existent within the community and help to sustain those efforts of clubs, voluntary groups, etc.
- Use a “just in time” approach to have shovel-ready plans for when or if infrastructure funding grants become available.
- Quantify “value for money” of various leisure activities so as to ensure emphasis is put on some quick wins, and rounding out investments later.

While the Town of East Gwillimbury establishes annual service goals through business and strategic planning processes, it will be advisable to incorporate wherever possible the direction that has been established in the *CPRA Framework’s five goal areas*:

1. Foster active living through physical recreation. Participation in physical recreation is essential to building healthy, active individuals from infancy to older adulthood.
2. Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation. Bring people together in a non-threatening,

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<sup>22</sup> Health and Active Living Strategy, full version with details of rationale, context, measurement and implementation attached as an Appendix

- pleasurable atmosphere and address the barriers and constraints to participation faced by some people.
3. Help people connect to nature through recreation. Connecting with nature is associated with improved cognitive, mental and physical health, enhanced creativity and positive social behaviours.
  4. Ensure provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities. Supportive physical and social environments help people explore their creativity and adopt healthy, active lifestyles by making the “healthy choices the easy choices”, and foster family connectedness, which fosters reciprocal caring.
  5. Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field. Leaders in recreation include professional staff and volunteers, who need the knowledge skills and resources to plan and deliver high-quality recreation services.

### Strategy Underpinnings

**Vision:** People can make personally constructive choices for enhancing their physical, spiritual, mental and social health and wellness regardless of age, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

**Values:** Public Good, Sustainability, Outcome Driven, Evidence-Based, Inclusion and Equity, Lifelong Participation, Quality and Relevance, Partnerships and Collaboration, and Innovation.

### Core Business:

Create opportunities for health excellence, encourage a culture of collaboration, build on the strengths of the community, and empower patrons and partners to: test their limits, develop their skills, achieve their optimal level of self-health actualization, and revitalize themselves from other pressures and stresses of daily living.

The Social Determinants of Health will provide the framework for creating holistic ways and means to enhance the personal health of residents in the Town of East Gwillimbury, to ensure no person is denied the opportunity to pursue personal health.

\* Those that have particular applicability to recreation, parks and culture (details contained in Health and Active Living Strategy Appendix document).

Determinants of Health	
Income and Social Status	*Social Support Networks
*Education and Literacy	Employment and Working Conditions
*Social Environments	*Physical Environment
Personal Health Practices	*Healthy Child Development
Biology and Genetic Endowment	*Health Services
*Gender	*Culture

## **Key Factors in Planning**

It will be essential that each concept/idea/suggestion related to program, service and facility development is *reviewed in the context* of the vision, values, principles and core business statement prior to their development to ensure that the department stays focused on creating a healthy community. In the planning of each program, service and facility, the concept of health and active living in the context of this strategy can be woven into each discussion and decision making process by considering each of the following Key Factors:

1. **Healthy People:** strengthening our health and social services; providing excellent sport and recreation services and facilities; encouraging healthy lifestyles.
2. **Engaged Citizens:** nurturing a shared sense of community; honouring diversity and inclusion.
3. **Vibrant Culture:** respecting our heritage; encouraging artistic and cultural expression.
4. **Sustainable Environment:** protecting and responsibly managing our trails; preserving the natural environment; managing our impact on the environment; stewarding our natural resources.
5. **Dynamic Economy:** vibrant and diverse local economy; educational and employment opportunities; affordable housing.

## Communication

It will be important to develop a communication strategy that is updated each year that clearly outlines the services and facilities offered by the Town and community partners. This strategy needs to ensure that the right information reaches the right people, in the right format at the right time with residents feeling confident that they have been heard. To ensure that content and context is relevant to the target audience, it is strongly recommended that an expert in literacy, language and design of communications to diverse populations is engaged to refine terminology and design.

## Data Collection

Data will continue to be an important part of annual initiatives to ensure that the health data in this strategy, other related health and demographic data related to the Town of East Gwillimbury is kept current as the community grows, and used during annual and other service and facility planning events.

The detailed version of the Strategy contained in the Appendix, outlines the approach and process to measuring the difference the programs, services and facilities are making in peoples' lives. For each program, service and facility operation there should be at a maximum two measures established to provide information on things like: personal health (i.e. increased awareness); individual level (i.e. increased participation); social level (i.e. volunteerism growth); physical environment (i.e. people engaged in places); policy and planning (i.e. facilitate healthy living); and CPRA Framework (i.e. matrix of options in Appendix).



### Staff Focus and Monitoring Progress

As this approach to service delivery is relatively new, it will be necessary to provide a thorough introduction to the concept of integrating the philosophy of Healthy and Active living into the culture of the CPRC Department. This integration can be an integral component of operational planning and be an integral performance review process and career development.

Ongoing monitoring of progress being made, successes and challenges towards the intended purpose can be achieved through monthly operational plan review, analysis of participant and user surveys and measuring accomplishments, supervisory and staff planning meetings, and reporting to Council and the community. Annual review of the direction outlined in the Master Plan document provides a mechanism through which strategic decisions can be made.

## Future Re-positioning of the CPRC Department

As stated in the Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015,<sup>23</sup> Pathways to Well Being, a renewed definition of recreation has been developed for adaptation in the sector.

This master plan has been created on the premise that people should be **“empowered to make healthy life choices”**, which includes all of the foregoing and the fundamentally important aspect of good health. The Health and Active Living Strategy, explained in the previous section, ties nicely into the CPRA statement and provides the mechanism for the department to further the five goal areas of Active Living, Inclusion and Access, Connecting People with Nature, Supportive Environments, and Recreation Capacity.

**Renewed Definition:** an experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being.

John Crompton<sup>24</sup>, an internationally known speaker, presented his views on repositioning recreation in building a national recreation agenda at a seminar in the recent past for recreation professionals. Excerpts from this presentation have been used to enhance the approach the CPRC Department could consider in re-positioning itself in the future.

### The Past

It is well known in the sector that in the recent past recreation, parks and culture have been perceived to be a relatively discretionary, non-essential government service. *It is nice to have if it can be afforded.* But as early as 1849 the American Medical Association wrote that “the necessity for public squares, tastefully ornamented and planted with trees, cannot be too strongly urged upon public attention, as one of the most powerful correctives to the vitiated air within the reach of the inhabitants of a populous place.”

And furthermore in 1850 the Sanitary Committee of Massachusetts recommended that “open spaces be reserved in cities and villages, for public walks; that wide streets be laid out; and that both be ornamented with trees. Such an arrangement would have a good effect on the beauty and social enjoyment of the place; but it would have a greater effect upon its general sanitary condition”.

In 1909, the President William Taft of the USA wrote to the Playground Association of America, “I don’t know anything which will contribute more to the strength and morality of that generation of boys and girls compelled to remain part of urban populations in this country than the institutions in their cities of playgrounds”.

In one respect, that is from a financial perspective only, it could be construed as discretionary, but as the foregoing historical statements indicate, there has been a long standing acknowledgement that parks, recreation and culture do contribute to personal and community well-being, overall quality of life and the health of residents in many significant ways.

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<sup>23</sup> Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) Statement

<sup>24</sup> John L. Crompton, University Distinguished Professor and Regents Professor, Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence, Texas A&M University

## Moving Forward

Successfully integrating the Health and Active Living Strategy with the traditional “core business” of the department is the primary step for Re-positioning in the future, particularly as it relates to contributing to alleviating the major problems in a community identified by taxpayers and decision makers, the latter of which are the Mayor and Members of Council. *Articulating internally and externally the “business that the department is in”, will ultimately:*

- Contribute to the health and well-being of residents, and to helping to alleviate health care costs.
- Build a healthy and active community.
- Enhance the economic base of the community.
- Encourage and initiate life-long learning.
- Result in both physical and mental health benefits.
- Help people be “healthy alongside nature”.

One of the “big ideas” associated with re-positioning, is that **funds are invested in solutions** to a community’s most pressing problems. The term “investing” suggests a positive forward-looking agenda with a Return on Investment (ROI).

This is not always in direct alignment with a politician’s practice of keeping the tax rate low. Changing the approach from NOT *just funding programs and facilities*, RATHER to that of *investing resources into solutions* changes the paradigm of decision making and forces professionals and volunteers to take a longer view

of what is needed, and required, as the community composition changes.

As the Town of East Gwillimbury continues to experience escalated growth over the next few years, it will be important to be aware that enhancing participants’ and users’ satisfaction will continue to be critical and to ensure that services continue to include:

- Social interaction with friends and family kin.
- Social interaction with previously unknown others.
- Ethnic and cultural identity and integration without assimilation.
- Generation of excitement, adrenaline rush, exhilaration in experiences.
- Ego satisfaction through accomplishment and achievement and desire to be successful.

Implementing Positioning is essentially “*pulling people in*”, a concept that is central to *this master plan*, especially in the way programs, services and facilities are planned and delivered. The Health and Active Living Strategy is what is referred to as a “*preferred position*” that has relevance, obviousness and a unique “selling” proposition (empowering people to make healthy life choices), in the broader servicing context.

The CPRC Department, as part of the Implementation of the Master Plan, would be prudent to internalize in all facets of planning and operation defining:

- a) Ways to introduce and/or educate elected officials and key administrators to enhance their perceptions of department positions and initiatives.
- b) How they want to be seen in the public and other servicing agencies “eye”, being selective on how many positions to take as a “service arranger of convenient and complimentary services”.
- c) What is substantive and important to the community, that which has relevance and obviousness – not changing peoples’ minds but re-focusing them.
- d) Ways to reinforce the intuitive knowledge with existing perceptions.
- e) Linkages to other service providers and like-minded partners.

Aligning with prevailing attitudes and nomenclature (i.e. Council’s need for low cost, sustainability opportunities, etc.) will be critically important in “re-focusing” peoples’ attitudes and their view of recreation, parks and culture in the context of Department Repositioning. Terminology will continue to be important and some of the terms that facilitate clearer connection with the department’s position could include (if linkage is evidence to other people it will work), particularly in the way the department communicates with its audiences:

- Investing in parks, recreation and culture, not a tax subsidy.
- Not ‘greenways or trails” but green infrastructure.
- Amenities that are attractive to knowledge workers, not park and recreation facilities.
- Not natural areas but low maintenance areas.
- Not youth programs, rather youth enrichment programs.
- Not just water, clean water, preserving water quality.
- Protect wildlife habitat, not endangered species which is more polarizing.
- Natural areas – avoid open space, empty space of no benefit to people, urban space is usually seen as an abandoned lot or a bench among big buildings.
- Hiking, biking and walking trails, not just trails, attaching uses make it more resonant.
- Protecting quality of life and carefully planned areas - not sprawl, unplanned growth or reducing sprawl, etc.
- Our and we imply ownership and inclusion – e.g. WE need to protect OUR beaches, lakes, and natural areas.
- Protect natural areas for future generations.
- Talk about ourselves as conservationists, not environmentalists.
- Creating parks and other places where children can play safely, not neighbourhood parks or playgrounds.

### Communicating the Re-positioning

If the fundamentals of Positioning as outlined above are not in the “hearts” of employees, that is, if it is not evident in all that they do, it will be meaningless. Management’s primary role is to nurture ownership in the concepts and lead staff to the successes that will be created. Staff need to *understand it, believe in it, and emotionally commit to it*. The more staff that are involved both emotionally and professionally with it and articulate it, the more consistently they will communicate it. Re-positioning is a relatively long-term proposition as this requires a pro-active cultural shift within the organization that will have profound impacts within the communities the CPRC Department serves.

There are three types of positioning:

1. Real Positioning - the development of new services or re-structuring delivery so they better contribute to addressing Health and Active Living; when staff walk their talk; and the approach and message are cohesive and coherent, rather than diffusive.
2. Associative Positioning - aligning with other organizations that already possess the desired position, and acquiring some of this position from the association (i.e. health services from the Region of York).
3. Psychological Positioning – changing stakeholders’ beliefs about outcomes which emanate from the services offered, so they better align with the desired position.

It is critical that the CPRC Department secure testimonial evidence from participants and users’ experiences, form opinion leaders from within the community and from other jurisdictions, and from independent experts. These testimonials can be a key element of a communication program and process.

Of equal importance is the integration of the Position messages (Health and Active Living) in all forms of advertising, promotion and awareness raising and annual communication planning. The message can further be promoted through referencing in Council reports, public addresses and information sessions and as an element of every program and activity (handouts, giveaways, promotional items, etc.).

### Recommendation

15. Integrate the principles and strategies of the Health and Active Living Strategy with the facility, service and program decision making process.  
  
Ensure that the principles and strategies outlined in the Department Repositioning overview are integrated with annual planning of facilities, services and program, and become a fundamental element in a communication strategy.

## **Program Review**

Program delivery is considered a mainstay with many municipal departments and has been a primary function of the CPRC Department for many years. It is anticipated that community interest will continue to grow in this area of service delivery, particularly with the introduction of a focus on healthy and active living as outlined in this plan.

As the population increases over the next ten years, it is expected that the resident base will become proportionately more diverse, thus creating a need for different approaches to the organization and delivery of programs and services. One of the key elements of health and active living is providing a variety of options, through which residents are able to make individual and family choices for participation.

The purpose of this program review is to ensure that the CPRC Department has the capacity and scope to meet the anticipated demand for programs and services as the population changes. Residents will have an expectation that services will be provided based upon their physical, social, mental and emotional needs. Providing typical municipal core services will continue to be important, as will be the creation of environments and experiences that provide opportunities for making healthy and active choices.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association Framework for Recreation in Canada – Pathways to Wellbeing (CPRA Framework) was reviewed in the context of program and service delivery as it contains a number of goal areas, principles and standards that can serve as a planning and performance measurement guide. Ways to integrate these goals, principles and standards in the services will be fundamentally important to determining success in the future.

### Current Approach

The Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department develops an annual Business Plan prior to the annual budget preparation process. This plan establishes work priorities in relationship to five key priority areas that don't generally change from one year to the next. Programs and services are planned in the context of the priority areas and performance measurements outlined in the plan. The following statements describe the department's current approach to program, service and facility delivery.

#### *Mission Statement*

"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."

#### *Vision*

We are engaging our communities in high quality parks and recreation experiences that are relevant to the Town of East Gwillimbury.

### *Core Business*

Delivering innovative, healthy and high quality services for our residents and visitors to the Town of East Gwillimbury.

#### *Values:*

1. Treat each other in positive ways.
2. Are proud of what we do, recognize the greatness in others and celebrate our successes.
3. Lead by example and empower and motivate each other to achieve our personal and professional goals and aspirations.
4. Set realistic goals and enrich our customers' experiences in all that we do.
5. Believe that good solutions are based on two-way communication and sharing quality information.

#### *Department Priority Areas*

1. Customer Experience: Create recreation opportunities that are congruent with changing community needs and contribute to the health and well-being of the residents and visitors to the Town of East Gwillimbury.
2. Community Growth: Anticipate and fulfill the demand for services and facilities created by increased population and cultural diversity.
3. Business Centred Approach: Set realistic goals and priorities that maximize human and financial resources and build long-term service delivery sustainability.
4. Research and Development: Maintain a process of continuous improvement to ensure services and facilities are consistent with the trends toward healthy, safe community living and the changing patterns of work and leisure.
5. Community Engagement: Establish meaningful relationships with stakeholders to improve the level, effectiveness and quality of community participation in department decision-making and service delivery.

#### Assessment of Current Situation - Process

An assessment was completed to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of programs and services, review of core services and the department's role in community engagement, youth, senior citizen and culture and heritage programming, and an on-line market study of programs and services offered by the Town of Newmarket, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, and Town of Georgina. It also considered future impacts of population growth, demographic profiling, the program delivery system, accessibility and inclusion, partnerships, and fees and subsidies. Alignment with the CPRA Framework was verified.

#### *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Program Delivery*

The information gathered from staff interviews, public input meetings and analysis of data from the electronic survey and demographic and psychographic analysis is summarized in the following table.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Process in place to promote programs and services (Health and Active Living Guide).</li> <li>· Staff team high energy and desire to move forward.</li> <li>· Community arts, culture and heritage groups and organizations eager to work together to offer community based programs.</li> <li>· Community sports groups are solid and offer programs that can grow, are willing to work with the CPRC Department.</li> <li>· Natural areas and an environment in which program delivery can take place.</li> <li>· The CPRC Department viewed favourably by community groups and organizations.</li> <li>· Survey data indicates favourable support for healthy active living programs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Community awareness program required to raise awareness of Healthy Active Living.</li> <li>· Need for a formal communications strategy to raise awareness of programs and services available.</li> <li>· More precise timing and coordination of the Health and Active Living Guide.</li> <li>· Refinement of current program development processes to better justify need for programs.</li> <li>· Leveraging partnerships with the Sharon Temple as a program partner and venue.</li> <li>· Engagement with the public and organizations in planning and implementation of special events.</li> <li>· Clarity required for staff roles as community liaison and resource provider.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Senior's Task Force has a future service plan that the department can support.</li> <li>· Sports groups, arts, culture and heritage groups, and older adults have a desire to work together and with the municipality to collaborate on programs.</li> <li>· Working with surrounding municipal departments would result in a more regional approach to Health and Active Living.</li> <li>· High Performance Standards provide a framework for a new way of doing business, accountability and a more concentrated approach to the planning and development of programs.</li> <li>· Future direction of population growth will result in a more diverse population, which creates the opportunity for more variety and new relationships community leaders.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Pressures on existing and anticipated funding could limit an ability to move forward quickly.</li> <li>· A sense of urgency caused by accelerated population growth requires the implementation of new program and service management that could have negative impact on staff resources.</li> <li>· Public apathy and/or low awareness of the benefits of healthy active living.</li> <li>· Rate of population growth in comparison to facility growth to meet demand.</li> <li>· Coping with the increased costs associated with new program standards and maintaining sufficient revenue generation to meet the standards.</li> </ul>

As the summary shows, there are many positive aspects to current program offerings and existing opportunities to enhance program variety and delivery, and operationalize the recommendations of the Health and Active Living Strategy.

Key considerations in moving forward are strengthening the capacity of staff, clarify the degree of department involvement with community leaders, and work with key stakeholders and the general public to accept and implement change. There is a solid base from which that change can take place.



Through further review and analysis of the SWOT early in the implementation process, staff will be able to enhance the strengths, address and/or eliminate the weaknesses, capitalize upon opportunities and deal with any external threats.

### Core Services

The department delivers a wide-range of programs and services that at the present time meet the general service needs of the community. Core services will continue to be important in the future along with the integration of healthy and active living choices, in keeping with the Health and Active Living Strategy. The table following illustrates the core programs and services offered by the Department in past years, all of which are adjusted in accordance with changing community needs and participation patterns.

Core Service	Description	Service Level
<b>Aquatics</b>	- Learn to swim opportunities for preschool to 6+ children youth and adults in partnership with Newmarket Inn.	8 week instructional lessons in Red Cross Swim levels.
<b>Camps</b>	- Children Camps during summer months, and March Break.	March Break five days, summer.
<b>Preschool Active Living Programs</b>	- Wide variety of learning and participation in active games, music, and sports activities.	Ten week sessions, and daily drop in 0-5 years, during fall, winter, and spring at locations throughout the Town.
<b>Child and Youth Active Living Programs</b>	- Wide variety of arts, music, sport and dance programs.	Ten week sessions, for 5-16, years during fall, winter, spring at locations throughout the Town, weekly dances in spring.
<b>Active Adult and Older Adult Living Programs</b>	- Full range of fitness, art, sport and dance programs.	Between 8 and 12 week series programs in fall, winter, spring and a smaller select offering of 7-9 week programs in summer.
<b>Older Adult Clubs and Seniors Task Force</b>	- 2 clubs have regular week-day offerings of things like bingo, euchre, pot luck dinners, shuffle board, and games days etc. - Task Force offers drop in programs, workshops, and walking group.	Generally during fall, winter and spring, varies in some instances.
<b>Outdoor Opportunities</b>	- 9 premier high quality walking/biking/hiking trails. - Variety of soccer fields, baseball diamond, picnic shelters, and natural areas. - Area and community parks throughout town, playgrounds, bike parks, skateboard, splash pads, etc.	A number of informal use areas and option to permit use, in most instances on a fee per use basis. Trails, parks, playgrounds, open spaces are 4 season, others seasonal weather permitting.
<b>Horticulture and Beautification</b>	- A full program of tree canopy and preservation, and beautification through flower beds, border	Street, beds and borders at various buildings and street locations throughout the Town, spring, summer and fall.

	plantings and street pots and baskets.	
<b>Environmental</b>	- Environmental design, reclamation and preservation of natural and cultural features integrated with design and sustainable stewardship maintenance operations.	At all parks and other outdoor natural areas under jurisdiction of Town or through partnership agreements with the Region and LSRCA.
<b>Arenas</b>	- Two ice pads at a single location for permitted use, shinney hockey and public skating. In off season ball hockey and other sports.	2 pads fall, winter and early spring, 1 pad with summer ice.
<b>Special Events</b>	- Include variety of events including summer concerts, Canada Day, New Years Day, Halloween, Special Holiday events, etc.	Number vary from year to year, held at various locations throughout the Town, for all ages. Birthday party program packages for children 5+.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	- Liaison with all sports, arts, cultural groups etc. that permit facilities, community centre committees, opportunities for students to fulfill community hours, and Youth and Community Initiatives fund to ensure all can participate regardless of socioeconomic circumstances.	Department staff available as required all seasons.
<b>Fair Access</b>	- A program that encourages participation at the local neighbourhood level for all persons regardless of socioeconomic background.	Week-days at the public school in Holland Landing for elementary school aged children, in conjunction with the Region of York Community and Health Services.

### Special Events

The CPRC oversees 11 special events and over 300 general interest programs throughout the year. The special events include the New Years Eve celebration, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween, Canada Day Celebration, Family Day, Music In The Park (4 events), and Music On The Move (2 events).

These events are planned, promoted and implemented by the staff of the CPRC Department with assistance from other municipal departments, and community volunteers, and high school students usually assist on the day of the event. They are popular and well-attended, are known as “family friendly”, showcase local and non-resident talent, celebrate the Town’s unique culture, heritage and traditions, and provide a valuable point of contact for the Mayor and members of Council, and Town staff.

### Municipal Program Comparison

General on-line research was conducted of programs and services in the municipalities of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Town of Newmarket and Town of Georgina determine the extent to which these programs may impact upon East Gwillimbury. It is evident that each of the three municipalities target the same age groups and offer many of the same or similar programs as does East

Gwillimbury. The cost of program registration was not considered as program content, frequency, equipment, etc. varies between municipalities and requires more extensive study as part of a more in depth fee analysis. Each of the comparator municipalities are larger in population and provide accordingly an enhanced level of programming in a greater number of community facilities.

Bradford West Gwillimbury has many similar age groups and program selections as in East Gwillimbury. A Leisure Centre with an indoor swimming pool, multipurpose room, activity room, fitness centre, track and gymnasium provides many more options for fitness, specialized and year round programming not available to East Gwillimbury. Leadership and coaching courses are held to train volunteers and staff for the pool and a backyard water safety program.

In addition to what is similarly offered in East Gwillimbury, the Town of Newmarket has extensive arts programs and events, museum exhibits and culture days, the Newmarket theatre offers a variety of musical, theatre and other events, teen cooking club and back to basics, family programs (e.g. archery, karate, and music), a youth centre and indoor skate park, youth leadership/counselor training, skateboarding, an extensive selection of special needs children and adult programs and inclusion for all ages in all services provided, low impact and restorative therapeutic programs for children, adults and seniors, special events and bus trips for seniors supplementing regular programming and drop-in programs, an extensive number of seniors programs and swimming programs for all ages. Like Bradford West Gwillimbury the Town has several leisure centres with pools and gymnasiums, a seniors centre and youth centre.

The Town of Georgina, in addition to what East Gwillimbury provides, has an extensive offering of senior's formal and drop in programming, is involved with the seniors games, an indoor pool and subsequent extensive offering of swimming instruction and public swimming, a theatre, pioneer village and archives, art gallery, and a community hub that offers space for non-profit social service associations to provide programs and services.

### Observations

East Gwillimbury residents can easily access programs and services in nearby municipalities (and likely have in the past), particularly those that require specialized facilities like fitness and aquatics. Both the Towns of Georgina and Newmarket have an extensive variety of choices, indoor pools, theatres, gymnasiums, and senior spaces, offer inclusion opportunities (either direct programs or through integration) to persons of varying abilities, and provide a menu of direct services for senior citizens.

It has to be recognized that East Gwillimbury is 22,000, Town of Newmarket 88,000 and Town of Georgina 45,000 to maintain perspective on the scope and depth of service provision. As the Town of East Gwillimbury grows, it will be necessary to expand programming and facility provision, as proposed in this master plan.

With the move to an enhanced department vision to “empower people to make healthy life choices”, it will be necessary for the CPRC Department to ensure that health and active living is an integral part of each program and service. The Program Model, Program Standards and Health and Active Living Strategy outlined in this master plan will serve as talking points and triggers to ensure that this will happen. Conceptually it is envisioned that as a result of this report, things like exercise breaks, nutrition, health education and planning healthy meals etc. will become an element of each program delivered by the department and other partners.

In 2018 the department entered into negotiations with over 14 social service and community service groups and organizations for the delivery of a variety of programs to further this vision at the proposed new Health and Active Living Plaza in Queensville. The mix of health, social, community, arts and culture and educational services provide a supplemental strengthening to department programs and will result in opportunities being offered that were originally thought not possible. These partnerships will create momentum in creating an environment of healthy and active living.

The Health and Active Living Plaza has the potential to serve as a one-stop access for community health and active living to meet a multitude of community needs. It will be important to define the role and focus of the facility in creating partnerships to deliver fitness, social service and health related initiatives to create a wide variety of health and active living choices.

The recreation community centers in Holland Landing and Mount Albert and the community halls, could be utilized more effectively to enhance the visibility of the Healthy Active Living Strategy throughout the community. Aligning programs and services to specific segments of the population at the neighbourhood level will increase much needed access to many programs and services.

The natural environment provides a multitude of program opportunities. The on-line survey results show that the use of the natural environment is one of the most desired healthy and active living experiences desired by the respondents. East Gwillimbury is capable of providing this service due to highly competent staff and an extensive number of natural areas. Working with community environmental, arts and culture organizations, and the long-time residents and members in the community can create opportunities for crossover programming. While formally organized activities can result in a positive experience, informal programs such as walking groups, art in the park, nature walks and bird watching can achieve the same result.

Many of the same general interest recreation programs for both children and adults are offered at multiple locations throughout the municipality in an attempt to provide convenient access to residents. This has in some cases resulted in cancellations caused by too few registrations. Remediating the instances of this happening, will strengthen customer relationships, discourage residents from travelling to adjacent municipalities for program experiences, and build customer

loyalty. A more focused, targeted and strategic approach to program variety, concentration and locations will help to resolve this circumstance.

The proximity of the surrounding communities and current relationships that staff have with each other, provides an untapped opportunity to formalize service delivery partnerships, avoid duplication, better utilize each other's facilities, and coordinate promotion and marketing of programs and activities.

Camp programs are well-attended (most sessions are at capacity) creating a very positive return on investment that helps subsidize other programming areas that traditionally have low registration and/or fees.

Building a strong relationship with the schools can have a positive impact on the healthy active habits that school age youth and teens develop. Staff cannot provide the resources to provide programs and services for all segments of the community, but through acting as a community resource to these groups and organizations, more effective use of time and resources will take place. The creation of an inventory of community sponsored programs and services aligned to a community calendar of events would serve as a planning tool to ensure that a balanced approach to planning programs and events takes place.

Engagement of additional community volunteers to assist with special event planning on event day would enhance the experience and allow staff to concentrate on other areas of responsibility more effectively.

### Moving Forward

The current level of programming meets a suitable level of community need, but the numbers of programs will need to increase and content consistently changed to match the needs of the population as it grows in population over the next ten years. The choices that residents now enjoy can exponentially be enhanced with opportunities and components that encourage making healthy and active choices in their lives.

The Recreation Branch in the past has seasonally planned programs in consideration of department business plan priorities, community needs as expressed through discussions and feedback from program participants and residents, and the results of satisfaction surveys. Past participation patterns have been analyzed to identify trends and downturns in popularity and participation. Program statistics collected in the ActiveNet registration and permitting software, provided a statistical base for consideration during the planning process.

There has been a past practice of offering a significant number of programs that end up "pushing" people to participate through promotion and marketing. This practice created an extensive menu of opportunities, but at the same time, there often were not sufficient numbers of people registered to offset program costs. As a result a considerable number of programs had to be cancelled in each series.

## **Service Planning Approach**

The Health and Active Living Master Plan proposes the department take a more focused approach through creating program experiences that are based on well researched community needs, the demographics and psychographics of the community and feedback from program participants in customer experience surveys.

By doing this the department will consistently “pull people in to participate” increasing participation numbers and residents’ perceptions of the difference the program is making in their lives. Participation numbers will gradually increase ensuring that revenue projections can continue to be met.

To further create alignment, a “value proposition” (service or feature intended to create interest from a target audience) has been developed to guide the change process:

**Value Proposition – empowering people to make healthy life choices.**

## **Program Standards**

Recognizing change is necessary in the manner in which planning and delivery of services is completed, is essential as the community grows and diversifies. This growth will require that key decision makers including Council, senior staff, supervisors and program development staff and part time leaders etc., internalize the relevancy of the Health and Active Living Strategy. This Strategy is a vision for the future of the CPRC Department, and is fundamental to all decisions and actions, so for the High Performance Standards process to be successful in moving the department forward, buy in and understanding of the vision by all staff is critical.

Aligning this vision with a number of Planning Standards creates a planning process and a measurement tool. Doing this ensures that any program, service or facility decision must further the vision and if it does not meet the standards, then it should not be considered.

An important aspect of the success of this process is that a mindset of “why not” versus “why” needs to exist. Staff planning can continue to be based on finding ways to create success. A new mindset cannot be distracted by thinking “that is not the way we did it in the past”, but rather what is an enhanced and/or new way of creating a memorable customer experience every time the CPRC Department has contact with a resident.

### **1. Inspiring Community Spaces and Experiences (Placemaking)**

- Facilitating creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.
- Capitalizing on local community assets, inspiration and potential, resulting in spaces and experiences that contribute to people’s health, happiness and wellbeing.
- Creating a public sense of ownership and influence. Ensuring that the people who will be part of the experience have a say in what that experience will be.
- Integrated planning focused on comfort and image, access and linkages, sociability and uses and activities.

2. *Just In Time Delivery for Services and Facilities*

- Focusing on the process and not the product for adding value to the patron, continually making processes more efficient and timely, and integrating the principles of adaptation and access.
- Relying on a sequence of measures to ensure the consistency of service output, in this case the Health and Active Living Strategy.
- Making sure the consumer is able to rely on reputation of the Town to produce what it says it will.
- Inseparability – taking a multifunctional approach that incorporates both marketing and operational concepts, making sure the consumer is aware of not only the service to be received, but the service delivery system (registration processes, planning steps, etc.).

3. *Thoughtful Investment*

- Equitable treatment with respect to investment of time and money in services and facilities that optimize the Town's ability to meet the needs and desires of diverse consumers, regardless of numbers and ability to pay.
- Effective and efficient deployment of financial resources coupled with regular financial reporting.

4. *Superb Quality*

- Creating a superior customer experience through:
  - Knowing and acting on our consumer needs.
  - Innovative design, and supply of creative programs and services.
  - A committed and knowledgeable team of staff.
  - Creating a culture in which staff have skills and are empowered to take responsibility for their actions and results.
  - Timely evaluation of each program, service and facilities.

5. *Inclusion*

- Recognizing and inviting both the differences and similarities of those who will want to benefit from service delivery and ensuring that the supports are in place and available to those that need them.
- Tailoring health and active living planning and delivery approaches to the needs of a diverse population with similar needs in being able to live a healthy and active life.
- Viewing accommodation and adaptation not as requirement but as opportunity.

6. *Equitable Access*

- Taking into account social and economic imbalances and reduce financial, physical and cultural barriers to increase access to participation in recreation by:
  - Having affordable programs and facilities for children, youth and families regardless of financial status.
  - Assisting community partners to fulfill their mandates.
  - Advocating for persons with exceptionalities.
  - Ensuring financial assistance is available.

7. *Capacity Building*

- Creating opportunities for people to develop and strengthen skills, instincts, abilities and create resources to help organizations to survive, adapt, and thrive.

- Encompassing elements of both learning and doing into activities.
8. *Holistic Lens*
- Each point of contact with the consumer strengthens an individual's physical condition, mental ability, spiritual orientation and ability to capitalize upon social interaction and acceptance.
  - Collective senior administrator and Councillor leadership to integrate other departmental decision making and service delivery with that of the CPRC Department.
9. *Community Engagement*
- Engage, empower and enter into agreements with consumers to define needs and desires and create opportunities that result in achieving the outcomes envisaged in the first place.
10. *Measurement and Accountability*
- Defining and acting on policies, processes and mechanisms to measure the difference services and facilities make in people's lives.
  - Benchmarking, researching best practices that lead to continuous improvement, policy development and management principles.

### **Program Development Model**

A Program Development Model is being proposed that contains a number of steps that can serve as a checklist to organize the data and decision-making processes when planning programs and services. Adoption of the model will ensure that "evidenced based" decisions are made and that programs are positioned in such a way to "pull people to participate". The model outline includes:

- a) Define and describe:
  - i. Instructor to participant ratios.
  - ii. Program curriculum and description and measures of success.
  - iii. Ways to integrate Health and Active Living Strategy with program content.
  - iv. Listing of any certification standards relevant to program curriculum and instructor certification (e.g. national and provincial standards for certification), etc.
  - v. Program equipment supply inventory.
  - vi. Minimum standards of CPR and First Aid.
- b) Completion of police checks where applicable.
- c) Prepare detailed budget that outlines estimated revenue to be generated, all costs associated with the program (registration fees, material fees, leadership/instructor costs, equipment, supplies, advertising and promotion, and facility rental fee), and Return on Investment (ROI).
- d) A description of ways the program will generate a consistent cost recovery over time in relationship to program fee, the point the program is expected to breakeven, and the trigger point for determining that the program is not viable to continue with. For each program:
  - i. Establish the maximum number of participants program can accommodate.
  - ii. Describe rate of cost recovery will be necessary to offset 100% of costs of the program and create a surplus for the department, based on the number of participants registered.



Example – If the program costs are estimated to be \$308.00, 11 people paying \$28.00 would be required to register to offset the costs. If the projected capacity of the program is 15, then a surplus of \$112.00 would be generated (4 participants x \$28.00). If fewer than 11 register for the program, it is evident that the program should be cancelled or a decision made to further promote and/or offer the service in another format.

- e) Establish performance measures to determine the difference that participation will make in someone's life (see section on Measurement).
- f) Describe ways the program can be evaluated and obtain feedback from participants on the impact the program has had in terms of enhanced healthy active living. The fundamental questions that could be asked of all participants include:
  - 1. How did the program contribute to your overall personal quality of life, health and well being?
  - 2. In what ways did the program provide a positive social experience for you?
  - 3. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the program.
  - 4. How could the program be enhanced in the future?
  - 5. If appropriate to the program:
    - What impact did the program have on strengthening the family?
    - Did the program allow you to enjoy the natural environment?

The success of this model will be dependent upon all staff:

- a) Understanding and buying in to the process.
- b) Accepting that change is a necessity.
- c) Having a desire to create a new mindset and standard of operation.
- d) Committing to being part of a long-term cultural change in the CPRC Department.

This collaborative and collective approach to service and program development and implementation will: create results that positively impact change in the community; expand and nurture a new mindset amongst residents and stakeholders; create a consistent process within which change can take place; and motivate staff to grow and develop individually as well as impacting the overall growth and development of the CPRC Department.

### **Aligning Programs and the CPRA Framework Report Card**

The CPRA Framework for Recreation is an all-encompassing document that describes the “big picture” of the impact that recreation programs, services and facilities can have on a community. This document identifies many of the issues and opportunities presented during the information gathering process of developing the Healthy Active Living Strategy for East Gwillimbury.

The five goals of the CPRA Framework For Recreation are:

**Active Living:** Foster active living through physical recreation.

**Inclusion and Access:** Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.

**Connecting People and Nature:** Help people connect to nature through

recreation.

**Supportive Environments:** Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities.

**Recreation Capacity:** Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.

While this Framework is based on a national program, it is relevant and can be closely aligned to the Healthy Active Living Strategy for the Town of East Gwillimbury. The document can serve as the report card of how the CPRC Department is progressing on making a difference in peoples' lives. The Framework can serve as the "true north" and be the beacon for staff aligning with the direction outlined in the Healthy Active Living Strategy. Some steps to ensure that this happens include:

1. Holding a staff and service partner planning session using the Framework as a discussion paper to gain an understanding as to the impact of the actions that can occur as a result of responsible planning.
2. Consider ways the Framework can be used to position local level service perspectives.
3. Use the Goals and Priorities of the Framework as a checklist to ensure that as programs, services and facilities are developed, care is taken to incorporate them into the decision making process.
4. Utilize the Framework to guide decision-making, planning, resource allocation and the development of strategies, policies, programs and performance metrics.
5. Position CPRC Department staff as the local champions in ensuring partners and other service providers have an understanding and working knowledge of the vision, goals, principles and implementation strategies aligned to the Framework.
6. Align the concepts and philosophies of the Framework with a Communications Strategy to heighten awareness in the target audiences.
7. Identify community leaders/champions to advocate for the mandate outlined in the Framework and the vision of the Healthy and Active Living Strategy to participation and awareness in healthy and active living.
8. Utilize the Framework document to anchor the planning and implementation of programs and services.
9. Integrating Framework supporting resource documents like the Canadian Sport Policy 2012, Active Canada 20/20, and Connecting Canadians with Nature in program delivery, can broaden staff.

As staff moves to address the direction of the Framework, every effort should be made to identify how its goals are being integrated with program planning. It should be noted that not all goals/priorities will be met for every program or service, but it is important that they are considered in all planning exercises. See appendix for measurement tool.

## **Direct Programs and Services**

It will be essential that the programs and services continue to be relevant to community needs and are maintained to reflect a satisfactory Return on Investment (ROI) without restricting accessibility to participation. Additionally, taking a more holistic approach to service delivery, means extending traditional approaches to program development and content to include health and active living.

As described in the earlier Section: Future Re-Positioning of the CPRC Department, positioning programs to encourage social interaction with family and new people, assimilation of ethnic and cultural identities, generate excitement and create a strong sense of accomplishment is key. Also setting the stage to “pull people” (create experiences people want to be part of) as compared to “pushing” (offering opportunities people may want to be part of) will generate long lasting relationships and participant loyalty.

The department’s role is to provide a wide variety of relevant, safe and high quality programs and services that create choices for physical, social, mental and spiritual development. They can be delivered directly (organized and executed by department staff through registrations) or through drop-in experiences (department staff create opportunities and there is a choice of participation on a basis chosen by the participant). They can also be delivered indirectly, through community-based organizations like sport leagues, arts and cultural groups, special interest groups, etc.), to which staff provide a consultative and resource role or through community volunteer leaders either informally or through formal partnerships.

### Importance of Research and Data Collection

The demographic, psychographic, trends and other health related factual data serves as a starting point for staff to establish and maintain an up-to-date data base of information upon which to base program decisions. It will continue to be increasingly important to define and re-define the target market, to align the program offerings to community needs. It is suggested that a staff position be assigned the responsibility for conducting this research and maintaining a data base as one of their job functions.

The objective would be to provide a wide range of programs and services to all age groups. Building on the existing program offering (four season) using the previously suggested Program Delivery Model, will begin the process of justifying the reasons for offering the programs, determine the financial viability and provide the framework for adapting/adjusting/enhancing/cancelling the program or service.

To align with the “balanced approach” of this master plan, it is suggested that every attempt be made to provide opportunities for people to participate in programs and services that augment those that are contemplated for the Health and Active Living Plaza, and are in close proximity to where they live and/or

work. Allowances made to offer opportunities that accommodate the needs of commuters and two parent working families.

Partnerships have been identified earlier in this master plan with a number of agencies, non-profit organizations and other levels of government for the joint delivery of a number of social services and supports. Direct program planning should be aligned and/or integrated with those services.

As the population becomes more diverse and anticipated increases in the Chinese, South Asian and Latino populations care needs to be taken to adjust and/or adapt programming to fit within the specific cultural needs and desires. Consideration should also be given to offering programs that address the trends of: declining physical activity; increased obesity; significant growth in older adults and resultant health shifts that account for ½ of social health spending; children's increasingly alarming nature deficit disorder; and the drop in time spent on social leisure. There has been an increased interest in hiking, climbing, horseback riding, swimming, cycling and mountain biking. Technology can be viewed as an opportunity for engaging people in activities and events, and easily integrated with fitness programming, geocaching related events, arts and graphic design opportunities.

Consideration could be given to providing things like:

- Longer facility opening hours and flexible scheduling of services.
- Creative integration of technology into program and facility design and approach to health and active living.
- Capitalizing on older adults' interest in being more active, longer.
- Re-focusing delivery on creating a superior customer experience centred on being able to make healthy life participation choices and that builds community.
- Building momentum for spontaneous, and both formal and informal programming, targeted to multiple age groups based on motivating interests.
- Bringing people together to celebrate diversity.
- Introducing "placemaking" into facility and program design and delivery ensuring public spaces are multi-use and diversified.
- Expanding on the high interest expressed for being active through walking, cycling and hiking in nature and active transportation initiatives.
- Introducing ways to celebrate local culture and heritage while at the same time create ways to integrate ways to celebrate new cultures.
- Creating special events through which people can celebrate their community diversity.
- Establishing partnerships with agencies, organizations, service clubs and businesses to enhance the availability of services and facilities that encourage healthy and active living.
- Ensuring facilities and services are accessible regardless of economic status or ability.

It is clear from the results of the On-line Survey that the three most popular leisure time activities were aquatics, fitness, yoga; staying healthy; and hiking and walking. The three most popular indoor facilities were a library, aquatics centre, arena space, fitness centre, arts and cultural spaces, gymnasium, arena and meeting halls. The four most popular outdoor facilities were trails and natural areas, picnic/community garden/gathering place, playgrounds and outdoor community event places. This information will prove invaluable in the decision making process and help position the marketing and delivery processes.

Dialogue with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Active Transportation and Trails Committee to engage in the identification of community needs and factors that should be included in program deliverables is advisable, early in the planning process. Progress reports and/or reporting results achieved as a result of the program would continue to encourage ongoing involvement.

### **Diversity and Accessibility**

The municipality does not offer programs specifically for persons with special needs nor are there integrated program opportunities. Population growth will continue to change the make-up of the community, and accessibility will continue to be important to reduce barriers for persons with varying abilities, in challenging economic conditions or with newcomers to Canada. Ensuring residents have unrestricted access to participation, means:

- Building staff capacity to create a complete understanding of accessibility principles and practices.
- Ensuring program spaces allow ease of use by persons of all abilities (ease of use, equitable use, flexibility in layout, simple and intuitive, perceptible information (pictures, words, information), tolerance for errors and elimination of hazards, low physical efforts (large push down handles, etc.), large special approaches and use of space (Universal Design Standards, University of North Carolina).
- Program delivery accommodates varying abilities in comprehension, sight, hearing, etc.
- Affordability, having program fees geared to an ability to pay, and/or a policy that provides a vehicle for registration fee subsidy.

Policy development is essential in clearly defining the Town's role and expectation regarding the creation of full and complete access to programs and services. A draft Access to Recreation policy could be revived and updated to reflect current conditions and be included in any future decision making processes.

Integration of persons of varying abilities in program and services can be achieved in consideration of four key elements:<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> New Brunswick Association For Community Living, Becoming an Inclusive Recreation Provider (The 8 Requirements)

1. Adaptive equipment and other accommodations so the participants can seamlessly attend.
2. Involving an inclusion facilitator (qualified therapeutic integration specialist) to help adapt programs, design inclusion strategies and program content, assist in program venue readiness, and advise on staff hiring.
3. Capital improvements to buildings or facilities that currently do not provide access to people of varying abilities.
4. Hiring people who can provide support to people with disabilities when this is required to ensure participation (could mean personal supports in the form of support workers or attendants, sign language, interpreters, etc.).
5. Marketing and Promotion, telling people that “your doors are wide open”, and encouraging people to use your program, then proving through the experience that they are welcome.

### **Youth Programming**

It will be important to continue to focus on providing direct program opportunities as well as creating spaces and/or opportunities in existing facilities for youth participation and socialization.

During the consultation process, older high school teens indicated there is a need for younger youth related programs and services, but were less interested in programs and services for teens fifteen years and above. The older age group is at a point in their development where they have more mobility and interest in part time jobs and other more informal activities. While it was not clear why this is evident, one reason may be a lack of knowledge of the opportunities available. It was expressed that regardless of the age, healthy active living activities and events need to be defined by youth themselves and aligned to the types of activities that they prefer to participate in.

A suggestion was made for the CPRC Department to host a youth and teen forum during which both age groups could express their needs and desires for both programs, and what a place of their own may look like. At the same time a role for the CPRC Department could be determined for facilitating the development of program experiences.

Youth programming “by youth for youth” will create ownership in creating the experiences and accountability for both the CPRC Department and youth to work together. Regardless of the types of experiences youth programs and services will be impacted by the prevalence of technology, so strategies will need to be developed to integrate it in some way with services and programs.

### **Older Adults**

The demographic research shows that a significant continued growth in the older adult population segment will likely continue as the population grows. This is

further supported by the emerging trend of “baby boomers” approaching or already reaching retirement age. This group of older adults generally are healthy and are looking for interesting and active leisure time pursuits. The CPRC will need to define its future role in the provision of direct recreation programming and the support that they are able to give volunteer groups and organizations. During the master plan consultation process it is clear that older adults in East Gwillimbury would support a “senior citizens recreation centre”. The partnerships being negotiated as part of the Health and Active Living Plaza provide an opportunity to provide a menu of health and social services for this population without them having to leave the municipality.

It is now common practice for older adults to “sign up” for participation in programs typically supported by younger adults, a sign that the new generation of seniors is more active, vibrant and interested in continuing their active lifestyles as they age.

The Town is fortunate in having a Seniors Task Force, comprised of volunteers from East Gwillimbury, who are interested in forming partnerships to deliver senior citizen programming. In their “Blueprint for the Future”, key areas of need of the older population are identified, and ways they will be working towards developing services to minimize their impact. The needs as identified include transportation, food sustainability, affordable housing and aging in place, and lack of centralized programs and services to supplement those of the senior citizen clubs. Some of the initiatives identified in a subsequent senior 2016 survey shows a need for on-line dating for seniors, bus trips, morning walks, technology information sessions, funding application assistance, police and fire presentations, and visiting other seniors centres.

There was also sufficient interest in forming a Seniors Association that would provide the impetus to establish more programming by working with Town staff and establishing a central meeting place/centre for socializing and recreation activities. The Association would be funded by membership fees, regional, provincial and federal grants and it is envisaged to be self-funded for operations. Town responsibilities could include operation of a meeting place, staff resources for organizing programs and liaising with the Association, and a seniors’ discount allowance for all Town programs. Additional details can be found on the Town’s website. The following statements provide context for the Association.

Vision: To have services and facilities for Senior Citizens in East Gwillimbury suitable for our growing and diverse population through collaborative partnerships.

Mission: Enhance the dignity and quality of life for Senior Citizens in our community and support their independence and inclusion by encouraging the establishment of a range of programs and opportunities to meet their diverse needs.

Two senior citizen clubs on weekdays provide bingo, euchre, shuffleboard, and other recreation programs in the Town. The Mount Albert Friendship Club for

Seniors operates in the Ross Family Complex in Mount Albert, and the Golden Anchor Seniors' Club operates in the Holland Landing Community Centre.

### Recommendations

16. Continue the delivery of direct programs in the context of the master plan, integrating the Health and Active Living Strategy, Value Proposition, Program Standards, Program Development Model and CPRA Framework with all decision making processes.
17. Conduct a thorough review of surrounding municipal program offerings in on a routine basis and at minimum every 2 years to determine areas of competitiveness and potential opportunities for collaborative delivery.
18. Target program content based on evidence-based data collection that includes demographics, psychographics and customer feedback.
19. Initiate access policy development and create opportunities for integration programming.

## **Community Engagement**

### Assessment Process

Twelve meetings with community leaders, general public and special interest groups took place during the master planning process. Public input meetings were held in Sharon, Holland Landing and Mount Albert. Meetings were also held with:

1. Key stakeholders.
2. Senior's Task Force.
3. Sports Groups meeting with 9 representatives from soccer, minor softball, minor hockey, figure skating and the recreational men's hockey league.
4. Sharon Temple meeting with 2 representatives of the Board.
5. Arts & Culture Group meeting.
6. Service Clubs meeting that included the Mount Albert Lions Club.
7. Youth meeting at a local high school during school hours with grade 11 students.

### Questions Asked

1. What are the most important areas that EG needs to focus on in order to provide high quality recreation facilities, programs and services?
2. What barriers currently exist that need to be addressed in order to enhance opportunities for Healthy Active Living to grow?
3. What could community groups and volunteers do to assist in the development and implementation of programs and services that would encourage and enhance Healthy Active Living?
4. From a communications perspective, how can EG increase the awareness and the education as to the positive outcomes available through an increase in Healthy Active Living programs and services?



5. What needs to be done to insure that programs and services are available for all citizens regardless of financial or physical restrictions?

### Observations

East Gwillimbury has wide variety of community groups and organizations offering programs and services. Many organizations, like sports groups, offer a formal program based on registrations, trained leaders and have affiliations with provincial and national sport governing bodies. Arts, culture and heritage programs are generally community based and offer opportunities for skill development, engagement in the history of the area, art exhibits and shows, theatre arts and arrange for performances.

While volunteerism appears to be stable based on existing community need, with greater demand being placed on volunteers to provide programs and services, it will be important to have a strategy for recruiting and retention of volunteers, succession planning, training and volunteer recognition. Continuing to leverage a partnership with Neighbourhood Network, a community based volunteer resource organization, is an option to create opportunities for residents to gain awareness of volunteer opportunities available.

Seniors will continue to be a growing segment of the population according to the research, therefore a formal “for Seniors by Seniors” servicing strategy would focus future initiatives. It will be important that the strategy outline short-term solutions to anticipated lack of program space during growth, so that consistent delivery of services can continue to be delivered to the older adult community.

Many of the organizations expressed a desire to be involved in the development of the Health and Active Living Plaza and see the facility as a program venue they can take advantage of. A number use the Holland Landing, Mount Albert and Ross Family Complex facilities and outdoor recreation facilities.

The Mount Albert Lions Club has contributed significantly to the development of facilities and programs in the Mount Albert community and is committed to continue this involvement in the future. As the population grows, and diversifies, new service clubs could emerge and there may be opportunities for the CPRC Department to create partnerships for service and facility delivery.

With the anticipated population growth, needs and desires for a more diverse, culturally-based service offering could be more prevalent. The demographic research of this study shows that targeted culturally considerate opportunities will be a necessary component of program and service development. To be effective in determining cultural preferences, the CPRC Department staff will be well served to develop an approach to engage with community influencers (recognized cultural leaders) within each segment of the population. This would help gain an understanding of how healthy active living could be integrated with lifestyle traditions and customs, culture specific programs and services, and to determine the best manner to engage each community in participation.

Three factors come into play with regard to sport development. With population growth, participation levels will increase creating a need for additional facilities

along with upgrades to existing facilities; cultural diversity will strengthen demand for the introduction of new sports and other activities, specific to traditions and special interests; and anticipated participation growth in sports such as soccer will create an increased demand for year round facilities.

A Healthy Active Living strategy is an all-encompassing process that a municipality will not be effectively integrated without developing strong relationships and partnerships with a wide variety of community groups and organizations. These groups and organizations provide programs and services that the CPRC Department does not have the capacity to offer. The role that the CPRC Department assumes in the future will need to be proactive in a process that will ensure each organization will achieve its maximum potential.

Community growth can be fostered through increased contact between people of varying age groups and cultures within the community. The more contact and interchange between seniors and younger adults and children, the greater the potential for community growth. Therefore, in the provision of healthy active living opportunities, attempts should be made to provide such contact and interchange between seniors and younger residents with a view toward transmitting cultural heritage across the generations.

Community growth can further be fostered through an integrative mixing of various ethnic groups so that each better understands and appreciates the differences and strengths of the other. Multicultural recreation services can be used as a vehicle in making the community more cohesive.

Providing specialized services, facility and fee accessibility and opportunities for integrated services is important and is fundamental to ensuring complete and equitable access for persons of varying abilities.

Community partnerships will have significant impact on East Gwillimbury as the town transitions to a city. Partnerships with neighbouring communities, social service agencies, private sector service providers, the Indigenous community along with the arts, culture, heritage, seniors and sports groups will provide a solid base for program and service development and implementation.

Community engagement is a key principle in the development of a healthy active community. It will be important for the CPRC Department to continue to work with the not for profit service sector and volunteer community groups to create programs and services that contribute to the greater public good. Engaging the residents through partnerships and by building relationships helps to create a community spirit and identify cultural diversity and results in a long-term benefit to the community.

Sharon Temple is a valuable community resource that could serve as both an external and internal asset. Temple facilities could be used as a central gathering place for events and attractions organized by the Temple board, community groups and the CPRC Department. It could also be promoted as a tourism destination, generating interest visibility in the community and generate alternative sources of revenue in support of Temple operations. The planned

Civic Precinct re-development is an opportunity to create a viable community entity.

### Volunteers

It would be impossible for the Town to adequately address community needs without committed volunteers at the organizational, coaching and support levels. This involvement has been essential in the past prior to the formalization of recreation service delivery and allocation of municipal financial resources.

Volunteer recruitment, supervision, development and retention will be even more important in the future, not only to supplement and maximize deployment of Town resources, but also to create opportunities in which people are able to give back to their community through involvement and service.

The relationship that community groups and other key stakeholders currently have with municipal staff is positive and it was expressed that this can continue in the future. To effectively maximize the resources of community volunteer organizations (i.e. sport, arts and culture, seniors, outdoor, etc.) during a period of high growth activity, it would be advisable to provide an opportunity for like-minded groups to join together in a common voice, for the purposes of coordinated planning and representation to the municipality.

Community volunteer-based groups could be well served through the creation of umbrella groups to share resources, coordinate and assist each other in the growth and development of programs and services, and represent group interests for things like grant applications, facility use negotiation, and presentation to local government.

Three umbrella groups are proposed including a Community Sports Council (all sport groups/all ages/all genders), Community Arts, Culture and Heritage Council, and Seniors Association. CPRC Department staff could be facilitators and advisors during the formation stages, provide guidance in program and service development, access to funding, and assist with organizational development and training.

As a Community Arts, Culture and Heritage Council gains momentum, the 2011 Community Cultural Plan should be revisited and assessed as to its relevance in light of the accelerated growth and the current community needs that were presented during the master plan process. It could serve as a base for issue identification and validation and create a number of quick wins for this sector.

The formation of Community Sports Council will provide the opportunity for sport groups to talk and work together to meet the short and long term needs of sport in a coordinated manner. Introduction of the High Five program would provide a base for all their recreational activity development.

Support for Community Centre Committees will also continue to be important for things like governance and decision making training, guidance in program planning and evaluation, advertising and promotion, and succession planning.

## Go Forward Approach of Community Engagement

Population growth will be a gradual process, and the related the issues associated with significant cultural shifts will take time to evolve. A go forward process for addressing priorities and defining approaches to community development from the perspective of the CPRC Department will be essential. The process will need to be aligned with the community needs as they evolve, along with a strong focus on engagement through staff interaction with residents and community service providers.

Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants Ltd. developed “A Rationale for the Delivery of Municipal Leisure Services”<sup>26</sup> that is significantly appropriate to introducing a more concentrated approach to engaging the community. There are three well-documented beliefs that provide a starting point for the rationale:

- a. People spend a great deal of their time in recreation. There is little doubt that the percentage of one's time spent in leisure will increase in the future and the potential for growth in leisure time is significant.
- b. Psychologists agree that recreation is a very basic part of life (i.e. a natural human activity).
- c. It is believed that leisure services may be used as a vehicle to reduce many costly social problems and hence, represents a sound economic as well as social investment.

It is in the best interest of East Gwillimbury to work with community groups, organizations and other stakeholders to develop community partnerships and relationships to expand and maximize opportunities for health and active living choices. The Rationale for the Delivery of Municipal Leisure Services provides the vehicle to do this.

### Special Events

Special events (e.g. carnivals, fairs, and the likes) can contribute to a feeling of community identity and spirit. East Gwillimbury should work with special events coordinators and other community partners to the extent necessary to ensure promotion, continuity and sustainability of these events.

### Support to Local Groups

Local clubs, groups and agencies are integral to the organizing and sponsoring healthy active living opportunities. The "people doing things for themselves" aspect of such groups is socially worthwhile and desirable. Through a defined staff role, community liaison with Specialized Community Councils (e.g. Arts, Sports, etc.) and Task Forces will result in a greater impact of community groups and organizations on services. Town support could include subsidized access to facilities and programs, assistance with leadership training, planning and program evaluation, and in accessing program grants. Often start-up resources for these types of groups can

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<sup>26</sup> Used with permission.

difficult so staff could provide valuable assistance with the development of a vision, mission and values, terms of reference, in identifying primary areas of focus, action plans and an annual evaluation process.

#### Exposure to Sporting Events

Community identity, spirit and culture can be fostered through the environment generated by spectators at athletic events. In such events, sport can be closely linked with community identity and pride. Because of this, opportunities should be planned for creating high quality spectator experiences at athletic events. The Community Sports Council can also serve as a host and coordinating body for scheduling facilities, liaising with visiting teams/coaches, coach and athlete training workshops, promotion and public relations and a community sports newsletter and equipment exchange days.

#### Exposure to the Arts

Artistic endeavors (both performing and visual) represent one of the most significant aspects of developing a community culture in East Gwillimbury. Through exposure to the arts, local residents can develop a better understanding and appreciation of the cultural aspects of a community. The Community Arts, Culture and Heritage Council can work with the Town to develop a coordinated calendar of events, develop and offer introductory and advanced arts and culture related programs, work with the Active Transportation Committee and the Environment Committee to develop integrated arts and culture programs aligned to the natural environment.

#### Social Functions

Because social functions are a valuable vehicle to use in developing community cohesion and identity, access to community facilities and staff resources should be considered. Social functions can serve as both community building events as well as fundraising events. As the Healthy Active Living strategy is unveiled, events designed to create community awareness and excitement lead to greater community awareness.

#### Protecting Community Natural Resources

The protection of natural aesthetic features, vistas, natural phenomenon and features of historic significance and the enhancing public access to such features will contribute to a greater understanding of and pride in the community.

#### Beautify the Community

The extent to which its residents see a community as being visually pleasing is directly related to the potential for creating community identity, spirit and culture. Therefore, to make a community more beautiful is a worthwhile social objective worthy of tax support.

#### Family Oriented Leisure Services

The family unit is an integral building block of community growth. Opportunities should be provided for families to pursue leisure as a family unit. The opportunity to create family oriented events should be a strong consideration in the development of all programs, volunteer opportunities and special events.

### Integration of Services

Integrating generations, diverse populations and sub groups will be essential in the planning and implementation of programs and services. Cultural diversity, teens and seniors and integrating peoples with disabilities into traditional programs are potential opportunities.

### Individual Growth

#### Fitness (Well Being)

Fitness, in this context, is used broadly as a synonym for wellness, and refers to mental and emotional, as well as physical fitness. The fitness level of every resident of the community should be increased at least to a pre-determined minimum level with opportunities available for progress beyond this point.

#### Pre-School Leisure Opportunities

An opportunity should exist for every pre-school aged child to participate with other children in a variety of leisure experiences, in order to:

- a. Expose the child to social settings.
- b. Foster gross motor development.
- c. Provide a generally happy and satisfying atmosphere where their growth can occur.
- d. Teach basic safety skills and attitudes.

#### Basic Leisure Skill Development for School Aged Children

Provide a variety of leisure pursuits in sport, performing arts, visual arts, outdoor nature oriented skills, and hobbies, and provide basic skill level instruction for school aged children in order to:

- a. Provide exposure to skills which may form the basis for enjoying lifetime leisure activities
- b. Contribute to gross motor and fine motor physical development
- c. Provide social settings in which social, moral and emotional growth can be fostered
- d. Provide the basis for leisure education (i.e. the teachings of the benefits of and wise use of leisure time).

#### Advanced Leisure Skill Development for School Aged Children.

Opportunities should be provided for those children who wish to further develop their interest and skills in a wide variety of leisure pursuits beyond the

basic level. Working with the education system to promote healthy active living programs and to create greater awareness of the opportunities that are available, will increase as the number of schools increase with growth.

#### Social Opportunities for Teens.

The maturing from youth to adult during teenage years, is often a critical time in the life of an individual. It is also a time when these difficulties may result in severe social problems. To offset this, opportunities should be provided for teens to:

- a. Learn about themselves and how they will react to various social settings and pressures.
- b. Develop positive social/emotional/moral skills, principles and convictions.
- c. Develop positive leisure lifestyle patterns, which will remain with them through adulthood.

#### Basic Leisure Skill Development for Adults.

Opportunities should be provided in a wide range of leisure endeavors and hobbies for adults who wish to learn new skills.

#### Advanced Leisure Skill Development For Adults.

Opportunities should be provided for those adults who wish to further develop at a higher level of participation in their interests or abilities in a wide variety of leisure pursuits.

#### Opportunities for Seniors.

Opportunities should be provided for senior citizens to participate in the leisure activities of their choice in order to:

- a. Maintain overall fitness levels.
- b. Maintain social contacts and continue to be involved in social environments.
- c. Provide a continuing sense of worth and meaning of life through continuing personal growth.

#### Interpreting the Environment.

Opportunities should be provided for every local resident to learn about, understand, relate to and experience all aspects of his/her environment.

#### Reflection/Escape.

Often growth can occur through escape, reflection, contact with nature and relaxation in a serene natural environment. Amenities and reclusive opportunities should be provided for residents to experience nature in this way and facilities should have quiet areas designated for people who wish to have quiet time and be with their thoughts.

#### Healthy Active Living Education.

All residents should be made aware of the ways they can best use their leisure time and the benefits they can expect as a result (e.g. growth and fulfillment).

### Recommendations

20. Initiate the Go Forward Approach to community development as outlined in the master plan and allocate sufficient staff resources.
21. Create and/or strengthen service partnerships with the private sector, service clubs, social service agencies, non-profit organizations and regional associations, and other levels of government to enhance the creation of a healthy and active community.

Continue to strengthen community volunteer development and capacity in conjunction with community groups and enhance relationships associations and regionally based organizations mandated to promote volunteerism.

### **Measurement<sup>27</sup>**

Reporting and monitoring measures will help the CPRC gauge progress towards effective implementation of The Health and Active Living Strategy. Outcome measures track the benefits received by the participants and stakeholders as a result of CPRC operations.

It will be important to understand the difference the CPRC Department is making in the lives of participants and facility users.

For each program, service and facility initiative there can be a maximum **two measures** established, many of which can be repeated in other areas. This will be helpful in making planning decisions from planning period to planning period.

Five areas of measurement have been established with examples of the types of *measures* that could be used (others can be added). Once the measures have been selected, *indicators* can be identified to understand the level to which it has been achieved (i.e. # of people satisfied with services, more people reporting involvement in programs, people changing the way in which they spend their leisure time, changes in eating habits, etc.).

### Health Measures

#### *Personal Health Measures*

- Increased awareness and accessibility to health and social services.
- Reductions in stress and anxiety levels as a result of being involved.
- Integration of healthy/active principles and determinants of health into everyday decision-making.

#### Indicators

- Personal health (e.g. physical and mental).

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<sup>27</sup> A detailed description of the measurement process is outlined in the HAL Strategy Appendix



- Accessible and quality services (e.g. availability of physicians, outreach, etc.).
- Personal and community safety (e.g. low crime rates, perception of safety, etc.).
- Recreation and parks programs, facilities and other services that meet the needs of the residents in measured ways.

#### *Individual Level Measures*

- Increase participation in established activities and sports.
- Changes in physical activity level and nutritional choices.
- Decreased screen time.
- More awareness of opportunities and their benefits to personal health.

#### Indicators

- Volunteerism and political engagement.
- Cultural inclusion (e.g. race, gender, ability, etc.).
- Connection to the community (sense of belonging).

#### *Social Level Measures*

- More gathering spaces and community design that fosters healthy activities and pursuits.
- More family activities that build on cultural values and traditions.
- Partnerships with social service organizations to strengthen capacity of community to interact.
- Expanded levels of volunteerism and civic involvement.
- Increased awareness of what is available.

#### Indicators

- Arts and culture activities (e.g. programs available, library, etc.).
- Cultural and social diversity (e.g. services available to newcomers, etc.).
- Protecting heritage (e.g. protecting heritage sites and rural feel, etc.).
- Embraces lifelong learning for all ages (e.g. preschool to senior).
- Availability of recreational areas (e.g. parks, trails, playgrounds, facilities etc.).

#### *Physical Environment Measures*

- Four season facility development, design and programming for all ages.
- Engagement of people in places and spaces {people places}.
- Accessible and affordable buildings and spaces.

#### Indicators

- Natural resource usage (e.g. extraction, industrial use of resources, etc.).
- Water quality (e.g. safe drinking water, clean river/lake water, etc.).
- Air quality (e.g. industrial/vehicle emissions, etc.).
- Wetlands/flora and fauna (e.g. preservation of natural rural areas, etc.).

- Built environment (e.g. management of growth, water, transportation, etc.).
- Personal environmental responsibility (e.g. recycling, local food, etc.).

#### *Policy and Planning Measures*

- A policy position that increases equity for gender access, affordability and mobility.
- Development policies that promote Active Transportation, trail connectivity and substantially more suitable parks and open spaces and play areas.
- Health and Active Living Leadership standards.
- Integration of Health and Active Living Strategy with broader municipal decision-making.

#### *CPRA Framework for Recreation 2015*

To gain insights into the performance of the CPRC Department in relationship to the National level, the matrix in the Appendix has been developed reflecting the various priorities outlined in each of the CPRA Framework's Five Goal Areas. This matrix is a tool that can be used during annual planning and evaluation meetings to measure the progress being made in East Gwillimbury on the priorities of the Framework.

#### Recommendations

20. Build capacity in the process of “results measurement” in the context of the methodology proposed.

Establish standard program and service measures supported by processes and systems to collect and analyze data. Use this process to increase targeted program content based on evidence-based data collection including demographics, psychographics and customer feedback.

### **Arts, Culture and Heritage**

Arts, culture and heritage should be considered in the context of music, theatre, fine arts, visual arts, film and multimedia, architecture, community traditions, and historical significance to the area. As community continues to grow new cultures will become an integral part of the community so it is advisable that the Town take steps not only to preserve past values and traditions, but also to celebrate the variety and diversity new cultures bring to the community.

The benefits that arts and culture bring to a community have been applauded for many years in many studies, and are known to: encourage social interaction; bring cultural backgrounds together; stimulate creativity and personal thought; contribute to economic development and tourism; contribute to the development and maintaining of healthy lifestyles; and build community.

Building community will become increasingly important, a critical component of which is providing opportunities for artistic, historical and social expression. Over

the past number of years a relatively informal approach has been taken to further promote and develop arts and culture opportunities. At time of writing this report the York Region Arts Council has expressed an interest in being a part of the new Health and Active Living Plaza, and continuing with the facilitation of artistic events in cooperation with the Town. The completion of the Municipal Cultural Plan in 2012, established five goals, to aid in the development and coordination of arts and culture in the community of East Gwillimbury.

1. Broaden the Town's Leadership Role.
2. Build a strong and collaborative cultural sector.
3. Grow culture driven economic development.
4. Conserve and promote history and heritage.
5. Celebrate diversity and inclusivity.

The plan identifies a number of key strategies to operationalize the goals. It is suggested that re-visiting this plan will provide a starting point for creating an Arts Culture and Heritage Strategy that is reflective of current and future community conditions and needs. The existing plan contains a number of recommendations that are still relevant, that could be integrated with any new direction proposed. The CPRC Department could form a close working relationship with the Heritage Advisory Committee and join forces with the Development Services Department, and other municipal departments to obtain input and assistance in strategy development.

Concurrent with Strategy Development, the department could begin to develop a formal Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee to develop a Policy to define a vision, mission, and principles and directions that are needed to move towards a sustainable arts, culture and heritage system. Working with existing arts and cultural groups and the Sharon Temple Board to identify ways to showcase arts, heritage and culture, in the community will create momentum to generate community interest and financial support from Town Council. The Town should continue to leverage partnership programming with the Sharon Temple Museum Society and consider the potential for a partnership with a new Visitors Centre where purpose built shared program space could be provided shifting the use of the Temperance Hall to permit space for private functions, meetings and gatherings.

Awareness of arts, cultural and heritage opportunities are an integral component of communication and marketing initiatives. Through a focused and strategically positioned communication strategy, this segment of community identity will become a critical component of healthy and active living.

Additional strategies for raising the visibility of arts, culture and heritage are outlined in the Facilities Section of this master plan.

### Recommendations

22. Initiate a review of the Municipal Cultural Plan in conjunction with the Development Services Department to determine relevancy to current community conditions.

23. Facilitate the creation of an Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee for representation, advocacy and guidance. Develop a strategy for the support and growth of Arts Culture and Heritage with the committee in conjunction with representatives from the arts community and in discussion with the Heritage Advisory Committee.
24. The Town should continue to leverage partnership programming with the Sharon Temple Museum Society and continue work to review the potential for a partnership with a proposed new Visitors Centre where purpose built shared program space could be provided.

## **Indoor and Outdoor Facilities**

### Overview

Some important East Gwillimbury facilities are at or nearing the end of normal operational lifecycles, with Mount Albert Community Centre and Holland Landing Community Centre are most in need of a facility refresh including upgrades and rehabilitation. It is recommended that both be upgraded with additional spaces allocated for youth and seniors along with meeting AODA accessibility requirements.

The Holland Landing Community Centre and Library require architectural feasibility review for expansion and upgrading. Given the desirability of “walk-to” facilities within Holland Landing, every effort should be made to not lose the capital asset value of the facility by letting required infrastructure upgrades including gymnasium expansion to OBA and volleyball standards, AODA standards, expanded lobby, improved library program spaces, improved capabilities for senior space and youth program room. This project could be funded in part with future provincial/federal infrastructure grant funding. The Mount Albert Community Centre is one of the most active centres within Town. In conjunction with the park redevelopment a renovation to Mount Albert Community Centre to include updated program space for fitness instructional programs and youth space will be required to expand and enhance services within this community. While the Ross Family Complex is a newer facility built approximately a decade later than the Holland Landing Community Centre, a refresh of this facility including rehabilitation and expansion may be required due to growth needs by the end of this study period.

The community halls are important community spaces, especially in the rural periphery in East Gwillimbury, as permitted events, community fund-raising dinners, celebrations will all help provide more potential diverse opportunities for socialization and community wellness. More attention however, is needed to ensure that every effort is being made to have maximum usage of these facilities whether through programming, rentals or longer-term leases for portions of available times for these facilities.

The new Health and Active Living Plaza project scope will need to be adjusted given the slowdown in the pace of new residential sales and occupancy, MPAC assessments, Upper York Sewer System delays and eventual development levy financial contributions to the project. The facility should now have a scope of size between 40 to 50 thousand square feet and allow the following components: aquatics, 3 meeting and program rooms, full size double gymnasium, fitness space (potentially through contract provision), flexible space for arts and cultural presentations and customer service and staff support space. As per the East Gwillimbury Library Master Plan, 10 to 15 thousand square feet of space may also be funded for inclusion into the centre.

East Gwillimbury should continue to work with both Boards of Education for community use of schools. In particular, the agreement with the York Board of Education at the Phoebe Gilman community space is very successful and similar school uses in the future. Partnership opportunities with Post-Secondary after this study period should also be strongly considered.

The East Gwillimbury Sports Complex should continue to try to maximize ice utilization for as long as possible to extend the capital asset value of both arenas before the requirement of growth-based participation requires a phased in addition. The trigger for the addition of a third arena would be when the population reaches 40,000 or ice demand requirements beyond one additional arena. The arena would ideally be located north and attached to the existing complex making use of present servicing and ease of access of the east parking capacity. Subject to separate study and review a fourth arena could be “roughed-in” and basic mechanical and structural elements present for future use.

### Process

This study compared provision of East Gwillimbury facilities against common Ontario standards of similar population sizes for review of current and future indoor facility provision. Each site visit was conducted to allow a cursory review of the condition of each facility and to assist in determination of current and future needs of residents against the current stage in the life of the facility. The facility inventory was reviewed for condition of amenities and overall estimated lifecycle status.

In addition East Gwillimbury was compared to other local municipalities in terms of facility options and overall yields per sq.ft. against population standards.

Use of census tract population data allows geographic analysis to allow monitoring of servicing to all areas within East Gwillimbury as the town continues to grow.

Given that East Gwillimbury strives to be an active, healthy and safe community some key principles were used to emphasize how facilities should be provided.

### **Principles**

1. **Healthy Personal Choices** – make the active choice the easy and most attractive choice.
2. **Whole of government approach** – wherever possible integrate Healthy Active Living planning principles in all areas of municipal government planning.
3. **Comprehensive** – use all levels of the socio-ecological model (Determinants of Health) to address factors affecting healthy life decision-making.
4. **Partnerships** – collaborate with social, health, arts and culture and other similarly positioned stakeholders to deliver a wide range of health and active living services and seek long-term political, financial and organizational sustainability.
5. **Community Engagement** – involve citizens in ways that are relevant to their interests and desires in creating a healthy and active community, provide leadership training and recognize their achievements.
6. **Evidence Informed and Effective** – Use the best available evidence and proven best practices to inform decisions and evaluations.
7. **Equity** – Eliminate disparities in access to physical activity opportunities and reduce disparities that result from geography, socio-economic status, and gender by focusing on inactive groups and groups with inequitable access and other barriers.

8. **Engagement** – create an environment that educates and creates awareness of opportunities for all citizens and a system of evaluation that provides constructive feedback when setting future programs, facilities and services.
9. **Transparency** – This strategy and resultant decision making process will involve the community to ensure that residents and visitors feel engaged in the resulting programs, facilities and services.

**Current East Gwillimbury Indoor Facilities**

Census Tract	Sq. M	Sq. Ft.	Community Centres (sq. ft)	Indoor CC Allocation Per 2016 Census Capita	Library
Holland Landing (453.02)	1424 <u>427</u> 1851 195  <u>418</u> 613	15333 <u>4602</u> 19935 2100  <u>4500</u> 6600	Holland Landing CC River Drive CC  Phoebe Gilman Community Space (school)  ** Newmarket private pool use	<b>0.21 m/person</b> <b>2.35 sq.ft./person</b>  (11,270 Population)	<i>Holland Landing Library</i>  <b>** 7500 sq. ft. not included in totals</b>
Sharon and Queensville (453.01)	372 6631 163 <u>171</u> 7337	4009 71379 1764 <u>1850</u> 79002	Queensville CC Sportsplex North Union CC Sharon Temperance Hall	<b>1.62 m/person</b> <b>17.51 sq.ft./person</b>  (4,510 Population)	
Mount Albert (453.00)	622 729 <u>906</u> 2257	6700 7857 <u>9760</u> 24317	Mount Albert CC Mount Albert Lions Hall Ross Family Complex	<b>0.33 m/person</b> <b>3.56 sq.ft./person</b>  (8,275 Population)	<i>Ross Family Complex Library</i>  <b>** 6000 sq. ft. not included in totals</b>
<b>Sq. M &amp; Sq Ft. Totals</b>	<b>12058</b>	<b>129854</b>		<b>0.50 m/person</b> <b>5.40 sq.ft./person</b> (24,055 Population)  <b>** Comparator Avg. 6.37 Sq.Ft./Capita</b>	13500 Sq. Ft.



The table below compares the level of indoor facility provision by EG versus local municipalities as a start point to determine best fit of level of provision for indoor facilities

### Indoor Facility Provision and Local Comparators

Facility Provision by Municipality				
		Sq. Ft. Indoor Recreation	Population	Sq. Ft. Per Capita
<b>Township of Georgina (2016)</b>		254229	45455	<b>* 5.59</b>
<b>Town of East Gwillimbury</b>				
EG - arenas	71379		24055	2.97
EG - community centres	<u>58475</u>		24055	2.43
	129854	129854	24055	<b>*5.40</b>
<b>Town of Aurora (2013)</b>		310975	53885	<b>*5.77</b>
Mississauga (2013) community centres	767529		722268	1.06
Mississauga - arenas	987132		722268	1.37
Mississauga – seniors centres	36560		722268	0.05
Mississauga - cultural, gymnastics etc.	<u>99129</u>		722268	0.14
Mississauga Indoor Facilities (2013)	<b>1890350</b>	1890350	722268	2.62
<b>Town of Milton (2015)</b>		416169	97230	<b>*4.28</b>
<b>King Township (2015)</b>		187894	22109	<b>*8.50</b>
<b>Bradford West Gwillimbury (2014)</b>		275005	32468	<b>*8.47</b>
<b>Average of Key Comparators (* In bold)</b>				<b>6.37</b>

### Facility Observations

The current level of provision of indoor facilities at East Gwillimbury yields 5.40 sq. ft. per capita (24,055) against a recommended standard of 6.0 sq. ft. per capita. The current level of provision is appropriate given that population growth to this point did not warrant certain types of enhanced indoor amenities such as aquatic services which other larger comparator communities have within facility inventories.

The three community facilities that form the largest square footage are the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex (71,379 sq. ft.), Holland Landing Community Centre and Library (22,333 sq. ft.), and the Ross Family Complex and Library (15,760 sq. ft.).

Some facilities are at or nearing the end of normal operational lifecycles, with Mount Albert Community Centre and Holland Landing Community Centre most in need of facility upgrades and rehabilitation. It is recommended that both be upgraded with additional spaces allocated for Seniors at Holland Landing and Youth and instructional program space at both centres meeting AODA accessibility requirements. The Holland Landing Community Centre and Library requires an architectural review for feasibility of expansion and upgrading. Given the desirability of “walk-to” facilities within Holland Landing, every effort should be made to maintain and enhance the capital asset value of the facility by letting required infrastructure upgrades including gymnasium expansion to OBA and volleyball standards, AODA standards, expanded lobby, improved library spaces, improved capabilities for senior space and youth program room needs; all of which could be funded through a future provincial/federal infrastructure grant funding. While the Ross Family Complex is a newer facility built in the early 90’s, rehabilitation and expansion of the facility may be required due to growth needs by the end of this study period.

Most large community centres in other municipalities have the following components:

- 25 metre leisure pool with beach entry and leisure components (spray stations etc.).
- A smaller pool that typically can serve as a teaching area for young children and may also contain a graduated therapeutic pool – the tank is a higher temperature than the main pool.
- A large gymnasium and change room facilities (preferably 4 change rooms) that meet Ontario Basketball Association and Ontario Volleyball Association standards.
- Multiple meeting and program rooms that can be programmed for a range of activities and typically have wash basins, sinks and a restroom may be contained within. Such rooms should be large enough to allow use of a divider so that flexibility of use can accommodate larger and smaller gatherings and uses.
- Entrance lobby that has clear visual lines that allows proper security and knowledge of who is in the facility when entering change rooms and pool.
- Lobby areas that allow youth games, exhibits, potential adjacent rental space for large gatherings
- The facility should be able to have segregated uses with other areas closed off in non-peak hours

Library facilities ideally should be located within sightlines upon entry to allow customer and library services adjunct to the facility. Excellent examples of co-location of libraries are the MacBain Centre at Niagara Falls, Frank McKechnie Community Centre at Mississauga and the Angus Glen Community Centre at Halton Hills.

Given the investment being planned for the Health and Active Living Plaza, it is helpful to identify communities that have built similar structures, some very recently that allow excellent capital and operating cost information with some key metrics:

**MacBain Community Centre, Niagara Falls (built 2005)**

- 105,000 sq. ft.; key comparator to HALP centre.
- Aquatic facility, double gymnasium, Library.
- Meeting rooms, child care, community partners, fitness.
- \$20.250 million construction cost.
- Operating cost \$1.2 million (maintenance/operations w/o programming).
- Estimated net income \$400 - \$600k after programming expenses.
- One-time capital infrastructure membership fee to join aquatic programs

**Cassie Campbell Community Centre – Brampton (2008).**

- 165,000 sq. ft. two ice rinks.
- 850 seat spectator viewing, 25M six lane pool and leisure pool, meeting rooms, child care, fitness centre, outdoor skate park, splash pads.
- Three outdoor soccer fields (convertible to 2 cricket pitches).
- Total cost \$44 million.

**Meadowvale Community Centre and Library (Built 2016, 2017 operating costs)**

- 85,000 sq. ft. aquatics (2 tanks) meeting rooms, library, youth, seniors rooms, fitness, double gym. Total capital cost \$36 million.
- 16.1 FTE to operate.
- \$1.574 expenses, \$1,054 revenue, net cost \$520k or \$1.92 sq. ft. (65,000 sq. ft. of recreation facility space except library).

**Timmins Aquatics Centre addition and twin pad addition Feasibility Study (2017).**

- 24,000 sq. ft. pool (25 metre + therapy pool).
- 26,000 sq. ft. meeting rooms, child care, community partners, fitness  
Total aquatics/cc cost \$30 million.
- Twin arena ice pads \$25 million.
- Arena double pad operating cost \$200-400k per year.
- Aquatic area net operating cost \$500k per year. (\$950k expenses, \$450k income).

**Richmond Hill Oak Ridges Community Centre**

- Approximately 50,000 sq. ft
- Aquatics Centre (25 metre pool, learning and hydrotherapy tank), single gymnasium, program rooms and fitness.
- \$26 million Approximate Construction Costs

Community Halls:

- North Union Community Centre/Hall – This centre and adjoining outdoor facilities are important rural places to carry on social and community activities given its northern location in the community
- Sharon Temperance Hall – The Town should continue to leverage partnership programming with the Sharon Temple Museum Society and consider the potential for a partnership with a new Visitors Centre where purpose built shared program space could be provided shifting the use of the Temperance Hall to permit space for private functions, meetings and gatherings.
- Mount Albert Lions Hall is currently limited by a lack of full sewage capabilities and therefore is limited in usage despite large crowds attending soccer games and tournaments which in turn has spawned dependence on portable toilets to service the outdoor soccer pitches.
- River Drive Hall has some deficiencies in conditions and parameters for use as a standard community hall given the age, current location, restricted parking and smaller size. As the rental use is less than optimum, and newer larger facility options such as the Health and Active Living Plaza will be introduced in close proximity to the hall the Town should review use rates and community needs at the hall when the Health and Active Living Plaza is operational.

East Gwillimbury Facility Needs against Standards

An essential step in the assessment process is to assess existing facility provision in relationship to other standards. The table below shows the appropriateness of current provision and contains comments to consider for the future.

Indoor Facility Type and Current Inventory	Recommended Provision Standard (Population/ Participants)	Current Supply Population 24,055	Current Surplus or Gap	Future Requirement to Population of 46,846
Major Community Centre (Over 50,000 sq. ft.)	1:50,000	0	0	<b>One Major Community Centre</b>  The planned 2018-19 HALP Centre will meet major community centre service provision requirements to 2028. The flexibility of having this centre will allow consideration of redevelopment plans for minor community centres.
Minor Community Centre  Holland Landing, 15,333 sq. ft. Ross Family Complex, 15,760 sq. ft.	1:10,000	2	1	<b>One Minor Community Centre</b>  Mount Albert Community Centre is in need of updating. Expansion of Mount Albert population (600 units) may allow upgrading to a minor Community Centre by meeting upgrade standards and potential use of infrastructure funding.  Both Holland Landing Community Centre (first priority) and the Ross Family Complex are approaching life cycle upgrade requirements.  As the population grows to the west of Holland River, consideration should be given to a new minor community centre, near the end of the study period (2028 and beyond) with land assembly well in advance of construction. The facility could act as an athletic fieldhouse to also service adjoining sports fields.

Shared / Contracted Facilities

The current Phoebe Gilman community space is well used, especially during school break periods. Similar access to school facilities should be expanded in the future, especially when there is a proximity to outdoor facilities such as those at Harvest Hills Park that contain a splashpad, a mini soccer field, basketball facilities and picnic shelters.

The current rented pool space fulfills basic introduction to swimming is not recommended to continue once the Health and Active Living Plaza and indoor aquatic facilities are introduced, as size limits any future program expansion as the population increases.

The following table shows the appropriateness of the current provision of community halls and meeting rooms against a recognized standard, and identifies requirements to continue to meet standards as the municipality continues to grow.

Indoor Facility Type Current Inventory	Recommended Provision Standard (Population)	Current Supply Population 24,055	Current Surplus or Gap	Future Requirement To Population Of 46,846
<b>Community Halls/ Meeting Rooms</b>  EG Sports Complex Ontario Loft Canada Hall A Canada Hall B Holland Landing Community Centre York Trillium Room Golden Anchor Room Simcoe Room Dalhousie Room Mount Albert Community Centre Mount Albert Lion's CC River Drive Park Centre Ross Family Complex Program Room Seniors Room Queensville CC North Union CC Phoebe Gilman, Harvest Hills	1:2000	14	(2)	12
Indoor Ice Pads - Rink 1 - Rink 2	1:10,000 or One pad per 600 registered participants  Current Registration 500	2	(0.5)	As it is not economically feasible to add only a single ice pad, it is recommended that two pads be added to the EG Sports Complex (north), both with brine pipes roughed in the ice 4 pad.  The facility would be built upon a satisfactory feasibility study and /business plan for ice use at Rink 3.  Rink 4 could be used initially for multi-purpose uses including indoor soccer.

The East Gwillimbury Sports Complex at this time meets ice time demand from user groups, however when population reaches 40,000, plans should be ready to add one arena plus the possible provision for mechanical and structural readiness for a 4<sup>th</sup> arena at the same time. The current utilization is at the approximate level of 80-90% of prime ice time hours, however, the utilization drops off sharply by the end of minor hockey season in March. One ice pad does provide continuous use through the summer season.

The utilization of the Sports Complex could have day camps configured to use more of the arena floor surfaces as a new desiccant dehumidification system is now being installed. In this manner, the Canada Hall can be reconstituted as a premiere rental facility with up to date Audio Visual equipment, kitchen facilities and accoutrements. As well, top tier catering arrangements for the corporate function market should be considered along with retaining an upscale rental environment at Canada Hall. Additionally considerations for the Sports Complex expansion to include a dedicated sports hall of fame, dryland stretching and conditioning area and specialized hockey development facilities.

Indoor Facility Type Current Inventory	Recommended Provision Standard (Population)	Current Supply Population 24,055	Current Surplus or (Gap)	Future Requirement To Population of 46,846
<b>Indoor Aquatic Centre</b> * Current use of a private indoor hotel pool at Newmarket is not recommended to continue	1:40,000	0	(0.5)	1  The HALP Centre (2018-2019) will meet needs to 2028 with a leisure tank plus lane tank.
<b>Older Adult Centres</b> * There are currently two dedicated "seniors rooms"; one at Holland Landing Community Centre and one at the Ross Family Complex. Both are inadequate for the needs relating to upcoming population growth in this age group.	1:10,000	2	0	1  It is recommended that the Town allocate space for a separate seniors centre. Investigate dedicated seniors/older adult operational funding as well with a self-governing structure.
<b>Youth Centre</b> There are approximately 1,200 youth between 9 and 14 years of age in 2016 Census.	1:2000	0	2	Programming at HALP centre will form 1 centre equivalent. Town needs another dedicated space that is situated in high youth population area and with easy transportation access.
<b>Gymnasias</b> * There is one gym at the Ross Family Complex. Other large spaces can be considered auditoriums as they do not meet typical multi-sport requirements. Given the growth of competitive basketball and volleyball, a full-size gym facility is required to meet competitive OABA requirements.	1:25,000	1	1	2.0  The upcoming HALP centre will meet one of the two required gymnasias. It is recommended that in conjunction with redevelopment of either Holland Landing CC or the Ross Family Complex, the current gymnasium/ auditorium space be expanded.

Indoor walking/running tracks should be provided at both the Health and Active Living Plaza and possibly at the future Sports Complex expansion to provide for separate clienteles at each facility to further encourage active lifestyles. Experiences of walking tracks at other arenas (i.e. Thames Centre Flight Centre) have noted that traditional spectators do become “walkers”.

### Recommendations

As growth in the population of East Gwillimbury has been delayed for a period and new growth is now quickly moving forward, facility planning requires careful review of rental, membership and programming options to assure revenue capture and financial sustainability in conjunction with assumption of and development of new facilities.

- Continue planning and design for the new Health & Active Living Plaza facility to include an aquatics centre (25m lane pool, learning and hydro-therapy tank), gymnasium and program space. Where possible and practical incorporate phasing the facility. Construction and operating of the facility must be timed with growth thresholds.

Continue with partner development for service delivery enhancement at the Health & Active Living Plaza.

- At the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex, ice time demand for a 3<sup>rd</sup> arena will predicate expansion of a structure to the north section of the facility with the 3<sup>rd</sup> arena being set up for ice use immediately. The 3<sup>rd</sup> arena could include

- some of the supporting facility amenities as described in this plan. Consideration validated by separate study for a mechanical and structural preparations for a 4<sup>th</sup> arena could be included.
27. The retention of smaller centres, halls and facilities is important given the importance of such facilities to rural and hamlet social and recreational needs. Business plan is required for each to determine long term role and extent to which they should be upgraded and/or expanded through renovations and building expansion.
  28. The Holland Landing Community Centre facility will require expansion and enhancement with a full size gymnasium to accommodate predicted growth. This should be accompanied by upgrades to the entire facility for library, lobby, change areas, program rooms and accommodating needs of youth and older adults.
  29. The Mount Albert Community Centre facility will require updating and expansion with expanded youth and programming spaces including instructional fitness.
  30. The Ross Family Complex will require a study and review for a potential facility expansion and enhancement project at the end of this study period.
  31. Facility Design Considerations and Emerging Trends
    - Facility renovations wherever required will should also include Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to present options for indoor users to link to outdoor activities and the converse where appropriate. For instance, pre-school, children and teen indoor program space should be in visual range of a range of outdoor play spaces. (playgrounds, skate park, basketball hoops, etc.)
    - Lobbies in buildings should not simply be a catchment area for visitors to linger before program activity starts or as a “pickup area” after programs are completed. These places should allow opportunities for socialization, to be able to have healthy snacks and refreshments, to be able to get easily get information about Town and Region of York services and activities and to feel comfortable as a great place to be. These areas can be used to focus interest by being able to view children’s progress in activities, to be able to see other programs at the same time (perhaps for multiple children in a household), having “pop up” activities and events, performing arts spaces and to browse at the Library at the same time. Examples of indoor play structures and rock climbing facilities utilize lobby spaces and pedestrian circulation space as active spaces.
    - Children, pre-teens and teens all have different levels of interest in various programs and sports and therefore program equipment must be centralized and provided by facility staff on a “just in time” basis, not dependent on storage at each program location (use of central program equipment storage).



- Public art, great design, use of light, use of transparent viewable spaces and occasional special events can transform such spaces from drab and boring to exciting and dynamic places to be.
32. The changing demographics of East Gwillimbury will require more flexibility of building operation dictated by input from user surveys, community input, new rental demands and changing program trends with regard to hobbies, new skills, new clubs, new sports such as pickleball. This activity is very popular with the “active senior” population that is distinctly more active than traditional older adult activities that tend to be more passive.
  33. Continue with budget allocations to Capital Repair and Replacement reserve fund to ensure asset integrity.
  34. Determine whether the greatest public good exists to promote leisure interests.
    - Be offered as a community resource at minimal cost to address service gaps (i.e. after school activity for children or low-income access).
    - Be programmed by CPRC staff.
    - Carefully review long-term rentals given that such terms may restrict wider required community access.

#### Future Facility Requirements

Allocated Development Charge study (2016) indoor space allows for up to 150,000 more sq. ft. which will provide a service ratio of 5.97 sq. ft. per 1000 population (at 46,846 population). This could also be increased through the 2018 Development Charge Review.

Growth pressures will be experienced primarily in the Sharon/Queensville area and West Holland Landing given current supply and predicted demands. The proposed centrally located Health and Active Living Plaza facility will meet required indoor provision for a majority of the population until approximately 2028 of the study period.

The makeup and elements of the Health and Active Living Plaza facility is detailed separately however, aquatics, gymnasias, social and recreation program rooms, and fitness could comprise the key elements of the facility. It is recommended that EG investigate the potential of a fitness contractor for fitness services given intensive need for equipment which can be more easily expensed and replaced by the private sector as depreciated assets.

Near the end of new development period (2028) given dependency on the Upper York Sewer System completion, pressure will build for west Holland Landing park areas and upgraded indoor spaces for residents, either through expansion of the Holland Landing Community Centre or a new facility west of the Holland River post 2028. In the short-term a pedestrian bridge linking Holland Landing West to Parks and Community Centre amenities East of the Holland River will assist.

Remaining indoor development space allocations should allow provision of dedicated seniors centre should be provided by the municipality together with

Programmable space in major/minor centres as needs permit. As well, such allocation should provide for development impacts to be recognized through expansion of the existing major community centres of Holland Landing and Ross Family Complex.

### Recommendations

#### 35. Leveraging Outdoor Spaces

- Community spaces such as picnic shelters, horseshoe pits, badminton and volleyball courts could be programmed with the aid of building service staff that could store necessary program equipment in central locations and provide such amenities at the place and times required when outdoor conditions allow.
- Given upgrading of park and recreation indoor and outdoor amenities in proximity to the proposed Health and Active Living Plaza, consideration should also be given to partnership/matching funding with either or both Boards of Education for the following facilities: artificial turf multi-use field (soccer, rugby, football, etc.) with an outdoor track and a lit major baseball diamond.

#### 36. Program Planning and Permitting of Public Spaces

- Review program attendance and fill rates regularly.
- Review rental take-up and degree to which facility hourly-slots are booked or not booked at desired yields, plan new facility booking opportunities accordingly.
- Have back-up plans for use of programmable spaces with programs do not fill to break-even capacities (or use as basis for future program growth in plans).
- Use psychographic and demographic information to better set up linkages and cues to welcoming cultural diversity within EG facilities; use community opinion leaders to help bridge potential distrust or fear of entering municipal facilities.
- Utilize lobbies of community facilities to showcase arts, culture, sports, heritage, and social engagement opportunities by community groups and sport groups. Regular arts and cultural expositions can brighten entrance spaces to facilities and have the potential to further engage the community in a greater diversity of activities.
- Maximize every square foot of every facility; have a program, membership or rental plan for each space and regularly review the condition, attractiveness and capabilities of each municipal space to improve yields of revenue and usage by the community keeping in mind efficiency and effectiveness of facility/program operations. Be flexible in determination of what hours may work; with busy schedules and commuter populations non-traditional hours of operation may be required.

### Additional Facility Development/Enhancement Recommendations

#### 37. Facility Design and Construction Guiding Principles

- Use of “shovel-ready” and “J.I.T. – just in time” capital project planning for major facility upgrades are very useful to provide a municipal advantage to East Gwillimbury in applications for and receipt of federal/provincial infrastructure funding projects. Establishing a “ready-range” of capital project options that allow potential funding departments to use “top up” monies for quick construction such as trail construction is often utilized; municipalities that have clear community and Council endorsement of capital plans receive more prompt approvals and higher overall grants.
- Private vehicles, municipal transit, accessibility transit, scooters, bicycles and walking should each have routes, design and safety in mind. The need to have safe means to arrive at the facility and then enter the facilities needs considered all ages. (Parents with young children, wheelchair & scooter use, persons with poor balance etc.)
- When vehicular lay-bys are provided of sufficient length and size, a facility is more able to handle municipal buses, accessibility transit and private vehicles for mobility challenged clients and increase attendance for all ages and capabilities utilizing a leisure facility.
- Facilities that have paved parking with good footing conditions, curbs, vegetation and drainage helps mitigate slip and fall claims and pedestrian/vehicular collisions. Use of permeable surfaces that allow on-site drainage to lessen loads on municipal storm drainage systems.
- Paths into facilities could be heated so as to minimize use of salt and avoid damage to hard surfaces and salt tracking into the facility. A safe dry surface with traction (no ice/snow) is particularly important for clients with mobility challenges. Use of glycol circulation pipes buried under concrete paths can utilize waste heat from indoor HVAC systems. *Best Practice – Niagara Parks Commission; Table Rock Welcome Centre, Niagara Parks Commission.*
- Heavy vehicles and delivery vehicles should be directed to and utilize separate delivery access to the facility, preferably not visible to facility clients. This also helps eliminate potential pedestrian and delivery vehicle conflicts.
- The Region of York has a dedicated web presence and resources toward CPTED, disabled access and “placemaking” to create facilities that are more visible, allowing users to see activities and spaces that lead the eye to many options; visibility with many “eyes on” create safer spaces for all. As an example, the Region of Peel has partnered with other municipalities in the Region to review use of CPTED standards to assist in lowering incidents.
- Identify strategic linkages with the Library Service at both the Ross Family Complex and Holland Landing Community centre for welcoming residents and linkages to settlement for new Canadians.

## Facility Best Practices and “Placemaking”

Education in and use of “placemaking “inspires people to collectively re-imagine and re-invent public spaces within communities by strengthening the connection between people and the places they share,

Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value and is more than just promoting better urban design.



**An excellent example of placemaking at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex**

Placemaking facilitates create patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

With community-based participation at its center, an effective placemaking process capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, and it results in the creation of quality public spaces that contribute to people’s health, happiness, and wellbeing as shown at the right. **Source: [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)**



Utilize “best practices” in use of placemaking, where a facility is designed so that users can see activities and spaces from one area of a building or outdoor space to the next.

Amenities can be included such as “airport-style” washroom and changeroom entrances, elimination of closed-in stairwells in favour of clear stairway railings; customer service desks located in central and strategic locations.

Enhance the potential for advancing arts, culture and heritage by incorporating indoor spaces for concerts, theatrical presentations, events and public activities, an art gallery and archives, artefact displays, indoor play and activity spaces to meet the needs of residents and visitors with the new Health and Active Living Plaza Facility that includes a library and resources.

More clearly identify strategic linkages with the library service at the Ross Family Complex and Holland Landing Community Centre for welcoming residents, as a leisure resource and linkage to settlement for new Canadians

It is suggested that facility staff cross-promote heritage, culture and the arts with library services. As library services are excellent traffic generators, customer service functions and facility welcoming activities should be coordinated between CPRC and Library Services with awareness and planning of co-existent program objectives.

***For more information on PPS principles and Placemaking see Appendix 1 – Page 209***

### **Outdoor Amenities at Major Facilities**

Facilities at entrances should have overhang awning structures to allow protection from elements for those clients waiting for public transit or caregivers providing auto transportation. As well, there should be benches and natural shelter (shrubs, grasses, etc.) built into the design to prevent wind-throw at entrances and harsher environments for clients awaiting pickup.



The splash pad facility shown to the left is immediately adjacent to the Huron Park Community centre together with high quality edge treatments and generous seating.

***Huron Park Community Centre - City of Mississauga***



Entrance treatments and landscaping adjacent to community centre to the right help create a sense of quality and attractiveness. Note outdoor seating and awning for clients waiting for pickup.  
**Frank McKechnie Community Centre, Mississauga**



Outdoor settings should follow the “placemaking” principle and lead clients from indoor settings to options for leisure to the outdoors in an informed and attractive way. Use of trailhead signage allows looped trails which link to major trail systems or come back to the facility.

The view from within the **MacBain Centre – City of Niagara Falls** is shown above. The gymnasium looks out to an outdoor park with a skateboard facility playground and basketball court.



There should be a sense of “arrival” upon entry to a facility. Benches and trees along pathways to the facility allow a feeling of entrance to a leisure facility, slowing the tempo for users, allowing resting places for older or challenged clients – this is a leisure facility and the objectives of a leisure

environment are set immediately upon entry to the grounds. The main lobby should be spacious, bright and attractive, leading the eye to multiple activities and interests using “placemaking” theory. Often vertical glass curtain walls are used as a best practice in modern community centre lobbies.

***Meadows Community Centre entry lobby – City of Edmonton***



Lobby spaces can be both inviting and functional. Pictured below is a visible and accessible “storefront” centralized customer service centre for the City of Niagara and the Parks and Recreation Department.

***MacBain Centre – Niagara Falls***



Outdoor landscaping leading to major facilities should be of high quality and create a sense of place and beauty throughout the year. Even in winter, prairie grasses and shrubs can be carefully selected to allow texture, colour and buffers from wind when walking from a parking lot to the facility.

***Meadows Community Centre, Edmonton***

Given that facilities try to make the best use of natural light to ensure a relationship between the outdoors and indoors, a particular challenge involves ensuring that building fenestration (one-way film) does not allow viewing from the outside into the facility for program activity that is sensitive. (ie. Fitness, Aquatics) Plantings thorny shrubs at the exterior of aquatic windows helps avoid inappropriate viewing by persons outdoors.



Do not allow newspaper boxes, donation boxes etc. to dominate entry into a facility. An example of good landscaping negated by such accessories is shown here.

Outdoor amenities such as picnic shelters, tennis courts, basketball courts, bocce courts, trailhead shelters, horseshoe pits, BMX , skateboard areas require shade trees and benches combined with landscaped resting places such as ledgerrock that allow formal and informal seating. Outdoor gathering areas (patio or equivalent) may augment indoor spaces for events and receptions and increase rental income yields.



Use of portable chairs and tables that are flexible allowing differing sizes of groups to gather in various configurations.

***Bryant Park New York City***





Outdoor lighting (up lighting, or bollard ground level lighting) is also extremely important in that such features enhance the attractiveness for receptions and evening rentals.

Creative use of LED lighting and variant colors help differentiate the leisure setting from “mall or commercial lighting” contexts. A sense of safety and intimate surroundings become possible and accentuates the investment in great ground

horticultural beds, premium pathway surfaces etc. With the potential of LED bulbs and configurable colors within LED lights, color changes enhance the sense of arrival to a facility.

### ***Commonwealth Community Centre, Edmonton,***

The picture to the right shows the impact the combination of quality vegetation, lighting bollards and pathway surfaces at night that create great atmosphere for evening rentals and events.



### **Indoor Facility – Entry Design Features and Maintenance**

Entrance doors should preferably be motion-activated and utilize a double-sliding door design to allow no need for push-button activation for door openers for mobility challenged clients. A vestibule limits wind entry into the facility and should be constructed with a slight time delay between the exterior entry door and the interior entry door to prevent wind entry into a facility.

The entry to a facility should be spacious, with lots of natural light, with durable flooring surfaces, seating that is preferably mobile, and in immediate view of a customer service counter. The service counter should have multiple levels so that

children and clients using wheelchairs, scooters may address facility staff at eye level.

Another best practice feature provision of at least one quality art design feature in a lobby area to allow local recognition of artists and to create diversity of visual interest and potential recognition of donors to the facility and its services.



Lobby areas and program areas which involve instruction or need for audio quality require sound attenuation. A common error in new buildings is to eliminate attention to these measures only to find that the building becomes very difficult to communicate within for customer service staff, for visitors in lobby areas to converse and for programming staff to provide instruction.

Facilities should use a central storage system where possible for program needs and minimize “dedicated” spaces or storage within facility rooms. This allows maximum utility and flexibility. Building service personnel become an adjunct to recreation programs by providing “just in time” program equipment in wheeled storage containers normally stored in a central location.

Placemaking principles suggest that multiple viewing angles and “triangulation” would have the most impact at creating interest in multiple activities within a centre. Use of floor to ceiling glass is a best practice used in many new facilities. There should be a relationship between the indoors and the outdoors and more visual privacy for sensitive program areas (i.e. Preschoolers).



Note the pre-school program area located in a corner of the building has excellent access to a playground and landscaped areas.

**MacBain Centre – Niagara Falls**

Facilities should be constructed with thought of how to maintain overhead lighting and HVAC over pools and structural obstacles. Either provide overhead catwalk access or specify appropriate access for mobile lift systems.

*“Spider lift” unit, for indoor and outdoor facilities  
City of Mississauga*



Aquatic facilities should make a connection to the outdoors; this is especially appreciated in the winter. The forested area seen through the windows of the aquatic area of this facility also shelters the facility, lowers energy costs and enriches the visual diversity and attractiveness of the facility.



**River Grove Community Centre  
Mississauga**

Components of indoor aquatic facilities should include a therapy pool, zero entry for accessibility, hot tub and leisure/lane pool combinations; waterslides require review of extra staffing costs due to regulations.



Edmonton's **Commonwealth Community Centre** makes excellent use of natural woods and contemporary open design concepts for a “warm” design feature.

### **Building Security and Safety**

Ideally, facility staff should be aware of the identity of all persons entering the facility that take part in program uses such as fitness, aquatics, gym programs and the like that involve use of change rooms and showers. A check in system that allows access with a valid access control pass must be designed to allow control by the customer service desk or station near change rooms. Preferably this should involve electronic access control of member/program cards.

Use of infra-red counters is helpful in ensuring that metrics of attendance and facility utilization can occur. Times of day, quantity of use both going in and going out can be analyzed and helps to assist with building cleaning schedules, staffing decisions and even degrees of washroom maintenance. Best practice : City of Mississauga (indoors), Niagara Parks Commission (outdoors).

Washrooms should be constructed so that entrances are barrier free to discourage ability for private disruption and vandalism. As well, some facilities have unisex and family change rooms along with flexibly signed dedicated washrooms that allow for usage by all citizens.

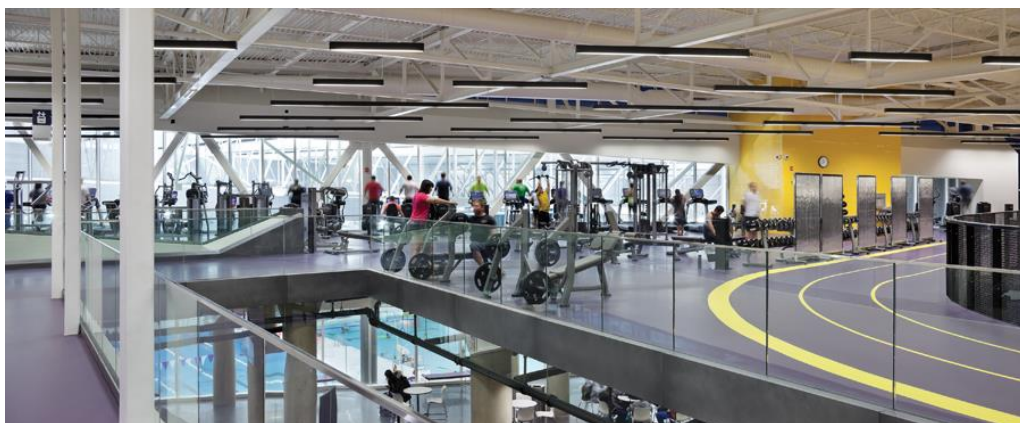


***Example of a barrier free entrance.***

Facilities should be designed with an “open concept” in mind. Stairways should be glass shielded and transparent. Combinations of “see and be seen” can be achieved in this manner by provision of transparent glass barriers and adjacency of facility components such as fitness areas, running tracks, aquatic facilities etc. Stairwells, wherever they are open to the public, should be open and transparent rather than hidden behind walls. Male, female, unisex and family change room options should be available.



**Angus Glen Community Centre  
Municipality of Halton Hills**



***Clareview Community Recreation Centre  
Edmonton***

Provision of bathing suit spin dryers is used by many facilities to minimize dripping water in change rooms and is used to facilitate easier and quicker transition to street clothes after aquatic activities.



Provision of healthy snacks, hot and cold beverages, basic program amenities for sale and flexible seating arrangements within lobby areas and program equipment is a best practice often in small tuck shops at community centres

Providing arts, culture and program space, equipment and facility amenities in lobbies for children and teens such as indoor play structures and equipment, rock-climbing, table games, and foosball, encourages being active, socialization and for families to come together to a centre and stay longer to enjoy multi-service options such as libraries, health services, financial and civic information along with leisure choices.



***Rock Climbing Wall in Lobby – Town of Orillia***



***Art Gallery Space in Lobby at City of Vaughan***

A busy games area within  
**Sunset Recreation Centre**  
**City of Vancouver**



Common Area – Living Room Space with Views to Natural Areas  
**Oak Ridges Community Centre – Richmond Hill**



An example of an alternative to  
permanent indoor fieldhouse

**“Coverall” building**  
**University of Guelph**

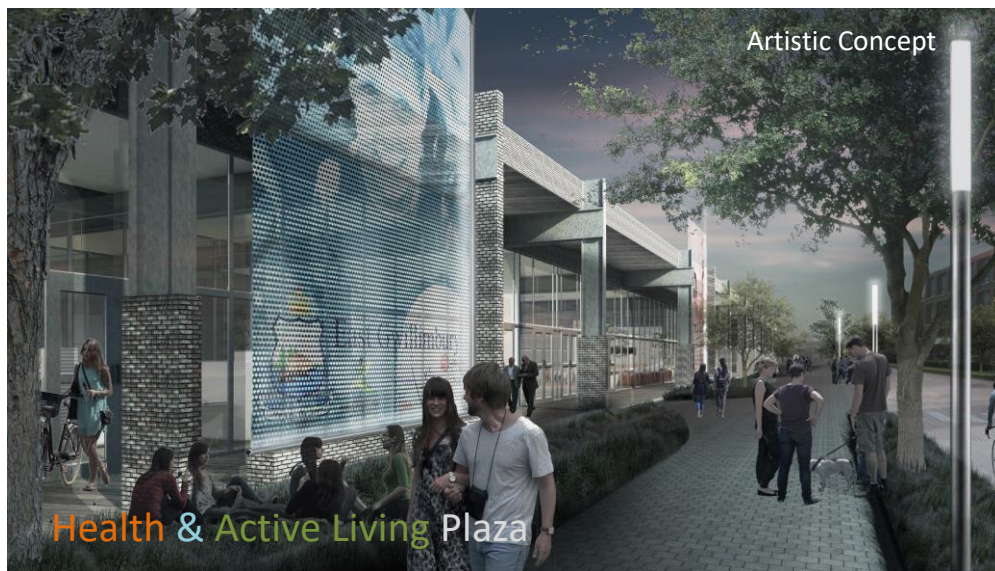


Open Court Café Food Services  
**MacBain Centre – City of Niagara Falls**

*This centre is used as a key comparator with East Gwillimbury's proposed Health and Active Living Plaza.*

Food concessions are often treated as an “after-thought” within municipal facilities.

A potential differentiator within for facility food services is partnerships with proven brand(s) within the community for various products that include more healthy foods and beverages.



**Health & Active Living Plaza Concept – East Gwillimbury** Visible, Accessible  
Convenient and Complementary Services for residents at one location.

## **Parks and Forestry**

### Overview

The current inventory of East Gwillimbury parks are generally well maintained and meet accepted quality and quantity standards. There is a good dispersion of types of parks ranging from Town, Community, Neighbourhood and Parkette classification levels of provision. There are excellent levels of provision of parks and amenities at the Neighbourhood and Parkette levels. There are remaining challenges in the assembly of larger park blocks that recently were partially ameliorated by the addition of Mount Albert Lions Park into the town active parkland inventory.

With new development, neighbourhood parks and playground areas will continue to be well provided for especially in meeting the 1 playground within 800 metres locational threshold for playgrounds. However, despite provision of 27.64 new hectares of active tableland through park development, the total predicted provision of parkland falls short of requirements when the population reaches 46,846. Needs of the population at that time would put pressure on the need for larger park blocks in Town Park and Community Park categories which include town-wide provision of larger sportfields and provision for sport fieldhouses, washrooms and multiple lit facilities.

Forestry maintenance is currently contracted to a registered forestry maintenance service with some in-house capacity for pruning and emergency removals. The anticipated addition of a professional urban forester will help guide tree planting selection and oversight along with proper lifecycle pruning, ensure trees are a layer within municipal digital mapping and develop targets toward municipal tree canopy goals. With impending development, the future East Gwillimbury will have 75% non-hard surfaces and the challenges of climate change. A mature tree on a residential single-family lot boosts the value of an assessed property by at least \$10,000 and with proper species selection has the potential for less expensive energy costs per household and a much more interesting streetscape for walks in the neighbourhood.

The current mix of park amenities are generally well structured, especially with provision of new amenities such as splash pads, BMX and Mountain bike amenities, playgrounds and multi-use basketball courts. Current provision of ball diamonds is not adequate to accommodate needs of adult slo-pitch leagues. As new parkland development plans do not include provision of ball diamonds, alternative means of provision need to be explored. Soccer levels are presently adequate but with growth the development of town-owned land at Mount Albert Lions Park (4.24 Ha) could ultimately yield an additional 2 new major soccer pitches and/or 6 mini fields along with expanded use of lighting.

Baseball provision could partially be satisfied at the soon-to-be former roads/parks works yard (2.50 Ha) after roads and parks crews move to the new operations centre. As well, land to the west of the Sports Complex (6.17 Ha) could also be utilized after current use of the area once a septic bed is decommissioned which is



expected in 2026 when the Upper York Sewer System (UYSS) is expected to be in place.

For development of major sports facilities, consideration should be given to partnerships with either or both York Region Boards of Education. There are available “best-practice” examples of partnerships in which artificial athletic fields and tracks were jointly built for the benefit of the entire community and maximizing use of valuable tableland for public purposes. The areas near the Health & Active Living Plaza and proposed secondary schools should be examined for such a joint partnership before major investments are made for such facilities.

There is some variance in both the quality and quantity of park provision depending on topography and geographic locations within East Gwillimbury. The Harvest Hills and Holland Landing South census tract area has the lowest Ha/1000 provision in East Gwillimbury has a relatively low provision level of 1.013 Ha/1000 against the overall EG average of 3.164 Ha/1000. With new development, this average increases slightly to 1.263 Ha/1000 against an updated parkland provision average for the entire town at 2.215 Ha/1000 after the current cycle of development activity to 2028.

It is noteworthy that the Town of East Gwillimbury continues to make timely capital investments to keep existing parks and amenities updated as exemplified by recent upgrades to town parks such as Anchor Park and planned capital upgrades to Queensville Park and Mount Albert Community Centre Park for rehabilitation of amenities such as ball diamonds, tennis courts and lighting. Playground upgrades continue to be implemented on a replacement cycle including Mount Albert Lions Park, Brenner Park, Queensville Park, Samuel Lount Park and enhancements with the Skateboard and Scooter Zone at Holland Landing Community Centre Park.

### Process

The study reviewed the quantity and quality of all tableland parks by hectares/acreage and level of parkland provision both for the Town in total and also by geographic review of the four (4) Canada Census Tracts that provide demographic information within each area every five years. Use of Canada Census information in this way allows regular review of population against service provision standards.

All defined types of parkland classifications within East Gwillimbury were compared against established standards and to levels of parkland provision against nearby comparator municipalities.

Each new development and subdivision documentation was reviewed in order to reconcile future delivery of tableland, environmental land (woodlots, floodplain, etc.) trails and components of each park planned for future residents. As well pro-forma calculations of future trails and parks for each census tract were prepared to detail how well East Gwillimbury’s Official Plan target of 4.0 Ha/1000 parkland provision is being met.

Parks within each new subdivision were documented and mapped to show existing and proposed park tableland, existing and proposed woodlots, valley lands and

floodplain. Site condition and park component quality were reviewed through field observation and capture of digital images of a wide variety of EG parks. The progress of trail provision was also assessed as a tremendous amount of energy and progress has been made in trails provision as evidenced by the Nokiidaa Trail extension and the new 2<sup>nd</sup> concession bridge underpass.

Care was taken to review park design within the overall parks system with special attention to use of standards involving Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), “Placemaking” principles in design and (AODA) access standards were followed.

Forestry, Parks and Trails maintenance practices, policies and provision standards were compared against other neighbouring municipalities with an eye to long term sustainability and responses to the impacts of climate change.

### Parkland Observations

The current level of East Gwillimbury active parkland provision compares favorably to comparator standards of parkland provision by maintaining 76.13 ha of tableland parks with a ratio of 3.164 Ha/1000 population. This provision compares to the East Gwillimbury Official Plan target of 4.0 Ha/1000.

Using a scenario whereby development yields are assumed to be fully achievable, the population would rise to 46,846 within the study period to 2028. The Town of East Gwillimbury would add 29.04 Ha of new active parkland to create a total active parkland inventory of 105.20 Ha.

Use of parkland provision ratios that examines the impact of provision of new parks against population reveals that with development-based additions of parkland, overall parkland provision ratios in East Gwillimbury would be reduced from 3.164 Ha/1000 to 2.245 Ha/1000 with an approximate 30% reduction in provision of active parkland per capita by 2028. This reduction in the provision of active parkland raises concern in the ability of the Town to provide future active parkland, especially for major park block requirements such as sportfields, and Town and Community park classifications. An additional 34.90 Ha would be required to maintain the current parkland provision ratio.

Development processes provide an additional 30.07 Ha of storm water pond facilities which adds environmental and visual interest in neighbourhoods as well as an additional 109.51 Ha of valley lands, floodplain and wooded areas which both serve to assist in East Gwillimbury being seen as a green community and also to assist in managing climate change events and storm water flows as “green infrastructure”.

There is 8.90 Ha of existing municipally-owned land (west of East Gwillimbury Sports Complex, the present Works/Parks operations centre and Mount Albert Lions adjunct lands) that could be placed into inventory to yield more active parkland. Such an addition would raise the active parkland inventory to 114.70 Ha and a new yield of 2.448 ha/1000 at a population of 46,846, anticipated to be post 2026 after the UYSS is completed.

The following table describes the current level of provision of parks in East Gwillimbury by park classification against current provision standards.

**East Gwillimbury Current Parkland by Park Classification**

Parkland Classification	Quantity (# of Parks)	Area (Ha of parkland)	Provision Standard	Provision Level and Existing Locations
Town Park	4	35.45	1.0 Ha/1000	1.476 Ha/1000 Mount Albert Lions Club Park Sharon Hills Park Sharon Park (Sports Complex) Queensville Park
Community Park	5	22.72	1.2 Ha/1000	0.946 Ha/1000 Anchor Park Vivian Creek Park Temple Park Holland Landing CC Park Mt. Albert CC Park
<i>Additional parkland (undeveloped)</i>		22.72 <u>8.90</u> 30.82		<i>West Sports Complex (3.43) Parks/Works Yard (1.23) Mt. Albert Lions (4.24) <b>Undeveloped – 8.90 ha</b></i>
Neighbourhood Park	5	9.43	1.0 Ha/1000	0.392 Ha/1000 French Park Ross Family Complex Park Harvest Hills Park Shannon Park Mainprize Park
Parkette	24	8.53	N/A * within 800 metres	Samuel Lount Park Brown Hill Park King Street Park Vivian Creek Park (trail entrance) Robert Hunter Cres. Park North Union CC Park Parkway Park Lady Gwillim Park Emily Park Don Rose Park Grant Park Grist Mill Park Millennium Garden Manor Forest Park Arkininstall Centennial Park Pegg's Wood Park Sharon Boulevard Walkway River Drive (open space) Rosebank / Stonehill Park Birchard Park
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>76.13 Ha</b> <i>(188.16 acres)</i>  <i>85.03 Ha</i> <i>w/additional undeveloped parkland</i>	<b>4.0 Ha/1000</b>	<b>3.164 Ha/1000</b> <i>* 2016 Census Population</i> <i>76.13 Ha / 24,055 = 3.164</i>  <b>3.534 Ha/1000</b>

The following table provides details of the types of East Gwillimbury parks as per the Official plan. The table indicates current level of provision by type of park and expected new level of provision after the current development cycle in 2028.

**Park Provision by Classification at End of Development Cycle**  
(at end of development cycle 2018 to 2028)

Parkland Classification	Quantity (# of Parks)	Area (Ha)	Provision Standard	Current and Future Parkland By Category
Town Park	Existing 4 New 1 Total 5	35.45 <u>3.18</u> 38.63	1.0 Ha/1000	1.476 Ha/1000 0.151 <b>0.857 Ha/1000</b> new provision level
Community Park	Existing 5 New 4 Total 9	22.72 <u>7.39</u> 30.11	1.2 Ha/1000	0.946 Ha/1000 0.351 <b>0.668 Ha/1000</b> new provision level
Neighbourhood Park	Existing 5 New 5 Total 10	9.43 <u>11.02</u> 20.45	1.0 Ha/1000	0.392 Ha/1000 0.524 <b>0.453 Ha/1000</b> new provision level
Parkette	Existing 24 New 11 Total 35	8.53 <u>7.48</u> 16.01	N/A * within 800 metres	
Existing Parks	<b>38</b>	<b>76.13</b>	<b>3.164 Ha/1000</b>	* 2016 Census Population 76.13 Ha / 24,055 = 3.164
With existing undeveloped parkland	<b>0</b>	<u>8.90</u> 85.03	3.534 Ha/1000	* Population based on 7,000 new units (21,000)
New Parks	<b>21</b>	<b>29.07</b>	<b>1.275 Ha/1000</b>	* based on population Of 45,055 by 2028
Totals of Existing and Future Parks	<b>59</b>	<b>105.20</b> <u>8.90</u> *114.10	<b>2.334 Ha/1000</b> 2.532 Ha/1000	* with additional undeveloped municipal land into inventory

\* Available 8.90 Ha lands: area west of the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex currently in use as a septic bed until approximately 2028; land currently used by Roads and Parks for operations yards; land at Mount Albert Lions Park for future soccer field expansion.

Review of the impacts of new development on how various levels of parks are provided, the current and future levels of park provision per 1000 population is shown below moving from 24,055 population to 45,055.

	<u>Existing Parks</u>	<u>with New Parks</u>
• Town Park	1.476 Ha/1000	0.857 Ha/1000
• Community Park	0.946 Ha/1000	0.668 Ha/1000
• Neighbourhood Park	0.392 Ha/1000	0.453 Ha/1000
• Parkettes	0.354 Ha/1000	0.363 Ha/1000

East Gwillimbury currently utilizes four types of park classifications and actively utilizes these to affect an appropriate level of park provision throughout the community. Proper use of types of parkland can provide more diversity, ensure continuity of service to each hamlet or geographic area and provide an excellent rationale for development levy investments in the East Gwillimbury parks system.

### East Gwillimbury Park Classification Standards In Comparison to Other Local Municipalities

Municipality	Town/Citywide	Community	Neighbourhood	Parkette
<b>King Township</b>  ** OP target 4 Ha/1000	<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> variable entire community	<b>1.2 Ha/1000</b> 2 – 8 hectares 1 km service area	<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> 2.0 hectares best 800 metre service area	<b>n/a</b> 0.2 to 1.0 hectares 500 metre service area
<b>Whitchurch-Stouffville</b>		<b>1.5 Ha/1000</b> 5 – 8 hectares entire community	<b>0.5 Ha/1000</b> 1.6 to 5 hectares neighbourhood	<b>n/a</b> up to 1.6 hectares sub- neighbourhood
<b>Bradford-West Gwillimbury</b>  Service area ** target 2.0 Ha/1000		<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> 5 – 8 hectares entire community	<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> 1- 3 hectares neighbourhood	<b>n/a</b> < 1.0 hectare sub- neighbourhood
<b>Aurora</b>  Service area ** OP target 5 Ha/1000		<b>2.5 Ha/1000</b> 4 – 8 hectares	<b>1.5 Ha/1000</b> 1.6 – 4 hectares	<b>1.0 Ha</b> 0.35 hectares minimum
<b>East Gwillimbury</b>  Service area ** OP target 4 Ha/1000	<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> variable entire community	<b>1.2 Ha/1000</b> 2 – 8 hectares entire community	<b>1.0 Ha/1000</b> 2.0 hectares (best) 800 metre service area	<b>n/a</b> 0.2 to 1.0 hectares

Examination of the four levels of park classification reveals that the current provision of Town Parks (classification) surpasses the 1.0 Ha/1000 standard at 1.476 Ha/1000, mainly due to the assumption of Mount Albert Lions Club Park.

At both the Community Park classification/provision level at 0.946 Ha/1000 against a 1.2 Ha/1000 standard and a present provision level of Neighbourhood Parks at 0.392 Ha/1000 vs 1.0 Ha/1000 standard, both community and neighbourhood park provision levels are tracking below set standard.

*Categories of parks (classifications) are essential elements embedded in the East Gwillimbury Official Plan and are a basis for ensuring orderly development and helps frame land use planning to ensure proper linkages of green areas with surrounding*

*residential development, schools and institutional uses, employment lands and active transportation linkages. The policies below are documented in the Town's Official Plan.*

### **Town Parks**

*Town Parks* are intended to serve a Town-wide function, as unique destination points drawing residents from the urban and rural populations as well as visitors from beyond the boundaries of the Town. *Town Parks* may feature civic, historic, cultural, recreational and heritage significance and connect the community both as a focal point, as well as through trail and open space linkages.

*The following are definitions within the East Gwillimbury Official Plan.*

- 4.8.20** *Town Parks* shall be provided as may be required to meet special Community-wide needs and serving town-wide functions such as a fairgrounds or major indoor and outdoor recreation complexes.
- 4.8.21** *Town Parks* shall be distinguished by uniqueness of their function or special feature(s) which add to the diversity of the parks system.
- 4.8.22** *Town Parks* 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.
- 4.8.23** There is no defined size for *Town Parks*, but they are likely to be large blocks of land. Park size will vary depending upon the intended program and the function of facilities to be included. The size and provision standards applicable for *Town Parks* shall be determined through future studies undertaken by the Town in partnership with community stakeholders.

### **Community Parks**

*Community Parks* are intended to serve larger Secondary Plan Areas or a series of neighbourhoods and shall be encouraged at a rate of provision of 1.2 hectares per 1,000 persons.

- 4.8.24** *Community Parks* shall be between 2 hectares and 8 hectares in size with a demonstrated capacity to facilitate the development of at least 2 athletic facilities.
- 4.8.25** *Community Parks* shall have frontage on an arterial or collector road with a minimum of 100 metres of continuous frontage.
- 4.8.26** Indoor and outdoor recreation space for all age groups shall be provided within *Community Parks*, including organized sporting activities.
- 4.8.27** *Community Parks* may contain illuminated major sports fields, field houses, and indoor recreation facilities.
- 4.8.28** *Community Parks* shall be encouraged to be integrated with public schools where possible.

### **Neighbourhood Parks**

*Neighbourhood Parks* are intended to serve local neighbourhoods within the community and shall be encouraged at a rate of 1.0 hectare per 1,000 persons.

- 4.8.29** *Neighbourhood Parks* shall be located within an 800 metre walking

distance of all residential uses, and optimally without crossing any arterial roads or natural barriers.

- 4.8.30** *Neighbourhood Parks* shall be encouraged at an optimum size of 2.0 hectares for the provision of 1 unlit athletic facility.
- 4.8.31** *Neighbourhood Parks* shall have frontage on a local or collector road, with a minimum 60 metres of continuous frontage. July 2014 Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan
- 4.8.32** *Neighbourhood Parks* shall be encouraged to integrate with public school sites.
- 4.8.33** *Neighbourhood Parks* shall be designed for passive and active recreational facilities such as field sports, playgrounds and the recreational needs of neighbourhood residential areas.
- 4.8.34** *Neighbourhood Parks* normally sited and acquired through the development approval process, may be permitted on lands having a *Commercial* or *Residential* designation without requiring an amendment when located in accordance with all other relevant provisions of this Plan.

### Observations

The rolling topography of East Gwillimbury provides a challenging environment to meet active parkland standards. Given these challenges, the Town has been diligent in providing a careful mix of park tableland, environmental and valley lands and woodlands within current and future open space.

By adopting use of linear trails linking green and open space properties, the overall provision of greenspace is enhanced especially when storm water ponds are provided in a naturalized state without fencing and trails along such ponds, woodlots and through top of bank of floodplain and valley lands. It is noted that without the relatively recent addition of Mount Albert Lions Park, the Town would be deficient in provision of large park blocks normally required for outdoor sports provision.

Predictions of ultimate development population to 2025-2028 are influenced by many factors including the timing of when the Upper York Sewer System may enter service, the pace of development and building starts against approved subdivision developments and economic conditions during that time.

Various scenarios to examine provision of cash development contributions range from a conservative estimate of additional population of 18,618 to a more optimistic estimate of 22,791 additional population within the study period with an ultimate population range between 42,673 and 46,846. A median estimate of 7,000 housing units or addition of 21,000 population was used in this plan for parkland provision impacts.

### User Surveys and Citizen Preferences

Residents of East Gwillimbury love their outdoors. Among the types of outdoor spaces desired in a 2017-2018 citizen survey, trails and natural areas would be used by 81% (544) and picnic area, community garden/gathering place by 61% (426). Playgrounds would be used by 58% (407) and 55% (390) would use outdoor community event spaces. 53% (371) are interested in splash pads and 52% (359) indicate an interest in outdoor ice rinks.

Soccer fields are important to 49% (346) and 42% (295) would use baseball/softball diamonds. Outdoor fitness equipment interests 38% (267) and 34% (238) are interested in tennis courts.

Off leash dog parks are of interest to 31% (219) and a BMX or mountain bike park to 25% (165). A skateboard park would have interest of 23% (165).

### Census Tract Analysis

The following tables outline the existing level of service and amenities by census tract within the Town and detail expected development within each *Canada Census* area. This analysis will be useful for examination of and ensuring that each census tract attains equitable levels of service as the population in each tract grows and will allow analysis of the impact of growth on each geographic area of the community.

*Census Canada* updates this information every five years, so it will be important that that East Gwillimbury staff update the demographic and geographic relationship in provision of services with updates with each census period to help guide future investments against population growth.

### **Summary of New Parkland and Components by Development by Census Tract**

*\*assumes maximum view of approved M plans and building activity*

Parks by Census Tract	2016 Census Population / Parkland Ratio	New Development and Population to 2028	2028 Total Parkland Ha/1000
Holland Landing (453.02)	7,200 population 7.30 Ha 1.013 Ha/1000	8,766 population 12.54 Ha 1.430 Ha/1000	15,966 population 19.84 Ha 1.263 Ha/1000
River Drive Park (453.03)	4,070 population 11.46 Ha 2.815 Ha/1000	No additional dwelling units within the 2025/28 period given Upper York Sewer Timing.	4,070 population 11.46 Ha 2.815 Ha/1000
Sharon and Queensville (453.01)	4,510 population 25.68 Ha 5.691 Ha/1000	10,299 population 15.66 Ha 1.520 Ha/1000	14,809 population 41.34 Ha 2.791 Ha/1000
Mount Albert (453.00)	8,275 population 31.69 Ha 1.384 Ha/1000	3,726 population 0.87 Ha 0.700 Ha/1000	12,001 population 32.56 Ha 2.713 Ha/1000
Combined Census Tracts	24,055 population 76.13 Ha <b>3.164 Ha/1000</b>	22,791 population 29.07 Ha <b>1.275 Ha/1000</b>	46,846 pop. 105.20 Ha <b>2.245 Ha/1000</b>



The most active area of the municipality for new development are located at Harvest Hills/South Holland Landing and Sharon/Queensville census tracts. Restrictions of timing of new sewer and water servicing capacities have impacted the rate of growth of River Drive/North Holland Landing and to a lesser extent, Mount Albert.

### Existing Parkland and Amenities – River Drive and North Holland Landing

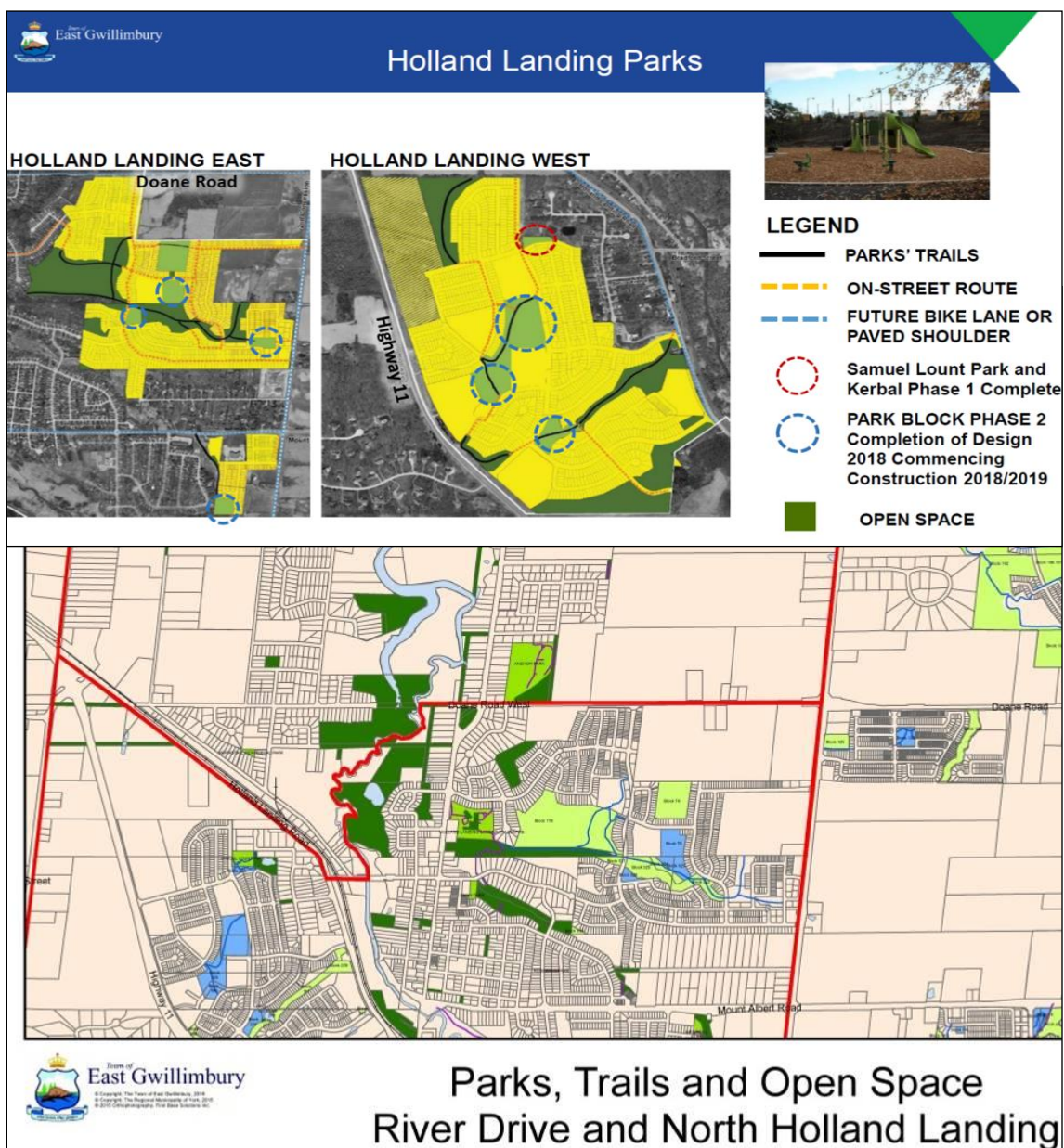
Current Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	Ha	Components
<b>Holland Landing (453.03)</b>	<b>2016 Census Tract Population</b> 4,070 of 24,055 total		
Anchor Park	Community Park	7.44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soccer pitch 62x100</li> <li>• Ball diamond Jr 250'RF</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Mountain Bike facility</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Site Furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
French Park	Neighbourhood Park	3.07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ball diamond Jr</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Site Furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Parkway Park	Parkette	0.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Splashpad</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Half Basketball Court</li> <li>• Site Furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Arkininstall Centennial Park open space	Parkette	0.27	
River Drive open space	Parkette	0.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Furniture</li> </ul>
River Drive CC park	Parkette	0.10	
*No new approved subdivision plans given UYSS timing	<b>Total Existing Parkland Provision of Parkland</b>	<b>11.46</b> <b>2.815</b>	Ha Ha/1000

The above table describes the current provision of parkland and amenities within each park.

Given the added requirement of future parkland with current development plans, in order for the Town of East Gwillimbury to maintain a desired parkland standard of 4.0 Ha/1000, steps should be taken to acquire more parkland. While provisions within the Planning Act provide parkland through development, this will not satisfy ultimate requirements.

The 2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan and the 2009 Parks and Recreation Master Plans also identified the need to seek alternative ways to acquire additional parkland with both studies.

The next map and insets show existing parks; light green areas are tableland parks; dark green areas are environmental lands and open space.

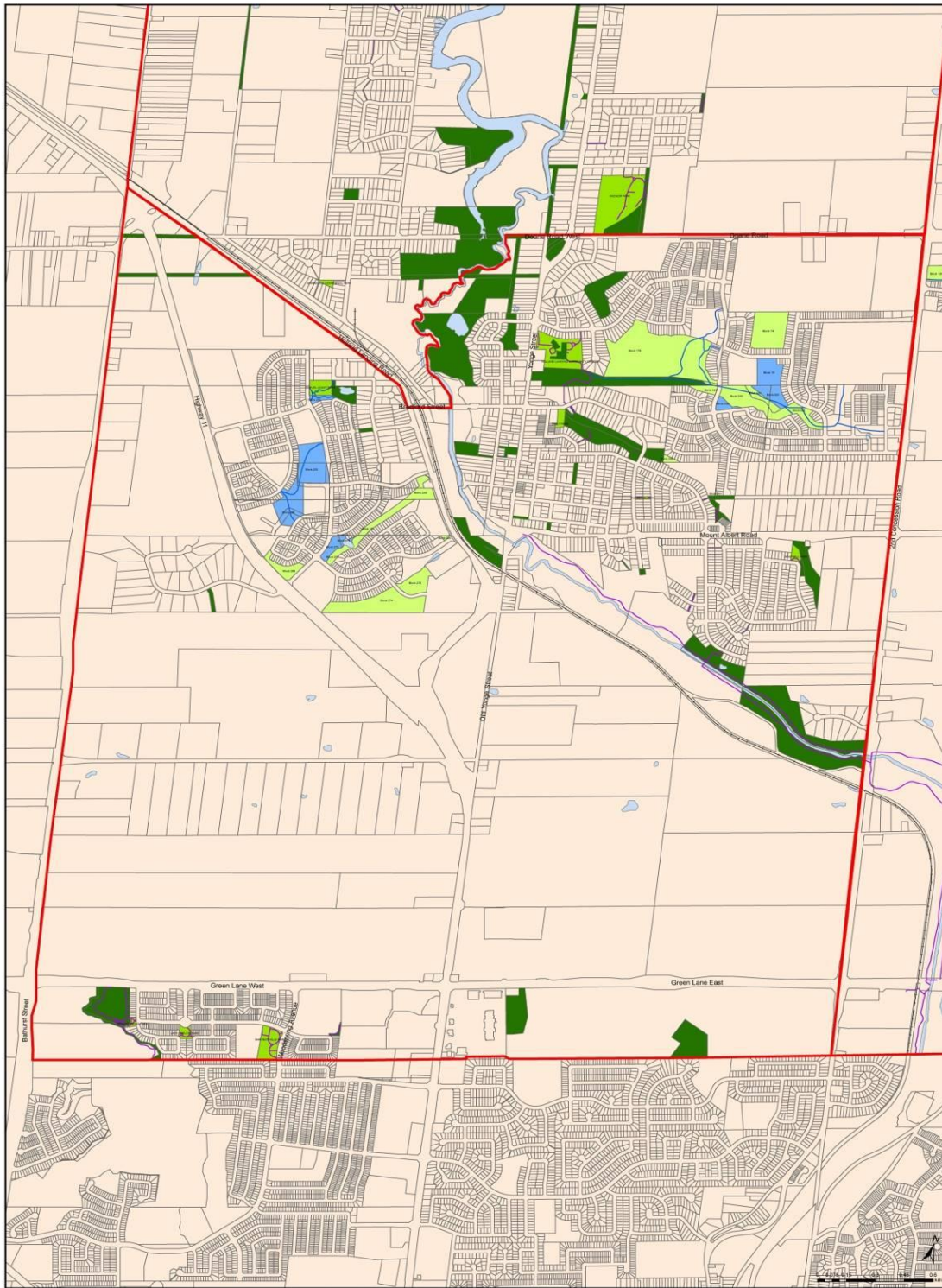


The chart below describes current future parkland provision within Harvest Hills and South Holland landing Census Tract.

Current Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	Ha	Components
<b>Holland Landing (453.02)</b>	2016 Census Tract Population 7,200 of 24,055 total		
Holland Landing Community Centre Park	Community Park	3.08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basketball half court</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Splashpad</li> <li>• Tennis (3)</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Harvest Hills Park	Neighbourhood Park	1.73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basketball half court (2)</li> <li>• Soccer pitch (major – irrigated)</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Splash pad</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Samuel Lount Park	Parkette	0.96	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Lady Gwillim Park	Parkette	0.43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pergola</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Emily Park	Parkette	0.41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> </ul>
Grist Mill Park	Parkette	0.36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Rosebank Park	Parkette	0.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Site Furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
	<b>Total Existing Parkland Level of Provision</b>	<b>7.09</b> <b>0.984</b>	<b>Ha</b> <b>Ha/1000</b>

Future Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	New Units	Ha	Components
<b>New Developments</b>	Harvest Hills and South Holland Landing			
Kerbel <i>West Holland Landing</i>	North – Block 223 Parkette	79	0.95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkways</li> <li>Senior Lit Softball</li> <li>Basketball half court</li> <li>Playgrounds (Jr &amp; Sr)</li> <li>Outdoor learning stations</li> <li>Walkways</li> <li>Shade structure</li> </ul>
	Middle – Block 220 Neighbourhood Park	308	3.04	
	Lower – Block 221 Parkette	211	0.86	
LRT <i>West Holland Landing</i>	Blocks 189 and 161 Neighbourhood Park	294	1.75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tennis court</li> <li>Full size multi-use court</li> <li>Fitness Stations</li> <li>Walkways</li> <li>Outdoor learning stations</li> <li>Circular Pathway (lit)</li> <li>Site furniture</li> </ul>
Mannington <i>West Holland L.</i>	Block 265 Parkette	402	0.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>
Winged Foot <i>East Holland Landing</i>	Block 76 Neighbourhood Park	650	1.76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Soccer Field</li> <li>Basketball half court</li> <li>Playground (Jr &amp; Sr.)</li> <li>Shade Structure</li> <li>Walkway</li> </ul>
Valleybrook <i>East Holland Landing</i>	Block 323 - Parkette	688	1.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site furniture</li> <li>Open space</li> <li>Walkway</li> </ul>
	Block 376 - Parkette		0.46	
	Block 187B - Parkette		0.68	
Tricap <i>East Holland Landing</i>	Block 90 – Neighbourhood Park	290	1.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>
	<b>Total New Housing Units</b>	2922 $\times 3.0 =$ 8766	7.30 Ha <u>12.54 Ha</u> 19.84 Ha	Existing Parkland Additional Parkland Total Parkland
	8,766 new residents <u>7,200</u> census 2016 15,966 population	<b>1.430</b> <b>1.263</b>	<b>Ha/1000</b> <b>Ha/1000</b>	New Parkland Provision Total Parkland Provision

The following maps show park tableland in light green and environmental lands such as valley lands and woodlots in dark green.



### Parks, Trails and Open Space Harvest Hills and South Holland Landing

- Legend**
- Open Space- New
  - Calculated Parkspace- Existing
  - Parks- New
  - Parks and Open Space- Existing
  - Existing Trail
  - Proposed Trail
  - Census Tract Boundary

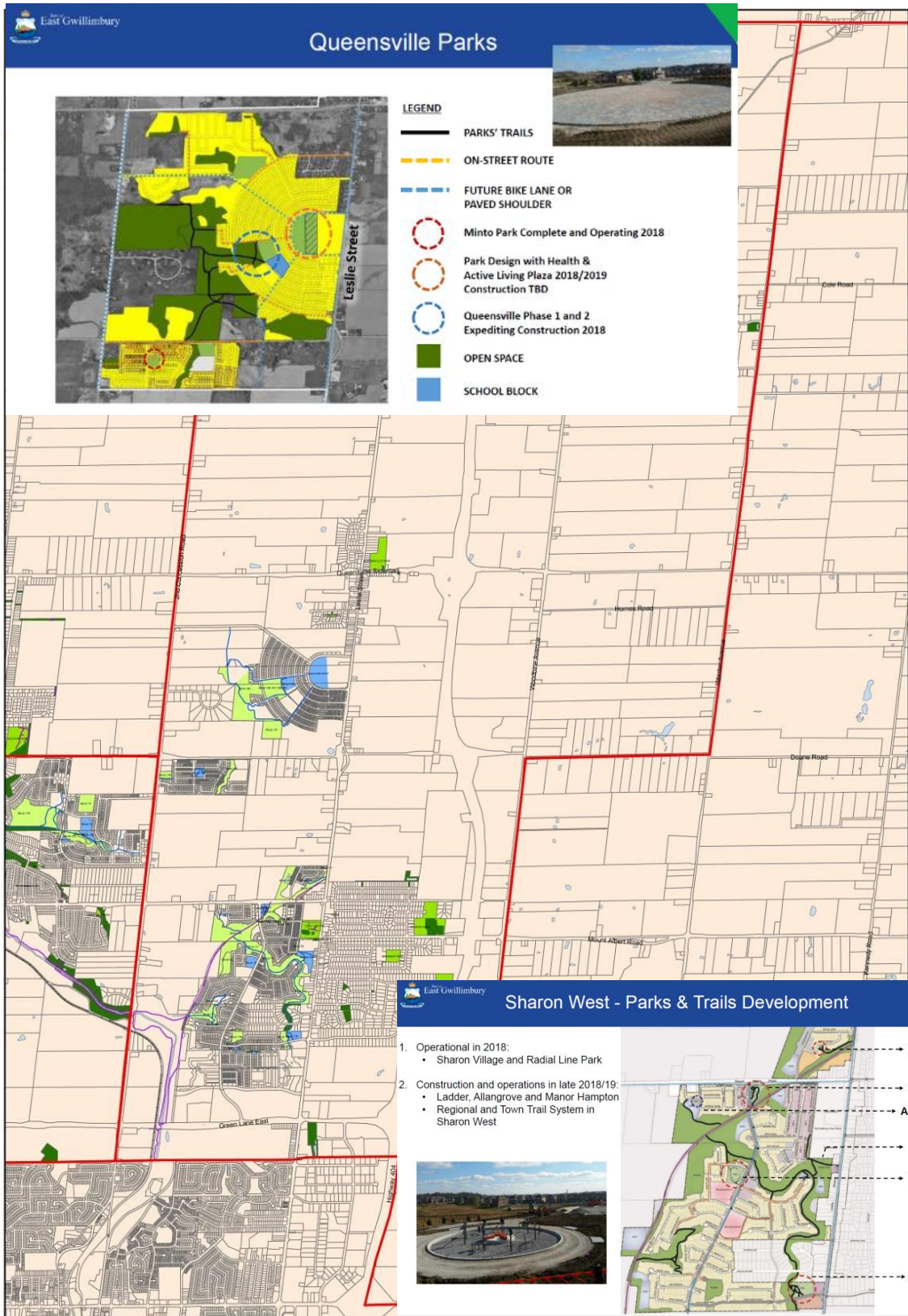
## Existing Parkland and amenities – Sharon and Queensville

Current Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	Ha	Components
Sharon and Queensville (453.01)	2016 Census Tract Population 4,510 of 24,055 total		
Sharon Hills Park	Town Park (destination)	6.70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basketball court</li> <li>• Soccer pitch 104mx64m</li> <li>• Tennis courts (2)</li> <li>• Shelter</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Sharon Park (Sportsplex)	Town Park (destination)	6.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ball diamonds (2)</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Queensville Park	Town Park (destination)	4.80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ball diamond</li> <li>• Tennis courts (2)</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Civic Centre	Public Space	3.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Brenner Park	Community Park	2.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Soccer mini-pitches (7)</li> </ul>
Brown Hill Park	Parkette	0.93	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Picnic shelter</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
North Union CC Park	Parkette	0.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sr/Jr Playground</li> <li>• Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• Site Furniture</li> </ul>
Grant Park	Parkette	0.37	
Sharon Boulevard Walkway	Parkette	0.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Temperance Hall park	Parkette	0.11	
	<b>Total Existing Parkland Level of Provision</b>	<b>25.68</b> <b>5.691</b>	Ha Ha/1000

Future Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	New Units	Ha	Components
<b>New Developments</b>	Sharon and Queensville			
Queensville Properties <i>Queensville</i>	Phase 2 & 3 – Block 196 & 363 Community Park  Healthy Active Living Plaza - Town Park (destination)  Block 312 Neighbourhood Park	1026	1.95  3.18  0.53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playgrounds (Sr. &amp; Jr)</li> <li>• Basketball half court</li> <li>• Senior Soccer Pitch</li> <li>• Shade structure</li> <li>• Premier soccer pitch with artificial turf</li> <li>• Skate zone</li> <li>• Splashpad</li> <li>• Accessible playground w/ rubber surface</li> <li>• Contemplative nodes</li> <li>• Outdoor game area</li> </ul> <p>** further development based on UYSS approval; Park design TBD</p>
Valmaderra <i>Queensville</i>  Minto <i>Queensville</i>	Blocks 130 Neighbourhood Park  Phase 2 – 661 units and Neighbourhood Park 1.58 Ha Block I <i>*dependent on UYSS approval</i>	139	1.04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground (Jr. &amp; Sr.)</li> <li>• Basketball half court</li> <li>• Fitness equipment</li> <li>• Shade structure</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Wycliffe Thornridge <i>Sharon West</i>	Phase 1 - Block 118 Parkette	378	0.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground (Jr.)</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
West Sharon Holdings <i>Sharon West</i>	Block 138 (split with Ashley Park) - parkette	340	0.48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Fitness equipment</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>

Future Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	New Units	Ha	Components
<b>New Developments</b>	Sharon and Queensville			
Elderbank <i>Sharon West</i>	Block 70 <i>Neighbourhood Park</i>	291	1.38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground (Sr &amp; Jr)</li> <li>• Basketball ½ court</li> <li>• Water play</li> <li>• Shade structure</li> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
	Block 75 <i>Community Park</i>		2.31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
	Block 69 <i>Community Park</i>		2.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Sundial	No park block	360		
Yorkwood	Block 168 <i>Parkette</i>	190	0.17	
Ashley Park	Block 18 <i>Parkette</i>	147	0.46	
Sharonvit	Block 179	267	1.43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground (Sr. &amp; Jr)</li> <li>• Shade structure</li> <li>• Walkway</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• BMX track</li> </ul>
Acorn <i>Sharon South</i>	Block 122 <i>Parkette (0.26 Ha)</i> Phase 2/3 UYSS.	295	0.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior Play</li> <li>• Adult fitness stations</li> </ul>
Menkes <i>Sharon South</i>	Block 167 - 1.38 Ha *dependent on UYSS Approval			
	Total Housing Units 10,299 new residents <u>4,510</u> census 2016 14,809 population	3433 <u>x 3.0=</u> 10,299  <b>1.520</b>  <b>2.791</b>	25.68 Ha <u>15.66 Ha</u> 41.34 Ha  Ha/1000  Ha/1000	Existing Parkland New Parkland Total Parkland  Level of Provision  New Level of Provision

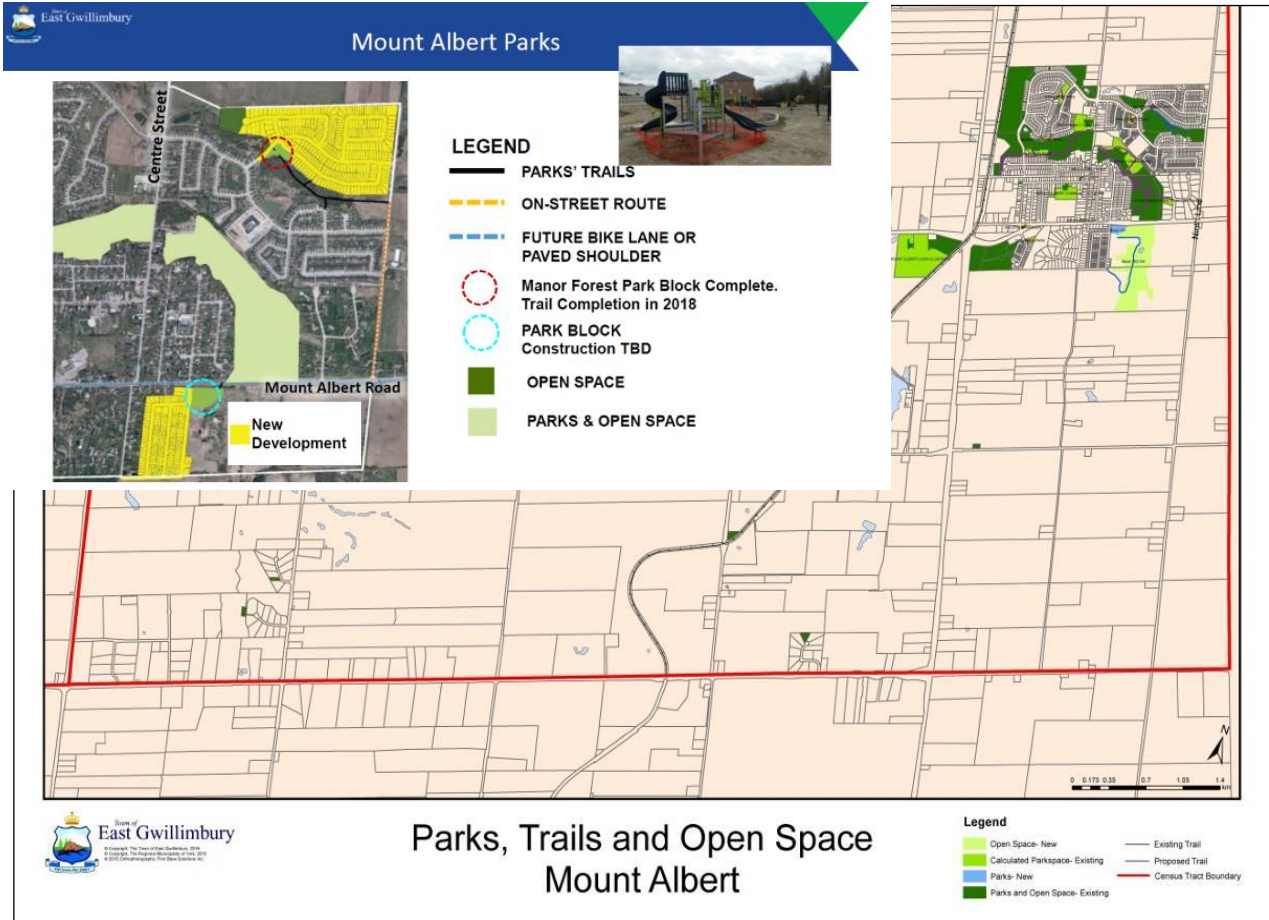




Parks, Trails and Open Space Sharon and Queensville

Current Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	Ha	Components
Mount Albert (453.00)	2016 Census Tract Population 8,275 of 24,055 total		
Robert Hunter Crescent Park	Parkette	0.56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Don Rose Park	Parkette	0.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Millenium Garden	Parkette	0.31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Manor Forest Park	Parkette	0.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
Birchard Park	Parkette	0.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site furniture</li> <li>• Walkway</li> </ul>
Mill Street Park	Parkette	0.03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site furniture</li> </ul>
	Total Existing Parkland Level of Provision	31.69 <b>3.713</b>	Ha Ha/1000

Future Parks by Census Tract	Park Classification Standard by Population	New Units	Ha	Components
<b>New Developments</b>	Mount Albert 8,275 of 24,055			
Averton <i>Mount Albert</i>		694		
Oxford Homes <i>West Holland Landing</i>	Block 131 Parkette	548	0.87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tbd</li> </ul>
	Total Housing units 3,726 new residents <u>8,275</u> census 2016 12,001 population	1,242 <u>x 3.0</u> 3,726  <b>0.700</b>  <b>2.713</b>	31.69 Ha <u>0.87 Ha</u> 32.56 Ha  Ha/1000  Ha/1000	Existing New Total  New Total



### Summary of New Development Parkland Provision

Parks by Census Tract	2016 Census Population / Parkland Ratio	New Development and Population to 2028	2028 Total Parkland Ha/1000
Holland Landing (453.02)	7,200 population 7.30 Ha 1.013 Ha/1000	8,766 population 12.54 Ha 1.430 Ha/1000	15,966 population 19.84 Ha 1.263 Ha/1000
River Drive (453.03)	4,070 population 11.46 Ha 2.815 Ha/1000	No additional dwelling units to the 2025/28 period given Upper York Sewer System delay.	4,070 population 11.46 Ha 2.815 Ha/1000
Sharon and Queensville (453.01)	4,510 population 25.68 Ha 5.691 Ha/1000	10,299 population 15.66 Ha 1.520 Ha/1000	14,809 population 41.34 Ha 2.791 Ha/1000
Mount Albert (453.00)	8,275 population 31.69 Ha 1.384 Ha/1000	3,726 population 0.87 Ha 0.700 Ha/1000	12,001 population 32.56 Ha 2.713 Ha/1000
Combined Census Tracts	24,055 population 76.13 Ha <b>3.164 Ha/1000</b>	22,791 population 29.07 Ha <b>1.275 Ha/1000</b>	46,846 population 105.20 Ha <b>2.245 Ha/1000</b>

## Recommendations

### Parkland Acceptance

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2009) parks/population chart is shown below describing projected parkland requirements against population.

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)

In this study, the projected level of active parkland inventory when the Town population reaches 46,846 will be 105.20 Ha. An additional 8.90 Ha of municipal owned land has been identified that could be put into use. (\* See page 102). If East Gwillimbury is to retain its current parkland provision of 3.164 Ha/1000, a total of 148.25 Ha inventory is needed; if the Official Plan target of 4.0 Ha/1000 is to be reached, a total of 187.38 Ha will be required representing an additional 43.05 Ha to maintain current park provision or an additional 82.18 Ha is required to attain the 4.0 Ha/1000 Official Plan target.

It should be noted that development activity will also provide 109.51 Ha of open space (floodplain, woodlots and valley lands) to be accepted over and above active parkland acceptance. This additional open space is essential to allow continued “greening” of East Gwillimbury and serve as valuable “green infrastructure” to help offset storm water flows and storm events to aid the work of 30.07 Ha of storm water detention ponds.

### 38. Potential Land Assembly Strategy

Given the need for large parcel configurations, not currently envisioned with the possible exception of the parkland near the Health & Active Living Plaza, future parkland blocks of a total of at least 43.05 Ha will ultimately be required to accommodate greater land requirements when the population reaches 50,000 with continued pressure to provide more major soccer pitches, ball diamonds and possible a larger sports field facilities.

- Potential land acquisition should be focused on areas of Town that are underserved or do not meet the current parks standards for service provision (1 park within a 800m radius, walking distance, of a residential neighbourhood).
- Land acquisition could be funded through development contributions or cash in lieu of parkland dedication.
- Any potential land securement should be in advance to Upper York Sewage Solution servicing to avoid higher costs of premium tableland.

- Late in population growth cycles, large parkland assembly in the area to the west side of Holland River is needed for large parkland use for multiple sports such as football, soccer, adult slo-pitch, rugby, ultimate frisbee, pickle ball and other sports.
- There is variance in both the quality and quantity of park provision depending on topography and geographic location within East Gwillimbury, special efforts are required to accommodate some areas for specific park provision needs.
- The Town should continue to accept the 5% residential and 2% industrial parkland dedication as per the *Ontario Planning Act*. The use of 1 Ha per 300 dwelling units should be utilized when it exceeds 5% residential parkland dedication requirements.
- As detailed in the 2009 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan, the municipality would be well-advised to seek out new means to acquire parkland and critical trail connections with an ongoing process to not miss opportunities for advancement as land acquisition strategies require diligent monitoring of market and demand conditions.
- Various land securement strategies can be employed to get closer to the stated Official Plan parkland target by this sequence of land securement strategies detailed in this report.
- Even more conscious efforts by the community and Council should be made within future active-transportation options. Current and future planning efforts toward a seamless and multi-scaled linear park system can be achieved in which town, community and neighbourhood parks are connected. Wherever possible trails, linear open space, floodplain, and woodlots should be connected and include links to multi-use off-road trails along major arterials between hamlets.

### Provision of New Park Components

#### Soccer Pitches

- The Mount Albert Lions facility can accommodate additional pitches on an available land (4.24 Ha) to include two new full size soccer pitches and 3 mini pitches
- As well, an additional 2.5 Ha is available for sport field development west of the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex

#### Ball Fields

- A major lit hardball diamond should be located near the Health and Active Living Plaza.

- Additional ball fields can be located, at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex. Potential land assembly should be undertaken for a major outdoor sports complex West of the Holland River for future development.

#### Tennis Courts

- A new upgraded set of tennis courts (3) should be provided at the existing Queensville site along with a potential future tennis clubhouse structure should an acceptable tennis club structure and partnership be structured with the Town of East Gwillimbury. Adequate lands also exist at this location for an additional bank of three courts and a possible tennis clubhouse. Other sports that could be included at this location could include pickleball, which is currently very popular with active older adults.

#### Outdoor Basketball Courts

- An adequate level of courts are being provided at this time and studious efforts have taken place with additional courts provided to standard at new neighbourhoods

#### Skateboard Parks

- Two new skateboard facilities are planned for the Holland Landing Community Centre and Mount Albert Community Park. A centralized facility will be considered with the Health and Active Living Plaza project.

The tables below outline the provision standards for outdoor park facilities and recommended requirements for the future.

Potential “land-banking” strategies, capital project submissions and potential partnership proposals with school boards or other partners could be utilized to satisfy gaps in service.

**Parkland Component Provision Analysis by end of Development Period**

<b>Outdoor Facility Type</b>	<b>Recommended Provision Standard</b>	<b>Current Supply Population 24,055</b>	<b>Current Current Surplus or (Gap)</b>	<b>Future Requirement of Population 22,791 to 46,846</b>
<p><b>Major Soccer Pitches</b>                      Mount Albert Lions, (2) Major Lit Pitches - 3                      Mount Albert Lions - Major Unlit Pitches - 1                      Anchor Park Major Pitch (to be lit 2018) – 1                      Sharon Hills Park – 1  <b>Total 6</b>                      * lit field = 1.5</p> <p><b>Intermediate Soccer Pitches</b>                      Farr Ave/Sharon Park (Sports Complex) - 1                      Ross Family Complex – 1                      Vivian Creek (irrigated) - 1  <b>Total - 3</b></p> <p><b>Mini Soccer Pitches</b>                      Mount Albert Lions Park - Mini Pitches – 5                      Brenner Park – Mini Pitches – 7                      Harvest Hills Park (irrigated) – 1  <b>Total – 13</b></p>	<p>1 per 80 participants</p> <p>@ 1200 current registrations (15)</p>	22	4 @ 1 per 80 participants	<p>@ 2400 Registrations / 80                      30 pitches required                      22 current</p> <p>Anchor Park (2018 lit) – .5                      Queensville Phase 2 – 1.0                      Winged Foot – 1.0  <b>Total – 2.5</b>                      * Lit field = 1.5</p> <p><b>6 major pitches required</b></p> <p>* additional mini fields may be located within designated neighbourhood parks as required</p>
<p><b>Ball Diamonds (Lit Hardball)</b></p> <p><b>Ball Diamonds (Senior Softball)</b>                      Anchor Park (unlit) – 1                      Mount Albert Community Centre (lit) – 1                      Queensville (lit) – 1                      Sharon (Sport Complex) Park North (lit) – 1                      Sharon (Sports Complex) Park South (lit) - 1                      Total - 7                      * lit diamond = 1.5</p> <p><b>Ball Diamonds (Junior Softball)</b>                      French Park – 1                      Vivian Creek – 1</p>	<p>1:40,000 population</p> <p>1 per 100 participants                      ** 400 current minor registrations do not include slo-pitch using outsider municipality facilities</p>	0  9.5	0  4.5 * current surplus @ 1:400 minor registrations  * if outside adult slo-pitch included new surplus is 0.5	<p>1 (hardball-lit)</p> <p>*at 800 minor ball registrations (1:100)                      8 ball diamonds required, current supply meets needs</p> <p>*if additional adult slo-pitch leagues are in EG,                      4 new ball diamonds are required.(total 12.5)</p> <p><b>4 ball diamonds required</b></p>
<p><b>Tennis</b></p> <p>Holland Landing (lit courts) – 3                      Queensville (lit courts) – 2                      Shannon Park – 2                      Sharon Hills Park – 2                      Total – 11.5</p> <p>*lighted courts – 1.5</p>	1:2500	11.5	0	<p>@1:2500 population ratio                      18 total courts required                      11.5 current plus 1 new court</p> <p>West Sharon tennis court - 1</p> <p><b>Total – 5.5 courts required</b>                      *recommend Queensville 3 lit courts with potential club facilities</p>
<p><b>Outdoor Basketball Courts – half/full</b></p> <p>Harvest Hills – 2                      Holland Landing – 1                      Mount Albert CC (full) - 1                      Queensville - 1                      Parkway Park – 1                      Sharon Hills Park – 3</p>	<p>1:500 youth (10-19)</p> <p>** 2016 Census, approximately 2700 youth in this age category</p>	9	3	<p>@ 1:500 ratio and a youth population of 6000 expected in this age group                      12 Courts Required                      9 current courts                      5 development courts                      14 courts provided</p> <p>Minto / Valdamarra – 1                      Kerbel Phase 1 – 1                      Elderbank Phase 1 (two ½) – 2                      Winged foot – 1                      Surplus 2 courts at preset 5</p>



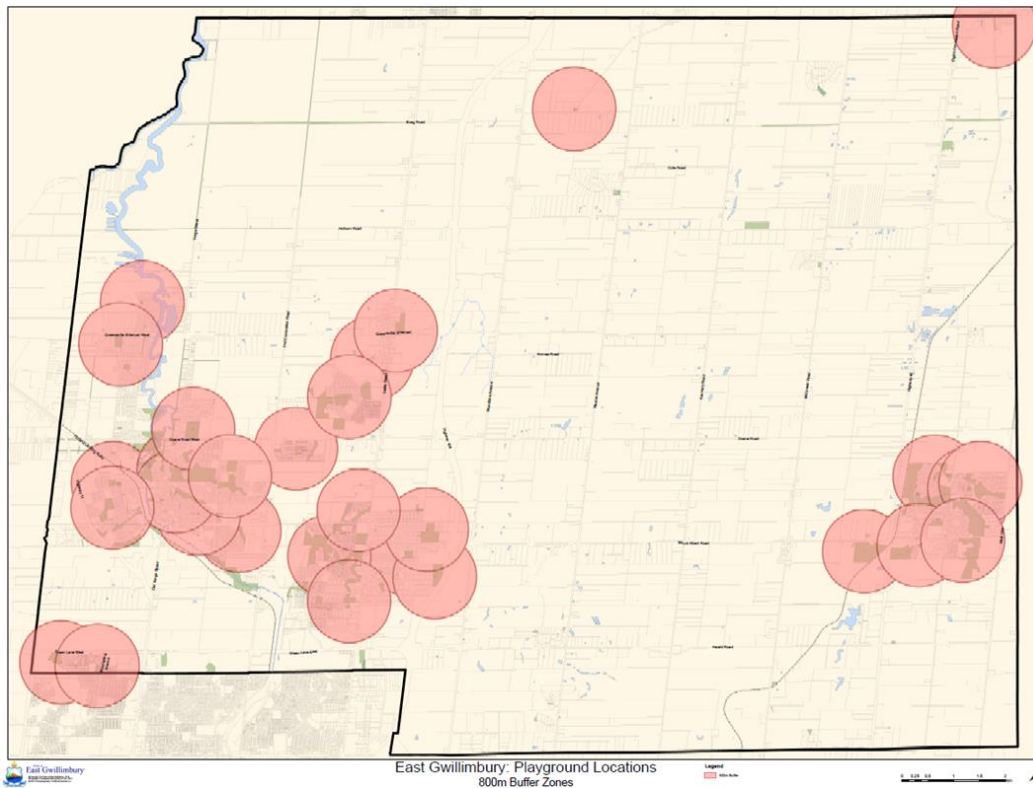
<p><b>Skateboard Parks</b></p>	<p>1:5000 youth</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Demand by Geographic Location</p>	<p><b>0</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>1 Skateboard Park Required</p> <p>(2019) Mount Albert CC – 1 HALP Plaza – 1 (2018) Holland Landing - 1</p> <p><b>0 Additional Skateboard Parks Req'd.</b></p> <p>* Meets needs by 2028</p>
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- One premiere lighted hardball diamond should be located with the Health and Active Living Plaza project with an artificial turf field and track to support soccer/rugby/football and multi-sport. This facility could support partnerships with one or both York school boards at adjacent school sites.
- Soccer fields should be expanded at Mount Albert Lions Park and potentially west of the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex, together with adjacent additional ball diamonds.

Provision of New Playground and Other Components

There 24 parkettes currently provided as well as 15 with development. Interactive and passive parks and recreational opportunities will be required within the Civic Precinct area. Playground provision is adequate if using geographic dispersion versus population ratios only.

**The 800 metre zones are shown to display coverage of playground provision graphically below.**



The following tables details the playground, outdoor rink, splash pad, off leash dog zone, BMX and Mountain Bike provisional requirements.

Outdoor Facility Type	Recommended Provision Standard	Current Supply Population 24,055	Current Surplus or (Gap)	Future Requirement of Population 22,791 to 46,846
<p><b>Playgrounds, (# Ages 0-12)</b>  <i>(Census 456.03):</i> Anchor, French, Parkway, 3/465</p> <p><i>(Census 456.02)</i> Emily, Gristmill, Harvest Hills, Holland Landing CC, Peggy’s Woods, Samuel Lount, 6/1100</p> <p><i>(Census 456.01)</i> Brenner, Brown Hill, Grant North Union, Queensville, Sharon Hills, Sharon Park (Sports Complex), 7/600</p> <p><i>(Census 455.00)</i> Don Rose, King, Mainprize, Mount Albert CC, Mount Albert Lions, Ross Family Complex Shannon, Vivian Creek, 8/1330</p>	<p>1 : 800 metres</p> <p>or</p> <p>Alternate standard, 1:1000 population</p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>0</b></p>	<p>24 current playgrounds                      15 provided by development</p> <p>Queensville 2 (Sr./Jr) – 2                      Oxford 1 (Sr./Jr.) – 2                      Wingedfoot (Sr. &amp; Jr) – 2                      Kerbel (Sr. &amp; Jr.) – 2                      Wycliffe (Jr.) – 1                      West Sharon (Jr.) – 1                      Elderbank (Sr. &amp; Jr.) – 2                      Sharonvit (Sr. &amp; Jr.) – 2                      Acorn (Jr.) - 1  <b>Total - 15</b></p> <p>1 fully accessible playground recommended within Civic Precinct</p>
<p><b>Outdoor Skating Rinks</b></p>	<p>By Area (Central and East)</p>	<p><b>0</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p>HALP Plaza – 1 (TBD) - West &amp; East sites – 2</p> <p>*rough In water services for potential service club, community funding/volunteers</p> <p>Artificial outdoor skating loop or a skating area in Civic Precinct envisioned in future development</p>

Outdoor Rinks

Service provision in the East (Mount Albert) could be provided with the Mount Albert Community Park re-development and a Central location within Town at the Civic Centre Precinct lands or Health and Active Living Plaza site.

Splashpads

The level of provision of splashpads is satisfactory to the end of the study period by the four existing locations and the planned addition of a central facility at the Health and Active Living Plaza.

Leash Free Zones

Leash-free zones should be provided with at least one per quadrant of the community by the time 40,000 population is reached.

Outdoor Type	Facility	Recommended Provision Standard	Current Supply Population 24,055	Current Surplus or (Gap)	Future Requirement of Population 22,791 to 46,846
Splashpads	Harvest Hills Park – 1 Holland Landing CC Park – 1 Ross Family Complex – 1 Murrel Drive – 1	1:5000 children (0-14)  ** 7230 children in 2016 Census	4	1	0 Required (2018) West Sharon - 1 HALP Plaza – 1  Meets needs to 2028 as HALP a central location of aquatics
Off Leash Zones	York Region – Bender Graves Woodlot	1:20000	0	(2)	2 Required  Consider four ultimate locations by geographic quadrants.,  *Queensville, then west and east locations
BMX Trails		1:5000 youth	1	0	0 Required  Sharon West development – 1  Current Vivian Park plus new facility meets needs by 2028
Mountain Bike Parks	Vivian Creek Park (inner loop) Anchor Park	1:5000 youth	2	0	0 Required  Current facilities meet needs

39. Parks Design Principles

- Each new park within East Gwillimbury should have regular analysis of utilization, attractiveness and functionality. In many communities, excessively small parks are discourage as many serve no useful function and remnant land-locked park parcels are also generally discouraged as there are few “eyes on” such parks from sidewalks or streetscapes and do not meet CPTED standards, representing greater threats to citizen safety
- Smaller open space areas that are “environmental islands” should be discouraged as they have limited ability to continue natural processes or retain natural environmental features; they are useful only if connected by trail systems and have a degree of flora/fauna interest.

- Quality of design of municipal places and spaces influences perceptions of the quality of life within a community and how well public spaces are presented and maintained. Careful attention to design standards and relating characteristics of each new neighbourhood to park design can assist in helping to make residents feel great about their new community and promote more active use of amenities.
- Great parks, trails and environmental lands require diligence and attention to be set apart from simple open green space. Some questions that need to be asked to focus on this concept: Do parks relate to the Town's heritage, natural environmental features, provide safe and attractive ways to become more active and socialize with others? Are parks inclusive and allow easy understanding of distance, difficulty, direction and destination points? Are these areas places that you would take your relatives and friends to visit to showcase something you moved to East Gwillimbury to enjoy?
- Each park needs to be treated as an extension of one's own living space, as would with a home garden or lawn. Ask whether a park is memorable, and whether people would come back to appreciate the landscapes and experience in different seasons? Are there places to rest and appreciate scenic views? Are there natural places to meet? Could the quality of these facilities warrant use of permit reservations for picnic and special event areas? Helps to focus the approach to create greater client satisfaction? This helps to focus the approach to developing attractive spaces.
- While the Town of EG requires developers to pay for parkland design through a % fee of overall development cost; the Town should have an active procurement review of landscape architect services so that variety of park designs may be encouraged and competitive pricing of such services is provided.
- Investment in education of staff regarding "placemaking" and greater use of "best practices" by other municipalities in design could assist in continuing to provide excellent outdoor amenities and to strive for quality at East Gwillimbury.
- Current use of limestone trails as a standard in flood-prone areas disadvantages the municipality as crews are forced to make emergency repairs at the cost of regular maintenance cycles.
- Parks equipment replacement could benefit from asset-based reviews using life-cycle standards and "groupings" of machinery/equipment types within such assessment rather than individual pieces of equipment.
- There are generally adequate levels of park amenities with some outstanding examples of well-designed parks such as Anchor Park, Grist Mill Park and Vivian Creek Park. Some parks seem to have less yield for amenities against overall parkland ha/acreage than others resulting in fewer amenities available

(i.e. larger sport field groupings). The level of parkland maintenance is generally higher in well-established parks.

- Detailed review of amenities document that a proper level of provision is accomplished for playgrounds, splashpads, multi-use courts/basketball courts and soccer pitches. There is demand for a dedicated community tennis club location with quality tennis courts in a new location.

- Park furniture provision practices should be reassessed as “one-size” does not fit all, some variance in the height, size of park benches and angles of seatbacks accessibility, functionality and comfort should be considered along with combinations of wood, metal and recycled plastic for diversity of choice for users.



- Black metal benches could burn citizens in extremely warm weather. Location of benches should relate to CPTED and “placemaking” principles so that users are not feeling vulnerable to activity behind seated positions. Current reliance on black metal park benches as an exclusive standard could be supplemented by more “senior friendly” design that also should have options to not overheat in summer (causing skin burns to clients and being at the proper height).
- New park designs could take advantage of linking demographics or cultural characteristics of surrounding neighbourhoods to various signage and other amenities (picnics, family rental reservation spaces, event areas, equipment used at family gatherings such as horseshoes, badminton nets etc.) which could be made available for rentals to groups.
  - With changing demographics and new residents likely to enjoy outdoor parks to an even greater degree, provisions should be made for addition of outdoor cooking such as BBQ’s, water services, more rented picnic areas, potential for “picnic games rentals” with amenities such as volleyball and badminton racquets/nets, horseshoes, etc. being rented to picnic groups.

Civic Precinct, Heritage & Culture

40. Supporting Arts Heritage and Culture



**Sharon Temple National Historical**

The Town has invested in improvements in the Civic Precinct and at Civic Centre/Town Hall area. With the adjacency to Sharon Temple, a significant nationwide historic entity, the Town should continue focused efforts toward a comprehensive plan for amenities, pedestrian and vehicular movements and ultimate design context for linking these spaces.

- Heritage and nature interpretation is carried out well at Anchor Park and adjoining trails, however, the Town could also recognize the historic Holland River Canal and its history. The Civic Precinct is a very important place within East Gwillimbury and care should be taken to adopt a comprehensive architectural and landscape identity in this space to help define key heritage and cultural elements to help promote the arts, culture, heritage and local tourism.

A sense of arrival can be enhanced by appropriate gateway features to facilities, parkland and trails.

The entry to Sharon Hills park could be enhanced as a trail head gathering spot with benches, water, landscaping and signage




### 3. Planning the Site

- *Supplementals:* Recognize that additional facilities might be needed at some of the larger Level I trailheads. Consider the following additions:
  - Toilets (non flush or flush)
  - Trash collection
  - Secondary CDNST portals
  - Defined picnic areas with tables
  - Concessions (e.g., food, gifts)
  - Lighting
  - Phone or 911 access
  - Visitor center or contact station
  - Amphitheater
  - Truck and bus parking
  - Equestrian accommodations
  - Drinking water
  - Scenic overlook

Near Building:

- Drinking Fountain
- Phone
- Information Board
- Toilet Building
- Light on Building

Range of site furnishings – Level I trailhead

 CDNST Trailhead Design Guidelines 33

Trail heads that various additional amenities are shown in the schematic above which includes restroom facilities.



Fenced pathways and protected trails help protect sensitive habitats and to increase/guide trail interpretation and experiences.



Scenic outlooks and seating opportunities should be used where possible. Example of use of a linear trail surrounding a storm water detention facility at **Peggy's Wood Park and Trail**



Outdoor public art and heritage interpretation at **Anchor Park**





**East Gwillimbury Civic Centre Accessibility and Green Courtyard  
2017 Parks & Recreation Ontario Award of Excellence – Parks Design**

Use of trees and landscaping along pathways and building entrances and park amenities further define spaces with quality care and create a sense of more intimate spaces and comfort for users more likely to feel “at home”.



**Grist Mill Park** illustrates excellent use of plant and hard surface to make this a special place. Vehicle on street parking at the park allow for more efficient use of land for park amenities



An excellent example of this concept is shown at the **Holland Landing Community Centre** “Literacy Garden” as a well-designed space valued by users.



**Soldiers Bay – East Gwillimbury**

Potential site for partnership project with Region of York and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority to enhance the waterfront as a recreational and educational site.

Ensure playgrounds include diverse elements, natural materials and varying degree of risk inherent in the design. Children desire and need options and elements of challenge within play opportunities.

**Confederation Park  
City of Calgary**



Use of “placemaking”, CPTED and “key inputs from the community” should be used to put the “onsite” experience of a park user first in park designs.

Bicycle repair stations can be placed at key locations to allow some basic adjustments or adding air pressure to tires.





An example of public art in a civic precinct setting at Mississauga City Hall Precinct. Landscaping, shade trees and seating options in an intensive pedestrian area make PPS and CPTED principles work.



Environmental Protection for sensitive areas along with possible “corporate social responsibility” CSR projects had 3M constructing this boardwalk with donated labour and costs for environmental protection. This engages businesses to enhance community components and amenities that may not be able to be provided by tax-supported funding.

**Riverwood Conservancy Park  
City of Mississauga**



The importance of quality gateways, interesting scenery and easy access features to major trails and vistas entice users get exercise and social contact.

***Lakefront Promenade Park – City of Mississauga***



Waterfront pathways with erosion protection, landscaping and many seating options utilize natural features and enhances user experience.



**Waterfront Trail at Port Credit** The remnants of the St. Lawrence Starch company is used as a park feature (above) to feature historical artifacts.

Liberal numbers of seating areas, and accessible pathways help create more intimate spaces and diversity of interests for various ages including a children's village.

**Port Credit Park  
City of Mississauga**



Wide and easily accessible pathways ensure inclusion of multi-generational age groups.



**Port Credit Park, Mississauga**



**Nokiidaa Trail – East Gwillimbury** Establishing a connection with nature can be active or passive. Bring nature to an environment by promoting wildflowers, pollinator-friendly species within an area close to a community centre, recreation facility or trail.



**Queens Landing Park – East Gwillimbury**

Naturalized area and seating in adjacency to active area, note the use of ledgerrock for seating.



**Queensville Fire Themed Playground – East Gwillimbury Fire Prevention and Education Site and partnership Emergency Services camp program.**



**Radial Line Fitness Themed Park with Trail Connection and Parking – East Gwillimbury Site for Fitness programming in the park Fall 2018**



**Nokiidaa Trail Boardwalk System through Wetland – East Gwillimbury**  
Partnership Project with York Region and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority



**Ghost Canal Engineered Wetland and Habitat Restoration Project – East Gwillimbury.** Lookout at Nokiidaa Trail Partnership project with Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority





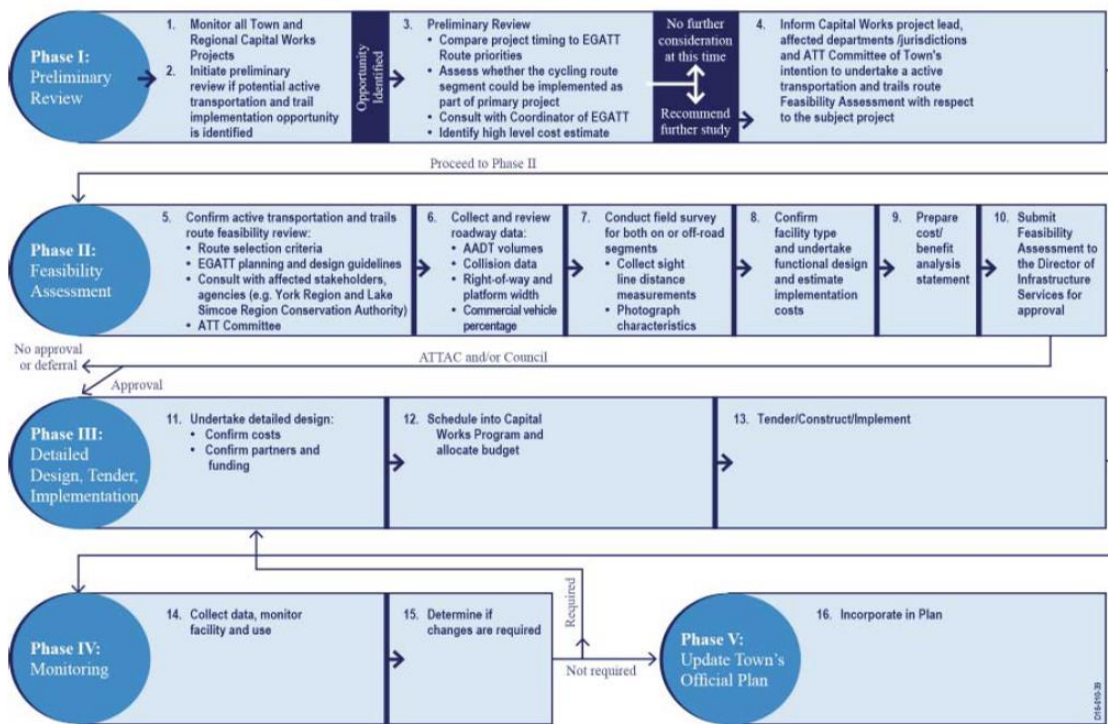
**On Street Raised Curb Cycle Tracks at 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession – East Gwillimbury**  
Promoting Active Transportation and Recreation. Partnership Project with York Region



**Trail Head and Parking Lot at Nokiidaa Trail – East Gwillimbury**  
Partnership project with York Region. Promoting Active Transportation and Recreation

This chart is taken from the 2013 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan and

Figure 6.2 Proposed Implementation Process Tool



illustrates a typical implementation plan for establishing new park or trail amenities.

The following tables illustrate a number of ways to acquire parkland and the advantages/disadvantages, and administrative and other considerations for each option.

Table 6-1. Technique: Purchase	
<b>Description</b>	Purchase of land at fair market value. Includes "First Right of Refusal"
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any greenspace, particularly those requiring environmental protection.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Municipal or other group directly acquires land. Permanent protection and public access.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Municipal Act (right of municipality to acquire and dispose of own land) and right of municipality to levy local improvement charge on benefiting land
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal government Land Trusts</li> <li>Non-Profit Groups (e.g. The Nature Conservancy)</li> <li>Community Co-operative</li> <li>Partnerships</li> </ul>
<b>Other Considerans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town can purchase properties within a neighbourhood that are listed for sale, and divide the side and/or rear lot to accommodate a block for future trail development through a minor variance of creation of an easement. This strategy is dependent on monitoring properties as they become available and the assembly of a corridor may have to take place over a number of years.</li> <li>The Town may compensate a homeowner for the portion of their land required for trail development. In this case the homeowner and Town would obtain separate appraisals and negotiate a reasonable price based on the independent results.</li> </ul>

Land parcels that have restrictions not suitable for normal development may be suitable for various parkland uses at reduced purchase costs.

<b>Table 6-2. Technique: Land Exchange</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Lands or interest in land can be traded to achieve mutual interests, and net differences in values can then be settled
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any land or land use greenspace or other type of use including housing.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Same cost as purchase; permanent protection; public access possible. Must be equitable for both parties to be attractive.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Municipal Act (right of municipality to acquire and dispose of own land).
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Municipal most common – public ownership.

City of Windsor used a federal/provincial/municipal land exchange for waterfront parks

<b>Table 6-3. Technique: Donation/Bequest</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Land or interests in land donated during an individual's lifetime or by private corporation or as a bequest as part of an estate. The donor may opt to retain use of land until death.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any land or land use greenspace or other type of use including housing.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Low cost/ permanent protection and public access. Tax benefits for donor. Lands must meet Federal Tax rules for donation in order to qualify for tax exemptions.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Municipal Act Income Tax Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	All of the above Both public and private ownership.
<b>Other Considerations</b>	The Town may coordinate an agreement with a homeowner whose property is potentially impacted by trail development to pay their property and land taxes until such a time when the homeowner sells or relocates at which time their property is gifted to the Town.

City of Mississauga and Peel Board of Education utilized donated property for a “Central Park” application with the Britannia Farm Master Plan (2017)

<b>Table 6-4. Technique: Parkland Dedication</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Lands dedicated to municipality for parkland purposes as a result of subdivision development. Usually relates to recreation land but may be used to acquire natural areas.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any greenspace, but usually active parkland.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Provides parkland in growing communities: Can be converted to cash for more flexibility. Planning Act limits amount of land that can be required at no charge.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Planning Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Municipal Ownership
<b>Other Considerations</b>	The Town may coordinate an agreement with a homeowner whose property is potentially impacted by trail development to pay their property and land taxes until such a time when the homeowner sells or relocates at which time their property is gifted to the Town.

East Gwillimbury currently uses the full extent of this provision.

<b>Table 6-5. Technique: Traditional Land Use and Other Regulatory Controls</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Use of land use planning (Official Plan/Zoning/ Subdivision Watershed and Sub-watershed Plans) and other regulatory controls. Land Ownership does not change.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any greenspace if designation or zoning is not successfully challenged.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Intent for the land is provided in the Official Plan. Permanent protection can be achieved. May not be popular and does not provide for public access. May trigger requests for financial compensation or purchase.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Planning Act Conservation Authorities Act Fisheries Act Aggregate Resources Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Municipal, Province, Conservation Authorities. Usually private ownership or public ownership other than the Town.

East Gwillimbury utilizes these provisions extensively to gain more overall open space within the municipality, especially given the predominant rolling topography.

<b>Table 6-6 Technique: Sale with Restrictions (Including acquisition and resale)</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Land can be sold with restrictions in place to control future uses.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Greenspaces requiring environmental protection where public access may not be as critical.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Generates revenue while maintaining greenspace; permanent protection; public access can be negotiated. Restricted land more difficult to sell, limited market and reduced value.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Municipal Act Conservation Land Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Municipal/Provincial Government

Use of this type of tool may be useful when preservation of heritage landscapes are a consideration or preservation of woodlot areas.

<b>Table 6-7 Technique: Land Trust</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Non-profit organizations dedicated to conserving open space, natural areas, etc.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Usually land needing environmental protection or recreational multi-use pathways.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	High profile grass-roots organization. Provides permanent protection and public education. Limits public access. Needs high profile and independence to get funds.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	N/A
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Generally non-profit, incorporated community organization or a chapter within an existing organization

This provision below is useful when a sympathetic individuals, organizations or non-profits may wish to open up lands for public uses, especially access to trails on a property. Although the City of Mississauga owns the property, the example of Riverwood Conservancy is a good example of this kind of mutual protection of a very important and large land tract in the heart of the City.

<b>Table 6-8 Technique: Corporate Landowner Agreement/ Condominium Agreement</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Similar to Land Trust Conservation land can be owned by a shareholder's corporation or condominium devoted to the protection and management of the lands.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Any greenspaces.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	An alternative to government ownership and management; no cost; flexible; management costs borne by those directly benefiting. Protection not guaranteed. Little used; no guarantee of public access, needs a willing corporate entity.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Corporations Act Condominium Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Private landowners, would not involve public ownership.

Certain privately-owned lands may be used to allow continuation of trails or continuation of a linear park. Example: The Bridges Golf club – Tillsonburg has a carefully routed trail within the golf course for public use.

<b>Table 6-9 Technique: Conservation / Public Access Easement</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Agreements that restrict uses for conservation or public access purposes, and when registered on title, they bind both current and future landowners.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Usually land needing environmental protection as well as heritage buildings.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Low cost; may be more acceptable to landowner; can provide permanent protection. Cost of easements may be as great as purchase; public access may be limited; requires ongoing monitoring; not extensively used in Ontario.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Ontario Heritage Act; Ministry of Government Services Act Ontario Conservation Land Act
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Only government agencies and registered charities including land trusts. Private ownership

The above technique is useful when public agencies wish to secure long-term protection for lands. Example: Toronto's Rouge Valley now a National Park.

<b>Table 6-10 Technique: Restrictive Covenant</b>	
<b>Description</b>	A condition on title that restricts the landowner's use of land or assigns certain rights or access to an adjacent landowner. Applicable where a government wishes to control land use but not own the land.
<b>Type of Land that Strategy can Typically be Applied To</b>	Usually land needing environmental protection.
<b>Advantages/Disadvantages</b>	Low cost; can provide permanent protection. Can only be used under certain conditions; unlikely to be able to specify long-term management obligation. Public access not likely.
<b>Legislative Basis</b>	Common Law
<b>Administrative Considerations</b>	Any government or conservation authority. Private ownership

The above technique is commonly used in conservation authority imposed land use restrictions in zoning floodplain/top of bank restrictions.

## Trails

### Overview

Critical analysis of the quantity and quality of trails within East Gwillimbury indicates that the Municipality can be considered a leader in provision of these amenities with continued investment in trails made by the Town and development community.

The stated desire of the Town to become more healthy and active utilizes trails as a key backbone in providing safe opportunities to do so. A recent East Gwillimbury survey of residents revealed the highest preference amongst outdoor activities, with trail use identified by 88% of residents. With many long-time East Gwillimbury residents now welcoming an almost equal number of new residents during the study period, use of trails represent easily accessible ways to get healthy, to socialize with friends, family and neighbours and seek “renewal” with a walk after a long work day and commute.

The Town of East Gwillimbury enjoys an excellent partnership with the Region of York and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), in coordination of active transportation, particularly shown by large capital investments such as the new pedestrian



bridge at the **Nokiidaa Trail** Holland River crossing at the 2<sup>nd</sup> concession and the 2018 budgeted and Town-funded Oriole Drive trail/bridge and Colony trail installations. Continued coordination with the Region will eventually allow safe inter-hamlet travel and would meet current cycling provision standards defined early for East Gwillimbury in the 2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan.

The off-road Green Lane multi-use pathway is another case in point that emphasizes how to provide safe active transportation along a major arterial road. The over 3.0 metre cross section of the multi-use pathway allows bicycling away from higher-speed roads and allows persons of varying skills and ages to safely use the route.

Compilation of the East Gwillimbury’s total kilometers of trails against national “Yardstick” comparator data, (CPRA, Ontario Parks Association & Ontario Parks Council) has East Gwillimbury at **1.189 Km/1000 population** which meets accepted levels of trail provision of 1 kilometre of trail 1000 population, within national “Yardstick” (CPRA, Ontario Parks Association & Ontario Parks Council) comparators.

The size of trails also meets standards as East Gwillimbury commonly provides a minimum of a 2.5 metre wide pathway, well over the typical 1.8 metre historic trail width standards and provides a 3.0 metre or wider width for multi-use pathways such as the Green Lane multi-use trail.



One aspect of trail provision that the Municipality could improve upon would be developing more trail head access areas that are situated to allow easy visual recognition and more detailed signage that includes distance, destination, difficulty and direction. Amenities such as picnic tables, benches, shelters, access to water and a bike repair stations help encourage greater utilization and socialization opportunities on trails. As well, more choices of looped trails of varying distances and surfaces would provide greater accessibility choices for all types of trail users and encourage intra-park use as well as inter-park usage.

### Process

For this study, existing and long range trails planning reports, Development Charges Background Study Update 2016, documentation of development and subdivision information and the 2012 East Gwillimbury Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan were reviewed. Site conditions and amenities were reviewed through site visits and photographs, and classes of trails and pace of implementation against development was compared with best practices of other municipalities. This review provided a starting point to determine the longer term needs of trail provision in relationship with the anticipated population growth over the next 10 years. Discussions were held with Parks Branch staff to obtain their views on the needs of the community.

Amongst the most highly valued components of East Gwillimbury parks are trails. In a recent (2017) survey commissioned by East Gwillimbury as part of the Master Plan process, use of trails received the highest rating (81%) by respondents indicating their interest level for participation in indoor and outdoor activities.

As well, with typical examinations of approximate costs-per-user for use of facilities, full indoor ice cost per user is typically about \$5.00 annually; \$2.50 per user annually for indoor aquatics and trails have the least cost ranging from \$0.25 to \$0.50 per user annually. It is evident from the trends research that given the popularity of trails, it will be important to continue to provide well-maintained and well-signed trail routes.

East Gwillimbury subdivision plans unlike past practices carried out by some municipalities, takes care to allow walkways to link all subdivisions with each other. In this manner pedestrian travel is enhanced and residents are not forced to use a car for trips to the local variety store or short trips within a neighbourhood area.

Not unlike many other communities, development of trails moves from “desire-lines” on turfed open space to limestone paths and under various criteria are upgraded to asphalt pathways. East Gwillimbury has wisely placed greater emphasis to date on securing key trail routes and investing in key connection points with bridges and leaving later options to upgrade existing limestone pathways to asphalt at later times.

## **Observations**

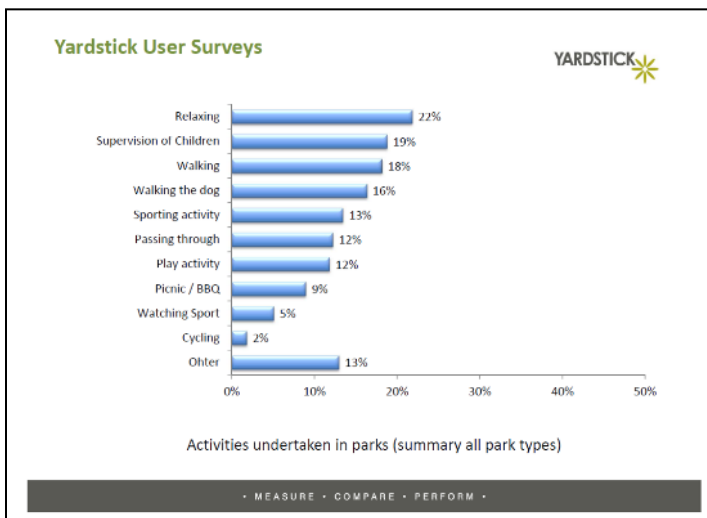
Tremendous progress continues to be made by Town of East Gwillimbury with the continued provision of various classes of trails that are consistent with national “Yardstick” standards for trails.

As noted earlier, trails in East Gwillimbury are amongst the most valued civic amenities. Existing trails are very accessible, less costly, multi-age oriented, encourage inclusion and use by all residents. Most have socially desirable potential for citizens to engage with each other to a greater degree and be linked with other outdoor points of interest and park-based amenities. It is a fact that property values are enhanced if located adjacent to or in close proximity to trails, especially if there is high community “ownership”, high standards of design and high maintenance for such valued amenities.

*“Park use is certainly a good (and generally free) way to engage in healthy exercise. Park programs can be particularly useful in promoting healthful exercise among youth and the elderly. A study in Cleveland confirms the promise of parks in promoting health for Americans age 50 and older (Payne et al 1998). Older park users (bikers, joggers, walkers) were found to be significantly healthier than non-park users and reported feeling “renewed” after using the park, with greater frequency of use linked to better health. These active users also reported fewer physician visits.*

*Parks’ value to neighbourhood quality is further confirmed by studies that find a statistically significant link between property values and proximity to green space, including neighbourhood parks and urban forested areas. (Cornel et al, 1978). One study found that the value of properties near Pennypack Park in Philadelphia increased from about \$1000 per acre at 2,500 feet from the park to \$11,500 per acre at 40 feet from the park. (Hammer, Coughlin and Horn 1974). Another found that the price of residential property – based on data from three neighborhoods in Boulder, Colorado – decreased by \$4.20 for every foot farther away from the greenbelt. (Correll, Lillydahl, and Singell 1978).*

## **The Urban Institute – Chris Walker 2004**

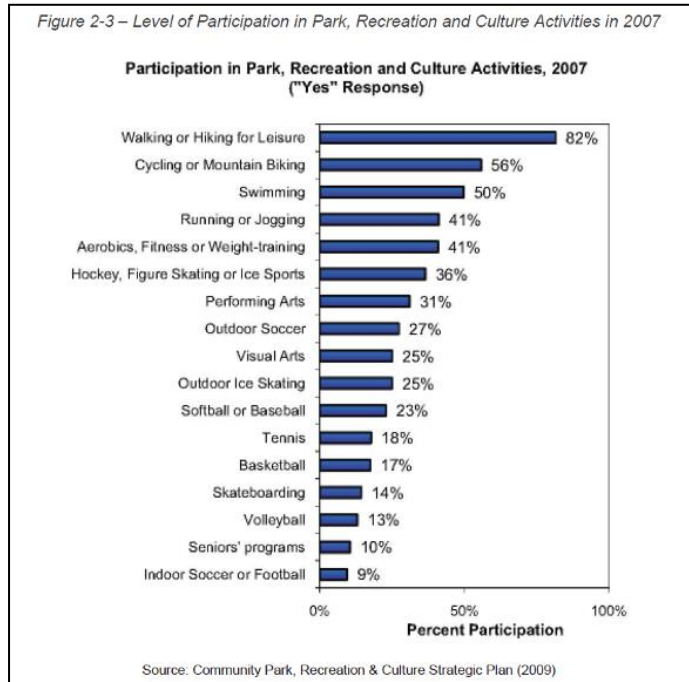


Ranking of desired activities in parks in the recent “Yardstick” surveys of 2016 and 2017 has walking as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most use of parks after “relaxing” and “supervision of children” as the most likely uses of parks.

Within East Gwillimbury, a 2017/2018 user survey revealed that residents saw “use of trails and natural areas” as the highest desired activity at 81% (544 respondents) followed by picnic areas and community garden/gathering places at 61% (426).

These results are also similar to the “user desires (left) of outdoor activities” quoted in the 2012 Active Transportation and Trails master plan derived from the 2009 Parks, Recreation & Culture Strategic Plan (2009).

It is clear that providing residents an opportunity to walk through parks and trails in connected neighbourhoods is preferred. As well, given typical GTA significant traffic congestion on major arterials, provision of multi-use pathways to allow safe active transportation uses is very much valued.



The trail development coordination with the Region of York and LSRCA at Green Lane and 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession arterial roads is class-leading and stands as an excellent example of linear active transportation system implementation.

“2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan”

The consulting firm of Macklin, Marshall Monaghan in 2012, completed the master plan for the Town of East Gwillimbury which contains many far-reaching and progressive trail development and enhancement recommendations.

The table details potential phasing of provision of various forms of active transportation routes and trails. **Source: 2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master plan**  
The stated goals of the 2012 plan included:

	Facility Type [Distance (Km)]								Total (Km)	%
	Signed Bike Route	Multi-Use Trails	Desire Line	Bike Lane	Paved Shoulder	Foot Path	York Region Forest Trails	Local Neighbourhood Connectors		
Existing	1.68	23.27	0.00	1.26	1.69	5.91	9.98	2.14	45.63	12%
Phase 1	31.42	9.17	12.38	8.61	28.48	*	*	*	90.05	22%
Phase 2	33.37	37.07	19.08	16.96	25.11	*	*	*	131.60	34%
Phase 3	16.73	7.23	49.23	*	48.06	*	*	*	121.24	31%
<b>TOTAL (KM)</b>	<b>83.20</b>	<b>76.73</b>	<b>80.69</b>	<b>26.83</b>	<b>103.34</b>	<b>5.91</b>	<b>9.98</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>388.83</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*- please note that for there are no projects proposed pertaining to this facility type for development within this phase.

*“Development of a Town-wide network of active transportation and trail facilities over the next 25+ years. ... The plan provided planning, design and operations guidelines as well as supporting policies, recommendations and programs to*

*encourage active transportation including walking and cycling as well as trail related activities. The Plan is also intended to support the Town's other sustainable growth management and "Healthy Communities".*

*The study is intended to focus primarily on non-motorized travel modes (hiking, cycling, walking, etc.) on Town and Regional Roads, and on lands owned by the Town such as parks, public open space and woodlots. It also identifies potential trail corridors that are currently under private ownership that might be considered in the longer term if opportunities permit as "desire lines". The plan also includes supporting educational and safety-related policies, as well as programs that promote walking and cycling)"*

The 2012 East Gwillimbury Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan provided an excellent start to the long-term 25+ year progress to the ultimate East Gwillimbury trails and active transportation network. Continued updating of the plan is required as resourcing requirements will have changed, dynamics of senior government funding and standards have changed and degrees of progress against initial goals are required to be reconciled.

#### CPRC and Active Transportation and Trails

CPRC has a key coordination role with the Region of York, LSRCA and Town's Roads and Engineering Department to ensure proper road and trail cross-sections and bridge requirements as well as the identification of and prioritization of off-road and on-road trails and pathways.

Another key aspect relating to the 2012 initial objectives the plan included *"supporting educational and safety-related policies as well as programs that promote walking and cycling"*. CPRC is in a great position to encourage "learn to cycle" programs, community-led hikes and walks, "Ride East Gwillimbury" events which could be held on low-traffic times with expert cycling club assistance, "learn-to-cycle" programs on grassed park areas and parking lots, coordination with York Regional Police for "rules of the road" seminars, "Share the Road" advocacy program education and program initiatives reinforcing respect for vehicles and vice-versa for bicycles on public spaces.

**The table below details the locations and type of surfacing material of walkways. Walkways are an important contributor to walking within neighbourhoods rather than forcing residents into more “go-to” vehicular trips.**

**Current and Future Provision of Walkways**

Walkways (February 2018)	Provision Standard	Current Supply Population 24,055	New Supply	Future Supply Population 46,846
<p><b>Walkways</b>  <i>(concrete unless otherwise noted)</i>                      Anchor Park <i>(natural and limestone)</i>, Artesian Ave. Blackstone Court, Brenner Park, (2) Civic Centre <i>(asphalt)</i>, Colony Trail Boulevard Delta Crescent, Don Rose Park <i>(asphalt)</i> Donald Stewart Crescent, Donaldson Road Donlands Avenue, Dutch Settlers Court Four Seasons, French Park <i>(limestone)</i> Grant Park <i>(2 asphalt)</i>, Grist Mill Park <i>(asphalt)</i> Hammill Heights (2), Harvest Hills Park <i>(asphalt)</i>, Holland Landing CC Park <i>(asphalt)</i> Holland River Boulevard, Hollis Crescent Kilpatrick Drive, King Street Park <i>(asphalt/pavers)</i> Lady Gwillim Park <i>(asphalt/pavers)</i>, Leslie Street, Stonehill Boulevard, Tall Pines Trail, Thomas Shepard Dr (2) Thompson Drive, Tyson Dr. Valentini Ave, Valley Mills Rd.</p>	<p><i>Within Draft Plans of Subdivision connections are required to avoid barriers to pedestrian travel to destinations</i></p>	<p>27 walkways  5.36 kilometres</p>	<p>1.66 kilometres</p>	<p>Holland Landing East Park 462                      Manor Hamilton Parkway 228                      Queensville Minto Park 303                      Samuel Lount Park 386                      Radian Line Park 276                       Total 665</p>

**The table below details existing trail routes along with trails to be put into service during the current development cycle to 2028.**

**Existing and Development-Based Trail Provision (by Trail Type) to 2028**

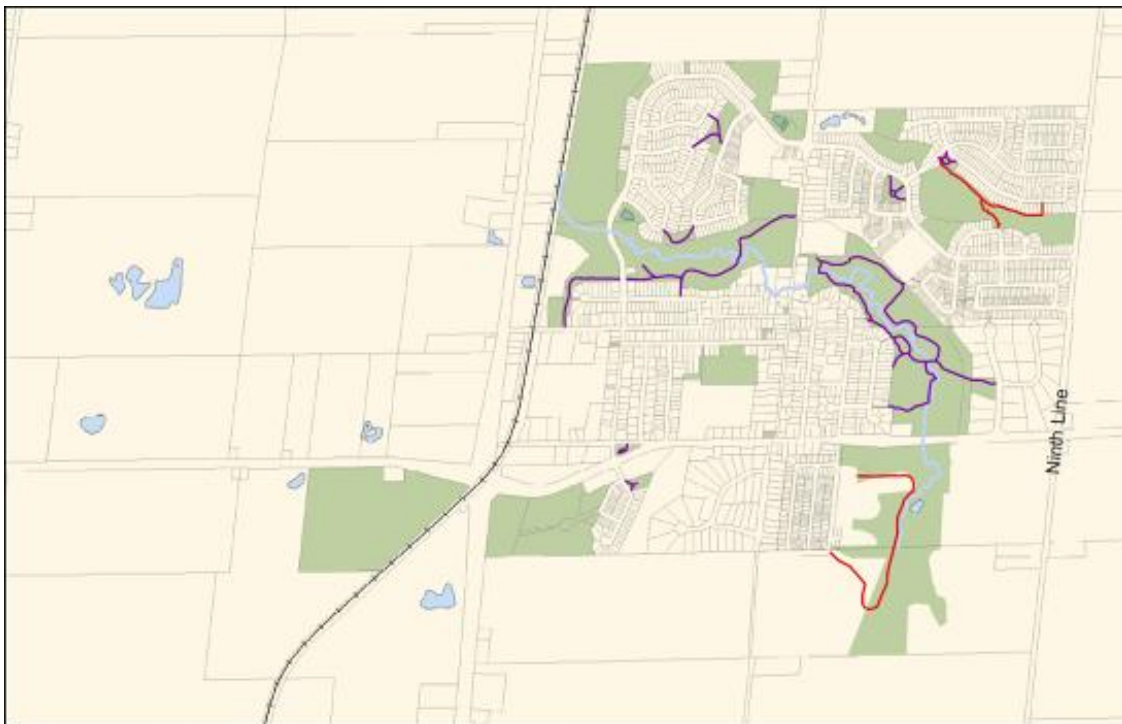
Trails (February 2018)	Recommended Provision Standard	Current Supply Population 24,055	Additional Supply To 2028	Future Requirement To Population of 46,846
<p><b>Asphalt Trails/Multi-Use Paths (metres)</b></p> <p>Green Lane MultiUse 210                      Nokiidaa Trail 700                      Peggy's Wood Trail 480                      2<sup>nd</sup> Concession Cycle Tracks 8153                      Simcoe Trail 17                      Vivian Creek Trail 296                      Woodspring Ave Bike Lanes 795</p> <p>Total 10651</p>	<p>Variable</p> <p>Hard surfaces recommended for steep slopes or for prevention of flooding damage</p>	<p>1.49 km</p>	<p>9.07 km multi-use paths and walkways</p>	<p>Holland Landing West Park 1394                      Murrell Drive bicycle lanes 5251                      Green Lane Multi-Use ext. 519                      Queensville on-street bike lane 1632                      Sharon Creek trail 275</p> <p>Total 9071</p>
<p><b>Limestone Trails (metres)</b></p> <p>Artesian Woodlot Trail 122                      Nokiidaa Trail 2283                      Peggy's Wood Trail 581                      Princess Trail 362                      Regional Trunk Sewer System Trail 3983                      Rogers Reservoir Trail 1331                      Simcoe Trail 330                      Vivian Creek Trail 1784</p> <p>Total 10776</p>	<p>Variable</p>	<p>10.77 km</p>	<p>14.71 km</p>	<p>Queensville Trail 4204                      Averton Pedestrian Bridge 7                      *Queensville Minto Trail 167                      *Sharon Creek Trail &amp; bridge 4916                      Holland Landing West 595                      Holland Landing East &amp; pedestrian bridge 2895                      Simcoe Trail extension 32                      * Oxford Homes Trail 152                      Averton Phase 3 Trail 1047                      664</p> <p>Total 14706</p> <p><i>*type of trail to be determined</i></p>
<p><b>Natural Trails/Bridges (metres)</b></p> <p>Anchor Park 419                      Artesian Woodlot Trail 180                      Noida Bridge 81                      Rogers Reservoir Bridge 34                      Reg. Trunk Sewer Bridge 26                      Sand Road Trail 380                      Simcoe Trail 149                      Simcoe Trail bridges (2) 20                      Simcoe Trail (connection) 77                      Vivian Creek Side Trail 1143                      Vivian Creek Bridges (2) 27</p> <p>Total 2536</p>	<p>Variable</p>	<p>5.49 km</p> <p>*Nokiidaa Trail 3.04 km is a natural trail to be upgraded</p>	<p>0.98 km</p>	<p>Oriole Drive boardwalk &amp; pedestrian bridge 243                      Sharon Creek boardwalk 137                      Simcoe Trail Extension &amp; boardwalk 152                      361</p> <p>Total 981</p>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Walkways</p> <p>Trails</p> <p>Total</p>	<p>1.0 Km /1000 population</p>	<p>5.36 km</p> <p>23.96 km</p> <p>29.32 km</p> <p><b>0.960 km/1000 @ 24,055 population</b></p>	<p>1.66 km</p> <p>24.76 km</p> <p>26.42 km</p>	<p>55.74 km - New Combined Total</p> <p><b>1.189 km/1000 @ 46,846 population</b></p>

Key local neighbourhood trail connections will continue to provide access to the longer major trails such as the Nokiidaa Trail and also to trails heading south to Newmarket and North to Georgina and Lake Simcoe as an important connection with the “Lake to Lake Trail Connection” lead by York Region Transportation Services.

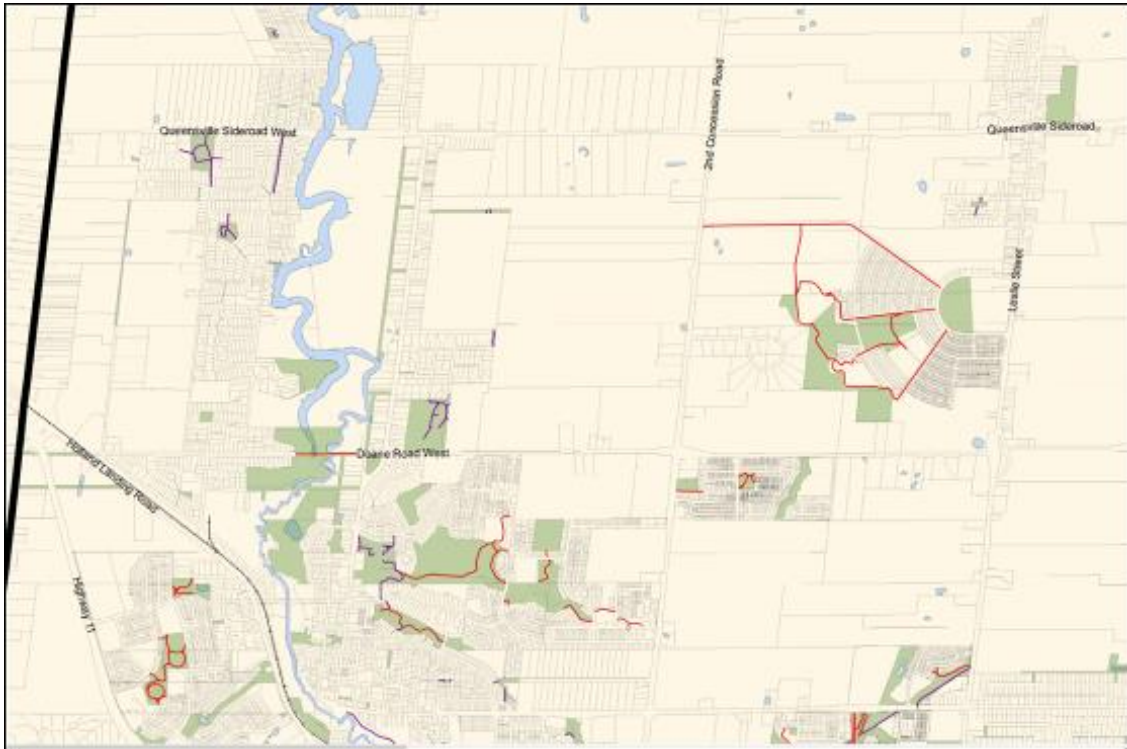
Trail standards and variant season conditions can provide challenges to maintain to ensure safe conditions. The Town should continue to pave steep grades and install guard rails and fencing where required.

***The following series of maps detail existing trails and trails under development as of February 2018. The blue lines on the maps indicate existing trails and the red lines denote trails under development.***

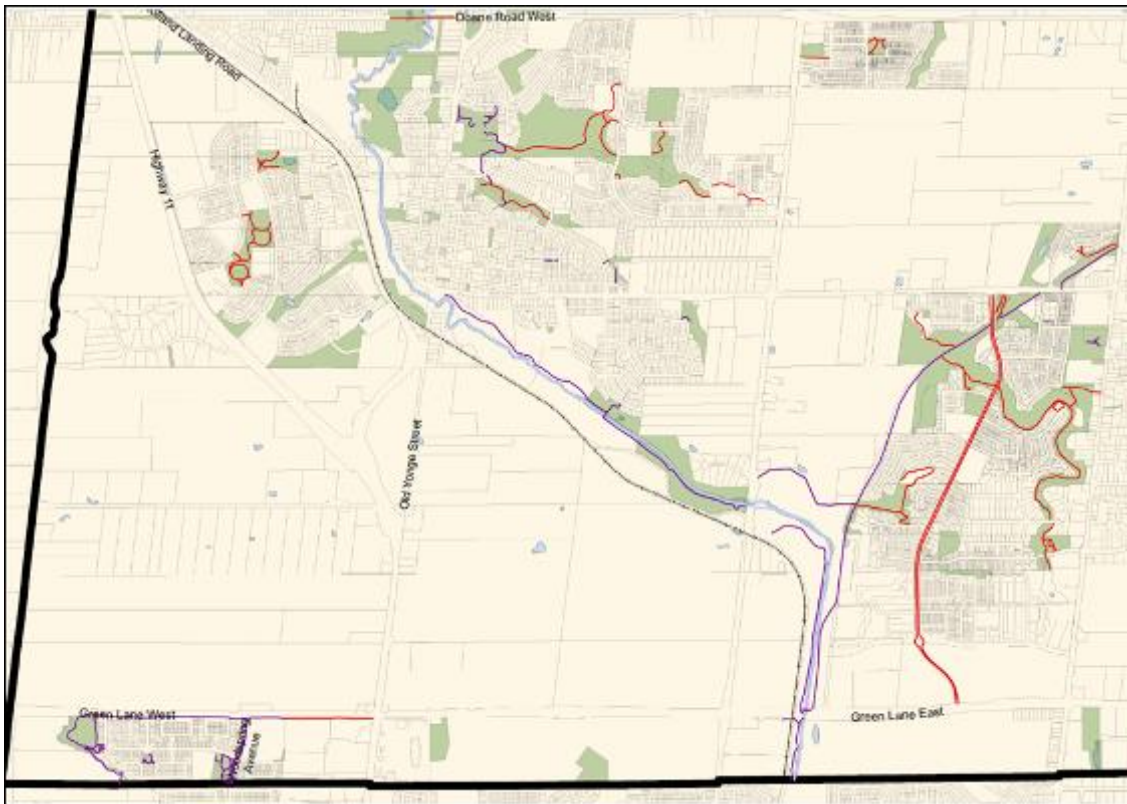
***Examples of park/trail relationships are shown below. These types of maps document progress against trail master plan objectives of 2012.***



**Trails Map Mount Albert**



**Trails Map Queensville**



**Trails Map Sharon and Holland Landing**



## Trail Recommendations and Considerations

### 41. Trail Design Construction, Maintenance and Operations

- There is potential to provide a “four-season” trail within the Civic Precinct in combination with arts/heritage/culture and tourism interests. This trail would be provided with a premium hard-surfaced finish, with lighting, tree cover and would allow roller-blading, skating and ice skating in winter (refrigerated piping under the trail slab)
- There is an opportunity to link pedestrian and cycling trail linkages in the precinct with the Sharon Temple and park area to south as well as inclusion of cultural performance spaces North and South Sharon Temple on adjoining town lands.
- Given the popularity of trails, the municipality can expect requests for higher levels of maintenance. Over time, demand will continue to come forward for hard surfaced trails rather than limestone or natural trails in heavily-travelled routes used for active transportation. Within natural areas, potential degradation of the natural resource will force greater need to use wood chipped trails, provide boardwalks in flood-prone and wetland areas.
- The Health and Active Living Plaza will be a key connection point for those wishing to further enhance indoor experiences with outdoor opportunities including having new destinations, new experiences and routes to follow and to explore East Gwillimbury as confidence in longer walks and rides come forward.
- It is essential that proper signage identifies such trail opportunities, especially for local residents at “walk-to” trail entrances but also for major trail use where signage should identify parking opportunities, washroom amenities and water stations.
- Connections should be made between various types of trails to allow means to arrive at destinations such as variety stores, grocery stores, small plazas and local businesses that are close enough for repeatable “walk-to” or “cycle-to” quick trips.
- AODA standards should form the basis of every trail and walkway installation in order to allow a variety of means to allow all citizens access to walkway and trail experiences, within parks and to connect parks. A variety of surfaces would allow wheelchair and scooter use of varying lengths and loops to provide a choice for users of short, medium or longer trips.

- There should be more installations of trail heads with proper signage showing 4 D's (distance, direction, difficulty, destination) and seating that will allow gathering of people to meet, walk and experience the trail with more confidence and information.



Peggy's Woods Park is adjacent to a major connecting trail to Newmarket and could form a trailhead site with additional amenities and signage. Addition of trail heads in key areas can be viewed as a key way to educate citizens about the trails, to act as a "beacon" toward the start of trails and allow the Town to get maximum value for its investments.

- It is likely that winter clearing of trails, especially multi-use trails such as the Green Lane trail will be requested by citizens and there are many communities now having a number of years of experience with the protocols associated with this.
- More programming involving use of trails, cycling routes and interpretive events offer more diverse uses of the trail system and advances health and active living objectives of the Town and further advance health-related objectives for the Town.
- Consideration should be given to new uses of spaces that involve atypical themes and types of groups providing more colourful activity within areas. An example is the annual car show at the Town Civic Centre.
- Local street cycling routes, off-road trails and adjacency to road cycling routes should be publicized by CPRC. Safe riding, educational events should also be promoted by the CPRC to allow greater use, confidence and enjoyment by citizens.
- As recommended in the 2012 ATTMP a need to provide signage for local street-based cycling within hamlets. Such signage would route cyclists in less-travelled streets which connect with linkages to new off-road trails and/or separated multi-use pathways. Mount Albert has an excellent proposed trail route within the 2012 study as a possible pilot program.
- Trail information and signage should make note of destinations along the way such as schools, commercial and retail, leash-free zones, floral and food gardens that help create greater vibrancy and usage. Such intensification with more hours of use has more "eyes on" parks and lessens vandalism, graffiti and inappropriate behaviours within parks. Signage featuring interpretation of East Gwillimbury built and natural heritage would make trips

more interesting.

- Routes can also be made more interesting with co-location of food and floral garden plots, leash-free zones and scenic lookouts to enhance user experiences.
- Additional trail amenities such as water availability, washroom access, picnic table stop points, bicycle repair tool stations and benches should be made available at key points along trails.
- Hiking clubs may also assist in identification of stopover sites, viewing points and routes that have diversity of texture, natural vegetation, woodlands and sights that may warrant benches as well. This is important to attract seniors and children who may wish to have shorter routes to enjoy an optimum walking/cycling experience.
- The timing of improvements to trail surfaces may involve waiting until “desire lines” of users become more obvious and avoids locational mistakes. This technique is commonly used at University campuses which let the students decide the best routes between destinations on campus before hard surface pathways are installed.

The series of maps taken from the Town website details park linkages and illustrate **existing routes (in purple)** and **desired routes (in red)**. Note that the maps have a variety of interior-park routes as well as connections to other parks and neighbourhoods.

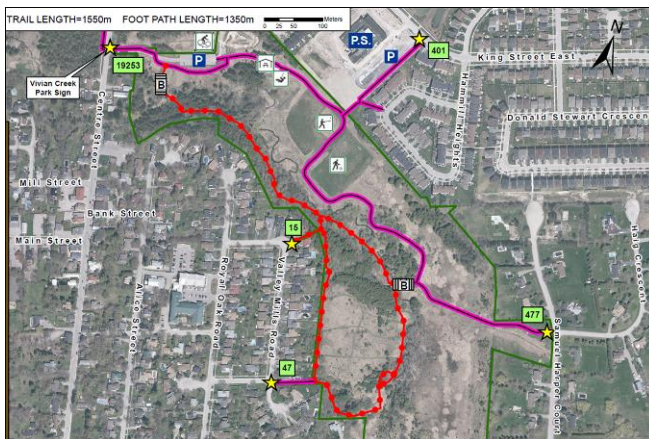
### Anchor Park



### Simcoe Trail



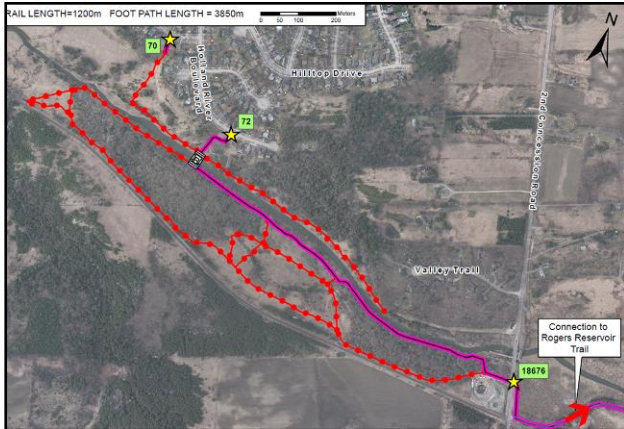
### Vivian Creek Trail



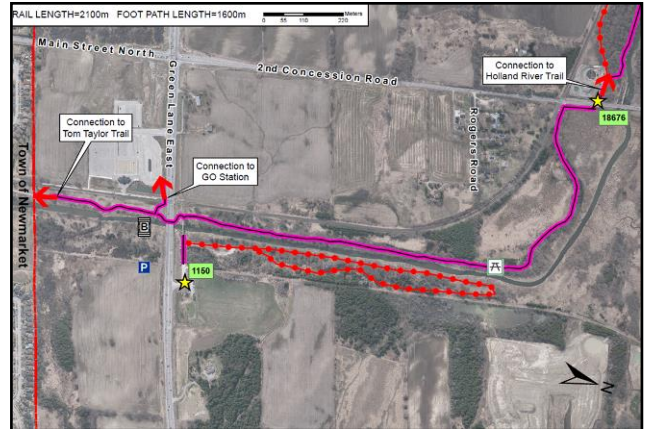
Vivian Creek Park trail is an example of a linear park which provides an extended in-park trail environment. Linear parks have many advantages which provide more access and more yield for user access. One small disadvantage is the distance required to service active facilities such as ball diamonds if not located close to roads and parking.

***The trail maps above and below illustrate how the trails and extensions help service residential areas and have the potential to link between neighbourhoods and hamlets. The Simcoe Trail above shown extending to Anchor Park is a good example. As well, intra-park routes as well as inter-park connections are featured in the prior examples.***

### Nokiidaa Trail - Holland Landing Trail



### Rogers Reservoir – Simcoe



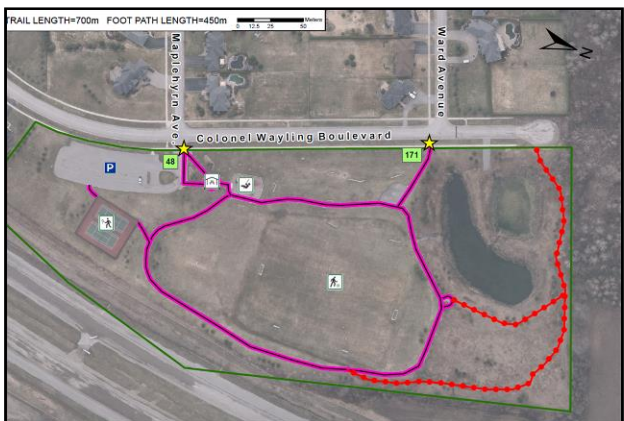
### Princess Trail



### Shannon Park Trail



### Sharon Hills Park Trail



### Peggy's Woods Trail



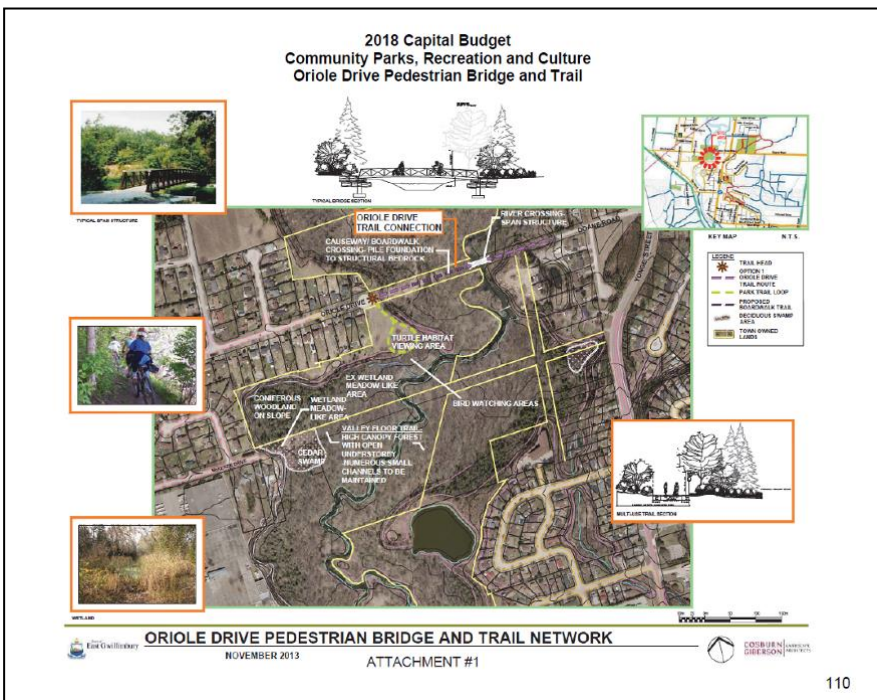
- Ensure that trails, trail head and trees are on municipal digital mapping layers need some detail here about why, what this would look like and how it would be used.
- Utilize CPTED long form and “placemaking” in design of trails, trail heads and connection points with linear and destination parks. Maintaining many types of sight-lines from many vantage points wherever possible increases safety along with greater possibilities of more regular use at all hours of the day.
- Trail cost information should be regularly updated to allow proper definition of budget or grant proposals. Consideration may be given for a potential multi-year unit-based contract with a supplier (or set of preferred vendors) to get best unit pricing for trail construction on a multi-year basis.

The 2012 ATTMP recommended expenditures as phased below:

- 0-5 years \$6.762 Million
- 6-10 years \$8.315 Million
- 10-25 years \$8.906 Million

The first 5 year target has been reached with current trail construction supplemented by the new Nokiidaa Trail pedestrian/cycling bridge over the Holland River at 2<sup>nd</sup> concession and the Green Lane multi-use pathway.

23 kilometres of trails and walkways are slated for construction within the 2018 East Gwillimbury capital plans. Capital budget allocation for construction of the Oriole Drive Pedestrian trail and bridge is approved in the amount of \$943,000. Colony Trail construction has been approved in the amount of \$390,000.



**Source:**  
2018 East  
Gwillimbury  
budget binder

- It is recommended in the Financial section of this report, that the Town of East Gwillimbury continue to provide, with tax-based funding of at least \$500,000 per annum to the end of the study period in 2028 to be available for potential matching-grant allocations from senior governments and to continue augmentation of support from the Region of York with active transportation routes.

### Trails Advisory Committee

The Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee and dedicated cyclists/walkers represent an extremely valuable community resource willing to assist the Town in continued growth and development of the trails system.

42. Continue to draw upon the Trails Advisory Committee for ongoing trail resource development and implementation of new trails along with use of the excellent 2012 Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan to identify priorities for trail expansion, comment on trail conditions and experiences as well as to make recommendations for the capital program for phasing of routes and amenities.

Prior input from Council Advisory Committees indicated that:

- Geography and transportation need to be areas of continued focus.
  - More communication of information to committees and residents.
  - More involvement with/from CPRC on facility/programs
  - Integration needed of Committee work priorities with CPRC priorities
  - Preservation of heritage and culture with trails infrastructure.
43. The Trails Advisory Committee and CPRC should co-host twice annual meetings with trail users, with the spring meeting to discuss upcoming season elements and in fall to discuss any issues in time for budgetary input.

## Trails Best Practices

There are many communities who have established great cycling and pathway systems. Among the leaders are Minneapolis-Minnesota, Wisconsin, Cities of Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto, Oakville and Mississauga.

Pathway systems with WIFI and signage integrated. To better reflect cultural diversity, add multi-language trail information and solar power for WIFI.



### Trail Head and Info Centre and WIFI pole **Minneapolis Bikeways, Minnesota**

- WIFI/signage posts could be used for major sports park schedules and locations of games. As well, the featured trailhead features a shelter, quality maps for users near a washroom and dedicated bike servicing station. Multi-language capability and WIFI access, plus benches would make this trailhead truly functional and relevant.
- Linear parks and pathways can create “linked areas of interest” using placemaking and “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) principles through installation of food gardens, horticultural gardens, trail heads, leash free zones and sitting areas along the routes. This extends more use of the trail by more people of all ages at various times of the day; increases safety for users and lessens vandalism by having more “eyes on” these spaces particularly in early mornings and later evenings.



“In the Nature of Cities, we write a great deal about the benefits of “green” cities, widely construed. In particular, we write that green infrastructure and biodiversity in cities have broad benefits for people, nature, and, indeed, for the world at large through their effects on sustainability and resilience.

Green infrastructure is good for human health and quality of life, it reduces the carbon footprint of cities, it increases resilience by insulating us from storms, and it helps create foci of community building, and so on.

Furthermore, green cities are good for nature in the form of conservation. This constellation of benefits constitutes what we call ecosystem services.”

*2016 “The Nature of Cities”,  
David Maddox – PhD.*

*“If how to increase park access is the question, then linear parks are a good answer. The reason is their geometry and nature of their shape – they touch more people.”*

David Maddox  
“The Nature of Cities”  
April 18, 2016

The power of viewing water, scenic outlook and viewing areas are illustrated by Edmonton's, investment in the Terwillegar Park footbridge, similarly there are some outstanding views along the Holland River.



*The 262 metre long footbridge links Terwillegar Park to Oleskiw River Valley Park to the north side of the river. The unique, minimalist profile of the first 'stressed ribbon' bridge in Edmonton provides a striking river valley crossing.*

The Calgary East Village Light Box project and an adjoining playground and trails form Calgary's East Village project after the devastation of the 2013 Calgary flood.

The separated bike and pedestrian paths could be used at East Gwillimbury in primary and heavily travelled routes where the rights-of-way allow. The separation allows two-way traffic for each active mode of transportation.



Note as well the use of prairie grasses, the use of erosion protection (stone filter bed), the use of "red boxes" as sitting areas which are also lit up at night and across the river a 30' public art piece.

Such public art features may also be utilized at East Gwillimbury to provide more diversity of experience and interest along public trail routes.

Use of lighting at ground level in the red boxes is another way of extending interest along trail systems.  
**East Village – Bow River Calgary**



Outdoor sculptures create greater interest along trails.  
**Liberty Village  
City of Toronto**

An example of use of sculptures  
**Chicago Navy Pier Chicago**



Create walking and cycling special events with group leaders at variant times (early morning, noon, late-afternoon, post-commute) so that greater opportunities for healthy active living.

Add sitting areas, water stations and bicycle repair stations along regular routes.



**Bike Repair Station**

Outdoor water fountains should be provided, especially if outdoor amenities are in proximity to trails, basketball and tennis courts and playgrounds.

Provision of water reinforces healthy active living objectives along with options for dog-walkers



**Confederation Park  
City of Calgary**

## Financial Modeling

### Overview

The East Gwillimbury Community Parks Recreation and Culture Department (CPRC) has had no major deficits or financial abnormalities in the past several years and operating budgets are generally on par with comparator municipalities budgets. An expected doubling of the population in this study period will require a focus on capital project management, planning for expanded services and, strategic assessments of how to best place available resources and to execute plans effectively.

Business plans will continue to be required in advance of budget submissions to Council so that financial and service accountability can be effectively planned and measured. Through the use of recreation program revenue recapture targets, required recreation program fill rates, numbers of facility rentals and potential for membership revenue at the proposed Health & Active Living Plaza, new facilities can be planned with more fiscal certainty.

It would be a good planning approach to have the allocation of capital construction expenditures set up with trigger points tied to development activity and MPAC assessment timing, given the typical 12-18 month lag of tax levies and the delay in allocation of tax capacity against multiple municipal departmental/service priorities.

Provisions will need to be made in the intermediate and long-range capital project plans to allow for potential infrastructure projects, particularly potential community centre renovation and expansion projects at Holland Landing Community Centre and Mount Albert Community Centre. Later in the study period, an assessment of the Ross Family Complex expansion and/or enhancement should be reviewed. Having “shovel ready” plans for projects ready, community support in evidence and financial capacity to co-fund these projects with other partners will assist in keeping the hard-working community facilities in a state of good repair and meeting the challenge of new demands on these facilities from an expanded population.

Delays of the Upper York Sewer System as well as a slowdown in the sale of new homes coming on line at the time of writing (February 2018) to East Gwillimbury has significant implications on capital construction cash flows. In the future, fiscal cash flows within East Gwillimbury must be carefully monitored and adjustments made in capital construction schedules as occupancy rates occur. This delay will also impact the potential timing and scope of construction of the Health & Active Living Plaza. This thereby adjusts the scope of the original project to be reduced with a smaller building envelope downwards with the potential of phasing the project over time.

In examination of East Gwillimbury’s performance against comparator communities, parks and recreation services are being managed conservatively, but there is a need to be more aggressive in revenue recapture in recreation program fill rates, and revenue yields from each program and facility rentals.

Establishment of formal user fee policies will assist in helping to avoid politicization of user fees. This type of documentation of user fees will make clear what level of taxpayer investments can be made in each service area and with appropriate rationale. There are many best practice policies available for comparison with similar-sized communities and generally those municipalities that are able to substantiate reasonable user fees are often more able to maintain quality services

and to reinvest in new and improved services systematically without the need for significant tax increases.

## Process

East Gwillimbury is moving from the status of small town to larger community with all of the complexities and expectations of service demands both from existing and new residents. The Town has an expanding amount of infrastructure that includes 188 acres of maintained parkland, 8000+ trees, and 24 kilometres of trails and over 250,000 sq. ft. of facility space. The value of these prior investments for the benefit of East Gwillimbury citizens amount to well over \$400 million.

Careful planning and management of fiscal options will be necessary to avoid swings of tax positions sometimes evident in other communities that have artificially set tax levies below inflation or the Canadian Price Index only to see above-average tax increases later due to erosion of the municipal assessment base.

As the development community is innately involved with the creation of East Gwillimbury as the place to live, exchange of and comprehension of the key demographics, psychographics and expectations for the mix of services and desirable experiences and amenities as they are introduced is paramount.

Consequently, this study review involved:

- Review of past Town and CPRC operating budgets.
- Review of the Town capital budgets of the past 3 years.
- Review of development charges studies (2014 and the 2016 Amended Development Charge – DC Study) to ascertain capacity to undertake capital projects.
- Reviewed neighbouring recent DC studies to compare quantity provisions of amenities and costs of various amenities on a /Ha basis and sq. ft./metre basis against population totals.
- Compared Residential DC rates in comparison to East Gwillimbury's rates for single/semi-detached units.
- Obtained and reconciled tableland parks by delivery of hectares/acreage and reviewed provision of parks by Census Tract to allow geographic provision comparisons within East Gwillimbury.
- Reconciled indoor facility inventories and future facility plans related to development charges and assessment of condition/lifespan of facilities.
- Interviewed Finance staff relating to future direction of finance and cash flows.

For the purposes of this study, the fiscal return component of development charges has been assessed in terms of overall *expected fiscal yield and the timing of that yield against expected capital projects.*

The review of timing and yield within the short term of the study period has been assumed to be conservative with forecasts of an additional 18,618 population development within the study period (6206 new dwelling units occupied against projections of 7100 units in the period to 2025). For the purposes of determining

ultimate requirements against recreation and facility standards, it has been assumed that the maximum population will be 46,846 derived from a maximum of 7,597 units at 3.0 persons per dwelling. In this manner, longer-term provision targets can be set and the municipality can choose to seek additional funding and accelerate provision of capital investments as necessary.

### **Observations**

Annual budget reports would be enriched by the addition of the documentation of outputs such as:

- Number of programs offered per session by location. Number of programs filled against break/even targets.
- Facility operation examination of gross cost and net cost per hour rental rate targets for each facility with typical hours of operation listed by the week and month.
- Participation metrics by daily program attendance, rental usage by allocated hourly spaces and estimated general facility attendance statistics. Visitation counts can be monitored by the use of infra-red “people counters” which now is much more affordable to be placed into service at both indoor and outdoor facilities used by the public.
- Profiles of volume of use hour by hour, week by week, season by season can yield information valuable to support maintenance shut downs, cleaning and maintenance requirements and program peaks.
- With the expected expanded population coming to East Gwillimbury, there are new pressures to set up new or expanded revenue streams to help offset costs for new services in East Gwillimbury. These services will likely include such things as aquatics, outdoor/indoor sports, indoor soccer, new tennis facilities and greater diversity of youth and family-based amenities (trends include indoor and outdoor pickleball, nature interpretation, more club activity for various age groups, drop-in games activities for youth, outreach programs for new Canadians. There will be pressures for more support for existing and new events celebrating East Gwillimbury heritage, arts and culture and more “learn-to” programs of all types that influence community healthy and active lifestyles.

### **Recent Past Budget Performance – Parks, Recreation & Culture**

As the tables below show, the CPRC department has had no major deficits or financial abnormalities in the past several years and operating budgets are generally on par with comparator municipalities. EG has the lowest net cost per capita amongst comparator communities for Recreation & Cultural Services in the 2016 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Financial Report Information (FIR) reports with net cost per capita of \$260.95 against a comparator municipality average low of \$295.53 and the highest net cost of \$323.31 per capita in Bradford West Gwillimbury.

The formal FIR information tables for each municipality below details information of all municipal services for each Ontario community. However, for this study, parks, recreation, library and cultural/museum expenditures are featured in the analysis.

**Table 1 Comparison of Financial Data of EG with 3 local communities < 50,000 population.**

*The table above compares financial results of three nearby comparator municipalities below 50,000 in population; the table below features those with over 50,000 population compared to East Gwillimbury. Comparator communities are averaged in each chart.*

Expenditures	Bradford West Gwillimbury		King Township		Whitchurch Stouffville		Average of 3 Municipalities	East Gwillimbury	
	\$'s	\$/Capita	\$'s	\$/Capita	\$'s	\$/Capita		\$'s	\$/Capita
Parks	1974915	57.63	1931777	78.81	2706390	59.04	65.16	1870968	77.99
Rec Programs	2510723	73.27	1479570	60.36	2051930	44.77	59.47	1348710	56.22
Rec Facilities, Ski, Marina, Golf									
Rec Facilities Other	5001297	145.96	3936496	160.59	6807482	148.51	151.69	2639219	110.01
Libraries	2918122	85.16	1538284	62.76	1887338	41.17	63.03	1555039	64.82
Museums			200964	8.20	737133	16.08	12.14		
Cultural Services	233926	6.83			820248	17.89	12.36		
Other (admin)					1068243	23.31			
Gross Expenditures	12638983	368.85	9087091	370.72	16078764	350.78	363.45	7411936	308.95
Grants, User Fees & Service Charges									
Parks					154370	3.37		45785	1.91
Rec Programs	1542677	45.02	378471	15.44	1501463	32.76	31.07	377988	15.76
Rec Facilities, Ski, Marina, Golf									
Rec Facilities Other	190	0.01	1897744	77.42	2117962	46.21	41.21	708277	29.52
Libraries	17722	0.52	21735	0.89	27039	0.59	0.66	19449	0.81
Museums			30844	1.26	116856	2.55	1.90		
Cultural Services					161909	3.53			
Other									
Total	1560589	45.54	2326794	94.92	4079399	89.00	76.49	1151499	48.00
Households (as reported by Finance Officer)	12031		9258		15712			15712	
Population (as reported by Finance Officer)	34266		24512		45837			23991	
Youth (as reported by Finance Officer)	16585		2015		9315			864	
Rev/Exp Ratio	12.3474%		25.6055%		25.3713%		21.11%		15.54%
Net Expenditures	11078394	323.31	6760297	275.80	11999365	261.78	286.96	6260437	260.95
% of Program Expenses recovered by Revenues	61.44%		25.58%		73.17%		53.40%		28.03%
% of Parks Expenses recovered by Revenues					5.70%				2.45%



**Table 2 Comparison of Financial Data of EG with 3 local communities > 50,000 population**

	Georgina Township		Town of Aurora		Town of Newmarket		Average of 3 Municipalities	East Gwillimbury	
	\$'s	\$/Capita	\$'s	\$/Capita	\$'s	\$/Capita		\$'s	\$/Capita
<b>Expenditures</b>									
Parks	4172549	82.18	3797298	68.49	8439261	96.64	82.44	1870968	77.99
Rec Programs	2467725	48.61	5283133	95.29	7551658	86.47	76.79	1348710	56.22
Rec Facilities, Ski, Marina, Golf	1538130								
Rec Facilities Other	7429258	146.33	6949517	125.34	12263880	140.43	137.37	2639219	110.01
Libraries	2497013	49.18	3861881	69.65	3553601	40.69	53.18	1555039	64.82
Museums		0.00	76421	1.38	367099	4.20	2.79		
Cultural Services	764326	15.05	592437	10.69	965131	11.05	18.40		
Other (admin)									
<b>Gross Expenditures</b>	<b>18869001</b>	<b>371.65</b>	<b>20560687</b>	<b>370.83</b>	<b>33140630</b>	<b>379.49</b>	<b>373.99</b>	<b>7411936</b>	<b>308.95</b>
<b>Grants, User Fees &amp; Service Charges</b>									
Parks	565651	11.14	460815	8.31	364445	4.17		45785	1.91
Rec Programs	252959	4.98	2525322	45.55	5533921	63.37	37.97	377988	15.76
Rec Facilities, Ski, Marina, Golf	474025								
Rec Facilities Other	1577935	31.08	2158737	38.93	98115	1.12	23.71	708277	29.52
Libraries	93426	1.84	43183	0.78	69085	0.79	1.14	19449	0.81
Museums					497	0.01	0.00		
Cultural Services					309459	3.54			
Other	120050								
<b>Total</b>	<b>3084046</b>	<b>60.74</b>	<b>5188057</b>	<b>93.57</b>	<b>6375522</b>	<b>73.01</b>	<b>75.77</b>	<b>1151499</b>	<b>48.00</b>
Households (as reported by Finance Officer)	18874		19381		29002			15712	
Population (as reported by Finance Officer)	50771		55445		87329			23991	
Youth (as reported by Finance Officer)	13740		9855		8506			864	
Rev/Exp Ratio	16.3445%		25.2329%		19.2378%		20.27%		15.54%
<b>Net Expenditures</b>	<b>15784955</b>	<b>310.90</b>	<b>15372630</b>	<b>277.26</b>	<b>26765108</b>	<b>306.49</b>	<b>298.22</b>	<b>6260437</b>	<b>260.95</b>
% of Program Expenses recovered by Revenues	10.25%		47.80%		73.28%		43.78%		28.03%
% of Parks Expenses recoverd by Revenues	13.56%		12.14%		4.32%				2.45%

### Table Analysis

The CPRC Department *revenue recapture of expenditures* amongst Bradford-West Gwillimbury, King Township and Whitchurch Stouffville averages 21.11%, with East Gwillimbury at a 15.54% (Table 1) recovery rate which is higher than Bradford West-Gwillimbury at 12.34% but lower than Whitchurch Stouffville's 25.37% recovery rate.

An important metric is the recovery rate of recreation program expenses. A municipality may choose to subsidize various types of recreation programs to attain various goals and to increase participation for introductory programs, or to reach special goals in outreach programs within a community (i.e. seniors, youth). Typically recovery rates for programs (excluding aquatic programming) should try to move toward 75% or even a 100% recovery for programs operated in new facilities given the many pressures of new operational costs.

East Gwillimbury's current *program* recovery rate is low at 28.04% compared to the 53.4% average recovery rate of comparator municipalities of under 50,000 in population. East Gwillimbury recreation program expenditures are \$15.76 per capita, however average program expenditures of all six comparator municipalities is \$31.84, suggesting conservative cost controls and possibly lower level of current activity and service provision with current facility and program levels in East Gwillimbury.

East Gwillimbury's low revenue recapture rate and lower gross per capita program expenses, points toward a need to ensure that a higher number of recreation programs offered are being filled to capacity and to have a more cumulative revenue contribution to overall operating revenues from program revenues (PxQ). The current East Gwillimbury low net cost per capita for recreation services suggests lower fees than market comparators.

East Gwillimbury parks services recovers 2.45% of expenses against Whitchurch Stouffville's 5.7% however, this is also lower than the Town of Georgina's at 13.56% and Aurora's 12.14% park expenditure recoveries. Only two municipalities formally reported expenditures for museums and cultural services (Whitchurch Stouffville \$6.08 per capita and Newmarket \$3.55 per capita).

The FIR-reported East Gwillimbury library expenditure per capita is \$64.82 per capita which is very close to the comparator group average of \$63.03 per capita.

The Municipality will have to be cognizant of the revenue lag in the completion of housing units, as well as the MPAC valuation process which is typically slow, to allow municipal tax assessment and eventual tax levies to generate sufficient tax revenues to offset growth in services. The period of time of this lag varies by municipality but averages 10-16 months.

### Capital Works

Capital budgets in parks and recreation services require additional demand/supply analysis and marketing based information to complete capital submissions as much as facility condition and capital asset value assessments. Attainment of reasonable operating net costs require facilities to be in a state of excellent repair so that cleanliness, assured continuity of service hours, attractiveness to individual and group users can ultimately meet revenue, price and quantity targets.

Use of multi-disciplinary review teams to inspect on-site facilities against marketing and facility positioning to public needs help identify weaknesses. Whether needs for facility upgrades are minor or major, all such requirements should be prioritized against safety, corporate priorities, community survey results, lifespan status and legislative requirements.

Therefore, it would be a good planning approach to also have allocation of capital construction expenditures by the municipality set up with trigger points tied to development activity and MPAC assessment timing. This would account for the typical 12-18 month lag of tax levies and the ultimate allocation of tax capacity against multiple municipal departmental/service priorities.

Delays of the Upper York Sewer System as well as a slowdown in the sale of new homes coming on line to East Gwillimbury have significant implications on capital construction cash flow within CPRC. Fiscal cash flows of the municipality must be carefully monitored and adjustments made in capital construction schedules.

The ability of CPRC to aid in helping to fund projects by infrastructure funding, naming rights, community, business and service club contributions could assist in providing a balanced approach to timing and implementation of capital renovations and new construction.

Many communities have naming rights and sponsorship policies at the ready and approved by Municipal Councils that help guide communities to reap the fiscal and relationship benefits that otherwise would not be present. Naming rights and sponsorships should be thought of as a long-term, two-way exchange between two parties that should each benefit from the relationship with equal responsibilities to carry out requirements during the entire contractual period. It would be advisable to review current draft Naming Rights and Sponsorship Policy drafts, revise if necessary and presented to Council.

As well, for smaller projects, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies of larger corporations often only need to be properly matched with community need to assist in donations of time, expertise and finances to worthy projects.

**2015-2017 Capital Funding**

Type of Funding Source	Level of Funding	Current Funding At Population 24,055
Capital Allocations	Capital Allocations	
Parks - 2018 Capital Program		
18-017 Oriole Drive Pedestrian Bridge/Trail	\$ 943,000	
18-018 Colony Trail Improvements	\$ 390,000	
18-019 Tree Removal and Replacement	\$ 150,000	
18-020 One-ton Pickup Crewcab & Trailer	\$ 90,000	
18-021 Riding Mowers – Zero Turn (2)	\$ 49,000	
18-022 18-022 Equipment Trailer 25'	\$ 30,000	
18-023 Snow Plow with Harness	\$ 7,500	
Total	\$ 1,659,500	\$68.96/capita
Facilities – 2018 Capital Program		
18-024 HALP Architectural Services	\$ 1,400,000	
18-025 Operations Centre Construction	\$ 16,500,000	
18-026 Sports Complex Fire Suppression	\$ 95,000	
18-027 Mount Albert Lions Well	\$ 17,000	
Total Facilities	\$ 18,012,000	\$748.78/capita
Total Community Services	\$ 19,871,500	\$817.77/capita
Parks - 2017 Capital Program	\$ 2,086,500	
Facilities – 2017 Capital Program	\$ 625,000	
Total	\$2,711,500	\$ 112.70/capita

The table to the left has been prepared to provide an overview of the last three years of capital allocations for CPRC.

2017 capital spending is up sharply at \$817 per capita vs. an average of \$112 per capita in 2015 and 2016.

As growth continues, multiple capital spending priorities will need to be harmonized both within the CPRC department and corporately. Capital spending priorities, timing and phasing against DC revenue sources and close cash flow/debt management will be required given uncertain timing of MPAC assessment valuations and

ultimately ability to drive new tax revenues. Rather than being seen as reactive, Councils could be proactive and show leadership in seeking to invest in solutions, to work toward active partnerships, ensuring that a “fair share” of federal and provincial infrastructure funding comes back so that “just in time” facility construction takes place as more residents make their home in East Gwillimbury.

Typically, capital asset reserve funds are set aside at a level of 5% of the total capital asset value to ensure proper investments in life cycle maintenance (excluding land). Many leading communities have even set a 1% of a tax rate to specifically ensure that infrastructure replacement costs are able to be funded on a sustainable basis and not have a majority of major community infrastructure such as roads, bridges, buildings fall into a state of non-recoverable disrepair. East Gwillimbury has set Facility and Parks Capital Reserve funds and contributes to these funds on an annual basis. Additionally East Gwillimbury maintains a long term capital repair and replacement database that will be integrated with a recently adopted Asset Management System. The current capital budget program is oriented toward funding infrastructure on a case-by-case basis referencing the capital repair and replacement priorities and respective reserve funds.

For recreation and parks services, DC yields are reduced by 10% as per the Development Charges Act. The upcoming DC review in spring of 2018 will yield DC revenues of approximately \$10 million or more that could be allocated to new facilities. If within this review, a case can be made that growth does indeed affect requirements of existing larger community facilities, the Town should not bear this

cost only with tax-based resources. Recent examples of DC studies in other communities show that impacts of growth on existing facilities can be funded under development charges and should be investigated to account for pressures on major existing facilities. This in turn would help set aside capital funding together with potential infrastructure grants and tax-based funding to prevent infrastructure such as Holland Landing Community Centre and Library from becoming viewed as lesser community assets due to limited investment in renewal.

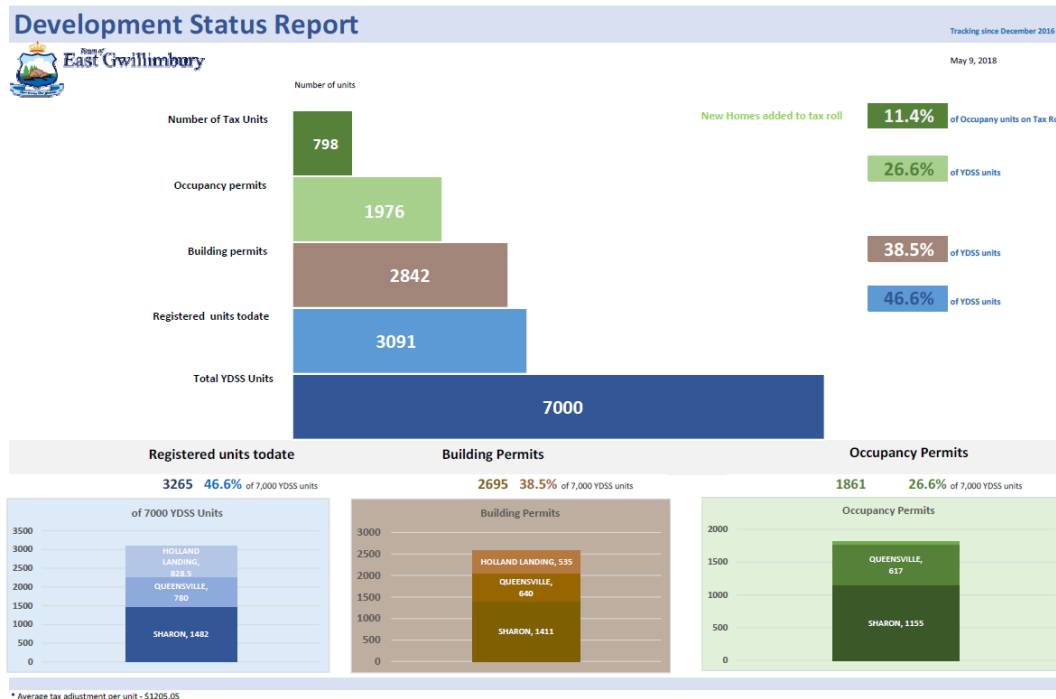
### Indoor/Outdoor Capital Funding by Development Levies 2018 to 2028

Type of Funding Source	Comparison of Municipal Levels of DC Funding (by Type of Service and Source)	Current Funding At Population 24,055	Current Surplus or (Gap)	Future Funding Yields Population 46,846 to 2028 DC discounted at 74.31% against expected 31,031 Population 63,037 to 2031
Development Charge Funding (2016 Development Charge Study Update)	<p>Indoor Recreation (single detached)</p> <p>Bradford W Gwillimbury (2014) \$ 1,060</p> <p>Aurora (2014) \$ 6,402</p> <p>Georgina (2015) \$ 2,083</p> <p>King (2014) \$1,782</p>	<p>Indoor Recreation (2015)</p> <p>East Gwillimbury (2016) \$ 2,449</p>		<p>East Gwillimbury DC allocation (thousands)</p> <p>Provision for Indoor Recreation land \$ 7,200</p> <p>Provision for Multi Use Community Centre \$ 64,575 less reserve balance \$ 3,785</p> <p>Total Outdoor DC \$ 67,990</p> <p>** with discount of 0.7344 \$ 49,931</p> <p>** revised growth / by prior growth based on M plans 22,791 / 31,031</p>
Development Charge Funding (2016 Development Charge Study Update)	<p>Outdoor Recreation (single detached)</p> <p>Bradford West Gwillimbury \$ 4,766</p> <p>Aurora (2014) \$ 3,047</p> <p>Georgina (2015) \$ 1,454</p> <p>King (2014) \$1,315</p>	<p>Outdoor Recreation (2016)</p> <p>East Gwillimbury \$1,593</p>	N/A	<p>East Gwillimbury DC allocation (thousands)</p> <p>Park Development \$ 25,888</p> <p>Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trail heads 626</li> <li>- bridges 1,234</li> <li>- underpasses (2) 726</li> <li>- trails (11,180 m) 4,830</li> <li>- vehicles 1,800</li> </ul> <p>Portion of ops centre 2,430</p> <p>Growth-related Park improvements 9,720</p> <p>Total Outdoor DC \$51,470</p> <p>* w/diskont of .7344 \$37,799</p>

The table above features analysis of the current levels of DC funding for both indoor and outdoor capital projects as derived from the 2016 Development Charges Amendment Study for East Gwillimbury. The tables relate the expected amounts of ultimate developer contributions to the infrastructure of East Gwillimbury and potential restraints on the timing and scope of various capital projects if the pace of occupancy of new homes slows.

#### Timing of Capital Work

The in-house software development of a growth monitoring and tracking “dashboard” tool, displayed below assists staff in determining timing of growth and subdivision stages within each community. This tool helps guide the outlook of finances for the municipality and is integrated into and informs the long-term and annual municipal budget process.



**East Gwillimbury Development “Dashboard” Program – Software developed in-house to track and monitor development progress and time capital projects. 2018 Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Professional Development Award of Excellence**

Financial Recommendations:

44. Administration and Operations

- As growth occurs, EG should track overall financial and outcomes against targets with the assistance of additional measures with regard to levels of service, pricing, quality and quantity options in addition to budget allocations. Measures of efficiency (*how well do we do?*) and effectiveness (*are we doing the right things?*) will also assist in providing targets for Council and staff in assessing whether the right services are being delivered at the right time and at the right quality standards.
- Documentation of user fees should make clear what level of taxpayer investments will be made in each service and with appropriate rationales. Many best practice policies are available at similar communities; that are able to substantiate reasonable fees to maintain quality services and allow reinvestment in new and improved services.
- Use of cost recovery modelling for program development and a routine, at minimum of every two years, review of fees with market comparators and ability to pay analysis of household income data will assist with pricing and cost recovery efforts.

- Utilize Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMAH) information annually, allowing comparison of fiscal performance amongst comparator communities for each type of service. More detailed provision standard and maintenance standard performance data can be utilized that is available in the national “Yardsticks” surveys for parks, trails and outdoor recreation. *Source: 2016 Canadian Parks Recreation Association, Ontario Parks Council, Ontario Parks Association.*
- Establish levels of service and target citizen market penetration for each leisure product (quality, quantity, % of citizens using the service) and use of psychographics right time at the right cost.
- Ensure that municipal user satisfaction surveys are regularly carried out by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party and shared with Council and the community.
- Ensure that the right standards are being set in place for outdoor recreation and indoor recreation in relationship to development levies, parks, trails and indoor facilities support attaining greater municipal tax offsets against the total costs of development within a community.

#### 45. Financial Capacity

Approximately \$1-2 million has been available for “regular” annual capital projects in CPRC each year. Within the facilities portion of the 2016 Development Charges Review (DC), indoor recreation facility funding and land assembly potential funding through the study period to 2025 would yield \$7,200,000 (for land) and \$64,575,000 towards a major multi-use community centre.

- With impacts of the delayed UYSS and new residential dwelling sales pace slowing, a more conservative estimate of 67% of these yields would be appropriate (use of 6202 dwelling units in the time period to 2023).
- Delays of the Upper York Sewer System as well as a slowdown in the sale of new homes coming on line to EG have significant implications on capital construction cash flow within CPRC, so fiscal cash flows of the municipality must be carefully monitored and adjustments made in capital construction schedules.
- The combination of Upper York Sewer System allocation delays and new home sale slowdowns impacts the timing and scope of construction of the Health & Active Living Plaza thereby forcing the scope of the original project to be reduced and potential adjustments of amenities within the building and adjoining outdoor areas.
- The Town should continue to develop yearly strategic business plans prepared in advance of submission of budgets; set up use of immediate, intermediate and long-term outlooks for operational and capital budgets to better guide recommendations and allocation of resources toward optimal areas of investment.

- Ensure that regular reviews of building construction estimates are tracked, various means of construction examined (tender, design-build, pre-qualifications of contractors, etc.) are used. Recent new construction for multi-faceted major recreation centres are approximately \$500 per square foot for new construction and \$600 per square foot for renovations.
- A development contribution of approximately \$10 million has been identified in the Development Charges Background Study 2016 to support existing community park expansion and enhancement projects to service new resident requirements. Continuing to build upon this funding sources will be critical with future Development Charge Background Study Updates.

#### 46. Supplementary Infrastructure Funding and Grants

- The municipality should structure plans and documentation “readiness” to allow matching grant applications through federal/provincial infrastructure grant programs. Holland Landing Community Centre & Library, Mount Albert Community Centre and the Ross Family Complex expansion upgrades could be targeted for these funds. All of these projects could be considered as eligible for some development-related funding through DC’s given impacts on these facilities of increased population.
- Use of “shovel-ready” and “J.I.T. – just in time” capital project planning for major facility upgrades are very useful to provide a municipal advantage to East Gwillimbury in applications for and receipt of federal/provincial infrastructure funding projects. Establishing a “ready-range” of capital project options that allow potential funding departments to use “top up” monies for quick construction such as trail construction is often utilized. Municipalities that have clear community and Council endorsement of capital plans receive more prompt approvals and higher grant amounts.

Investing in improvements to these facilities in this way, allows geographic service dispersion and easier access by citizens for “just in time” programming more in tune with a commuting population. It will also be an increasingly effective way to deal with child care requirements, concentrated programs for various groups and interests with programming during early hours, daytime, late afternoon and evenings as is necessary to acquire best efficiency of usage of facilities each hour and every square foot.



## **Future Capital Expenditures**

The following tables for capital projects are presented to assist in potential allocation of resources and planning for priority capital projects subject to Council approval.

**Timeframes are contingent upon population thresholds and include planning, design and construction within the timeframe.**

- **Table 1 shows Facilities Short-Term Years 1-3 priority projects**
- **Table 2 shows Facilities Mid-Term Years 4-6 priority projects**
- **Table 3 shows Facilities Long-Term Years 7-10 priority projects**
- **Table 4 shows Parks Short-Term Years 1-3 priority projects**
- **Table 5 shows Parks Mid-Term Years 4-6 priority projects**
- **Table 6 shows Parks Long-Term Years 7-10 priority projects**

**The tables may assist in planning capital funding requests over the 10 year period as well as inform the examination of and analysis of capital funding flows in consideration with other corporate funding requirements.**

**At time of this study development contributions were tracking to sufficiently fund the capital projects listed in the above Tables 1 through 6.**

**Separate operating funding strategies per project must be developed to ensure financial sustainability.**



**Table 2: Facilities Mid-Term (4-6 Years) Approximately 40,000 – 45,000 population**

Facility	Projected Capital Construction Costs (2018)
<p><b>Mount Albert Community Centre Expansion and Enhancement Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program Space including expanded and enhanced space for fitness instruction, child and youth programming</li> <li>- Dedicated Youth Space</li> </ul>	+/-5-7M

**Table 3: Facilities Long-Term (7-10 Years) Approximately 45,000 + population**

Facility	Projected Capital Construction Costs (2018)
<p><b>Ross Family Complex</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility Study for Expansion and Enhancement</li> </ul>	N/A
<p><b>Planning for Large Scale Multi Use Recreation Complex (Green Lane Secondary Plan)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secure Land</li> <li>- Initial facility fit and concept</li> </ul>	N/A
<p><b>Partnership Opportunities with Future High School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Examine partnership opportunities for indoor and outdoor facilities</li> </ul>	N/A

**Table 4: Parks and Trails Short-Term (1-3 Years) Approximately 35,000 to 40,000 Population**

\*Includes Large-scale new parks development and re-development projects, does not include neighbourhood parks development.

Outdoor Facility	Projected Capital Construction Costs (2018)
<b>Mount Albert Park Re-Development (Phase 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skate Park</li> <li>- Junior and Senior Playground</li> <li>- Events Pavilion</li> <li>- Services for Natural Outdoor Skating</li> </ul>	+/- \$750K Partial Development Charge Eligible Funding
<b>Queensville Park Re-Development (Phase 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tennis Courts (replace 2 existing courts with 3 new courts) and shade structure.</li> </ul>	+/- 500K Partial Development Charge Eligible Funding
<b>Anchor Park Field Lighting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retro-fit Lighting to Soccer Field</li> <li>- Retro-fit Lighting to Baseball Diamond</li> </ul>	+/- 280K Development Charge Eligible Funding
<b>Health &amp; Active Living Plaza Park</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Senior Lit Baseball</li> <li>- Senior Lit Artificial Turf Field and Track</li> <li>- Skateboard Park</li> <li>- Events Space</li> <li>- Junior and Senior Playground</li> </ul>	+/- 5-7M Development Charge Eligible Funding
<b>Review Facility Fit and Phasing for Civic Centre Precinct Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Event/Gathering Space and Public Performance Space</li> </ul>	N/A
<b>Centralized Outdoor Skating Civic Centre Precinct or Queensville Health &amp; Active Living Plaza</b> Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full size covered refrigerated pad</li> <li>- Seasonal Events Space</li> <li>- Water Feature</li> <li>- Temporary pilot natural outdoor skating could be provided at Civic Centre Lands</li> </ul>	+/- 3-4M Development Charge Eligible Funding
<b>Leash-Free Dog Zone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish first of two leash free dog parks. One in Sharon, Queensville or Holland Landing) and one in Mount Albert.</li> </ul>	\$50K Project could be incorporated into existing park  Leverage sponsorship opportunities for capital construction.
<b>Trails</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue implementation of ATTMP priority projects. (Oriole, Colony, Lake to Lake route, Nokiidaa Trail)</li> <li>- Refresh and Revision to ATTMP</li> <li>- Develop and implement trails signage strategy.</li> </ul>	Project specific to each capital budget year.  Development Charge Eligible Funding may apply to some projects.  Partnership Funding (LSRCA and Region) should be leveraged where possible for each project.
<b>Potential Parks Land Assembly Strategy</b> Examine opportunity to build land inventory for future parks uses to support large-scale parks and sports field development	N/A

**Table 5: Parks and Trails Mid-Term (4-6 Years) Approximately 40,000 population**

<b>Outdoor Facility</b>	<b>Projected Capital Construction Costs (2018)</b>
<p><b>Potential Implementation of Civic Centre Precinct Plan (Phase 1)</b>                      Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop Shovel Ready Drawings for potential grant intake.</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Mount Albert Lions Park</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of Two Senior Lit Soccer Fields</li> <li>- Potential maintenance and field house partnership project with community stakeholder</li> </ul>	<p>\$1.5M                      Development Charge Eligible Funding</p>
<p><b>Sharon Sports Complex Park Re-Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility study and implementation of outdoor space to support parks uses.</li> </ul> <p>Considerations: Lit Baseball</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Leash-Free Dog Zone</b>                      Establish second of two leash free dog parks. One in Sharon, (Queensville or Holland Landing) and one in Mount Albert.</p>	<p>\$50K                      Project could be incorporated into an existing park                       Leverage sponsorship opportunities for capital construction.</p>
<p><b>Trails</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue implementation of ATTMP priority projects.</li> <li>- Develop and implement trailhead improvement and enhancement strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>Project specific to each capital budget year.                       Development Charge Eligible Funding may apply to some projects.                       Partnership Funding (LSRCA and Region) should be leveraged where possible for each project.</p>
<p><b>Potential Parks Land Assembly Strategy</b>                      Examine opportunity to build land inventory for future parks uses to support large-scale parks and sports field development</p>	<p>N/A</p>

**Table 6: Parks and Trails Long-Term (7-10 Years) Approximately 45,000 + population**

Outdoor Facility	Projected Capital Construction Costs (2018)
<p><b>Planning for Large Scale Parks Development (Green Lane Secondary Plan)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secure Land</li> <li>- Initial parks facility fit and concepts</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Trails</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue implementation of Active Transportation &amp; Trails Master Plan priority projects</li> <li>- Conduct a refresh and revision to the Active Transportation &amp; Trails Master Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Project specific to each capital budget year.</p> <p>Development Charge Eligible Funding may apply to some projects.</p> <p>Partnership Funding (LSRCA and Region) should be leveraged where possible for each project.</p>
<p><b>Partnership Opportunities with Future High School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Examine partnership opportunities for indoor and outdoor facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>

**General Parks Upgrade Considerations**

- Enhancements to existing parks to include additional amenities to support placemaking and community gathering (additional seating and tables, outdoor eating/picnic facilities).
- Include where possible and practical Wi-Fi connectivity at large scale park developments, trail heads and facility common spaces.

## Implementation

It is essential that the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture staff commence implementation of the Master Plan immediately upon approval by Town Council, expected to be no later than September 2018, in a sequential and systematic manner. Acting too quickly and underestimating the Project Management part of implementation will be counterproductive to the sequencing of the recommendations outlined later in this section.

If the implementation process is effectively managed in relationship to the increases in residential occupancies and resultant tax base, and accurate assessment of residents needs and desires, resources can be invested by Council in a fair and equitable manner.

Recent changes in governance are going to create a new operating environment, with the potential of tensions between Councillors and residents if decisions and delivery are not transparent. It will therefore be fundamentally important to consider the recommendations in the context of where growth is occurring, knowing the make-up of population pockets throughout the municipality and the corresponding needs and desires, and equally important will be the need to take a geographically “balanced” approach to both service and facility delivery in relationship to community needs.

It will also be important to continue to be entrepreneurial and innovative in creating solutions that address needs in the community, and encourage staff, Councillors and partners to take calculated risks to move in new directions, as long as the need for these new directions has been confirmed.

As the CPRC continues to evolve, operational planning linked to program and facility costs, revenues generation and fluctuations in tax revenues will continue to be of utmost importance. The more staff that are involved in the assessment and planning process, the more ownership and commitment there will be to achieving success through appropriate decision making and delivery mechanisms.

While the direction contained herein is based on the consultation during the planning process in 2017-18, there is a significant requirement to annually reassess community conditions, particularly the rate of new home occupancy and the make-up of the people who have moved to the area, and change plans accordingly.

All reporting to Town Council should have a direct reference to the Master Plan and just as importantly be reviewed annually prior to budget development to ensure its content is still relevant and remains in sync with the growth of the community. Annual priorities that are established in the budget, should form the basis of staff annual work plans, and used as a measurement process during performance reviews. Sharing successes regularly both internally and with the community, will create momentum and establish department credibility with decision makers, partners, participants, users and the community.

An integral part of this master plan is the Health and Active Living Strategy. As noted earlier, it will be important to ensure that the tools developed as part of the strategy are used to ensure health and active living are a part of all service and facility delivery decisions. Essential to the service delivery process is the requirement to effectively monitor, measure and assess the *difference the department is making in peoples' lives*. There is a full section on how this

measurement process can be integrated with service and facility delivery, and should be an integral part of the annual planning process.

Increasing staff capacity in relationship to integrating health and active living philosophy into their Annual Operational Plans is fundamentally important to the long term success of implementation. As can be seen in the tables that follow, first steps in the implementation process focus on ensuring staff are knowledgeable of plan contents, the concept of health and active living and the department's role as both a service provider and service "arranger":

Basic steps to be considered in the implementation process following Council approval include:

1. Review of key priorities with the SMT.
2. A staff working meeting to review content of the plan, the Health and Active Living Strategy, and focus of new Re-positioning context, and develop immediate ways each Branch can take the plan and run with it, particularly to initiate action on the "quick wins".
3. An immediately scheduled staff training workshop, focused on the meaning of health and active living and the context in which the department will integrate the Health and Active Living Strategy into every day decisions.
4. Integration of the results of the Measurement Process with annual business plan during budget preparation. A one-day staff workshop in which department priorities can be reviewed and new ones identified in the context of the plan and on the results of evaluations. Individual Branch priorities could be developed that tie in to those of the department.
5. Integration of department and plan priorities with individual staff work plans that are reviewed on a monthly basis.
6. Quarterly full department meetings to review successes in plan implementation and review relevance to what is going on in the community.
7. Annual progress reporting to SMT and Town Council in addition to referencing the Master Plan in all department reports.

Financial modeling has been based on growth projections that have been established in 2018. Priorities in all likelihood will change over the life of the plan, particularly as influenced by financial pressures, lags in tax revenue and Development Charge yield, as well as changes in participation rates, availability of community resources and volunteers and changes in overall Town Council priorities.

The expenditures outlined in the Model are based on industry recognized construction and maintenance costs per square foot of space, and are considered best estimates that in all likelihood will require further refinement over the duration of the plan, particularly if there are fluctuations in the local economy. Program costs are closely tied to level of participation, competitive programming rates in surrounding municipalities and the participant's ability to pay.

The municipality is encouraged to continue to re-direct a portion of user fees, a percentage of tax increases to a capital reserve that can be accessed for facility improvements, major structural renovations and other new operating systems and



fixtures. Ongoing maintenance and equipment replacement should be considered operating costs and budgeted accordingly in annual operating budgets.

Revenues and costs of partnerships will need to be identified and verified during each negotiation process in the context of the relationships and service levels expected as part of the agreement. Other sources of funding have been identified but also will require adjustment, based on the programs and prerequisites that need to be met.

Timing of each recommendation has been outlined in a series of tables that follow, targeted to:

Short Term:	1 - 2 years (2018 – 2020)
Medium Term:	3 - 5 years (2021 – 2024)
Longer Term:	6 –10 years and beyond (2025 – 2028)

Annual assessment of progress in each area and a re-alignment of the implementation sequence and timing can be adjusted in relationship to annual Town-wide and CPRC department priorities and changes in the composition of the community.

**The table that follows contains a number of “quick wins” that will help the department demonstrate immediate progress on the implementation of the plan. These wins will also build ownership and excitement both internally and externally on the difference the department can make in peoples’ lives.**

Recommendation

Implementation

47. Following approval by Town Council, commence the implementation process using the Implementation Table as a guide, and, annually review in the context of setting priorities in the Annual Business Plan.

## Recommendation Summary

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Page #</b>	<b>Short Term 1-2 Yrs</b>	<b>Med Term 3-5 Yrs</b>	<b>Long Term 6+ Yrs</b>
<b>Administration, Programs and Community Engagement</b>				
1. Define and initiate a community engagement strategy and align appropriate resources. Continue and increase efforts by CPRC Department staff with Council Committees.	28	x		
2. Establish a well defined data collection/analysis system and assign staff to maintain alignment with market need.	28	x		
3. Develop creative approaches to enhance transportation in the municipality with York Region Transit or private/public partnership options.	28	x		
4. Develop ways to ensure equitable access to facilities by adopting Universal Design Standards and take into consideration cultural needs and customs.	28		x	
5. Adopt a philosophy that “no child will be turned away”, and develop policies to increase access to recreation.	28	x		
6. Initiate an evidenced based facility and program planning process, tied to collection of community needs and demographic and psychographic data.	29	x		
7. Wherever possible negotiate joint development and use agreements with the Boards of Education and other agencies and organizations.	29	x		
8. Conduct routine registration and facility use fee review and develop a user fee policy.	29	x		
9. Development of facilities and programs that increase the accessibility for persons of varying abilities, residents over the age of 55 years and youth.	29	x		
10. Where practical create one-stop centralized Town customer services at larger community centres.	29	x		
11. Ensure cohabitating programming and lifelong learning are prerequisites in service delivery.	31	x		
12. Develop policies and processes that promote culture and heritage preservation and special events expansion.	31	x		
13. Continue to develop and initiate mutually beneficial partnerships with agencies, organizations, institutions and the private sector.	31	x		
14. Continue to dialogue with social service organizations to identify opportunities to collaboratively plan and deliver health and active living programs that are relevant to community needs, incorporate the social determinants of health, and increase resident’s capacity in healthy and active living.	33	x		
15. Integrate the principles and strategies of the Health and Active Living Strategy and CPRC Department re-positioning with the facility, service and program decision making process.	44	x		

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Page #</b>	<b>Short Term 1-2 Yrs</b>	<b>Med Term 3-5 Yrs</b>	<b>Long Term 6+ Yrs</b>
16. Continue the delivery of direct programs in the context of the master plan, integrating the Health and Active Living Strategy, Value Proposition, Program Standards, Program Development Model and CPRA Framework with all decision making processes.	62	x	x	
17. Conduct a thorough review of surrounding municipal program offerings in on a routine basis and at minimum every 2 years to determine areas of competitiveness and potential opportunities for collaborative delivery.	62	x	x	
18. Target program content based on evidence-based data collection that includes demographics, psychographics and customer feedback.	62	x	x	
19. Initiate access policy development and create opportunities for integration programming.	62	x	x	
20. Initiate the Go Forward Approach to community development as outlined in the master plan and allocate sufficient staff resources where the annual operating budget process allows.	70	x	x	
21. 1) Create and/or strengthen service partnerships with the private sector service clubs, social service agencies, non-profit organizations and regional associations, and other levels of government to enhance the creation of a healthy and active community.  2) Continue to strengthen community volunteer development and capacity in conjunction with community groups and enhance relationships associations and regionally based organizations mandated to promote volunteerism.	70	x	x	
22. In conjunction with the Development Services Department to determine work to implement Municipal Cultural Plan recommendations relevant to current community conditions.	74	x	x	x
23. Facilitate the creation of an Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee for representation, advocacy and guidance. Develop an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy.	74	x		
24. The Town should continue to leverage partnership programming with the Sharon Temple Museum Society and continue work to review the potential for a partnership with a proposed new Visitors Centre where purpose built shared program space could be provided.	74	x		
<b>Indoor Facilities</b>				
25. <b>Health and Active Living Plaza:</b> Continue planning and design for the new Health & Active Living Plaza facility to include an aquatics centre (25m lane pool, learning and hydro-therapy tank), gymnasium and program space. Where possible and practical incorporate phasing the facility. Construction and operating of the facility must be timed with growth thresholds.	86	x		

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Page #</b>	<b>Short Term 1-2 Yrs</b>	<b>Med Term 3-5 Yrs</b>	<b>Long Term 6+ Yrs</b>
Continue with partner development for service delivery enhancement at the Health & Active Living Plaza.				
26. <b>East Gwillimbury Sports Complex:</b> At the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex, ice time demand for a 3 <sup>rd</sup> arena will predicate expansion of a structure to the north section of the facility with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> arena being set up for ice use immediately. The 3 <sup>rd</sup> arena could include some of the supporting facility amenities as described in this plan. Consideration validated by separate study for a mechanical and structural preparations for a 4 <sup>th</sup> arena could be included.	86		x	
27. <b>Satellite Community Centres:</b> The retention of smaller centres, halls and facilities is important given the importance of such facilities to rural and hamlet social and recreational needs. Business plan is required for each to determine long term role and extent to which they should be upgraded and/or expanded through renovations and building expansion.	87	x	x	x
28. <b>The Holland Landing Community Centre:</b> The Holland Landing Community Centre will require expansion and enhancement with a full size gymnasium to accommodate predicted growth. This should be accompanied by upgrades to the entire facility for library, lobby, change areas, program rooms and accommodating needs of youth and older adults.	87		x	
29. <b>Mount Albert Community Centre:</b> The Mount Albert Community Centre will require updating and expansion with expanded youth and programming spaces including instructional fitness.	87		x	
30. <b>The Ross Family Complex:</b> The Ross Family Complex will require a study and review for a potential facility expansion and enhancement project at the end of this study period.	87			x
31. Implement Facility Design Considerations and Emerging Trends where practical and applicable.	87	x	x	x
32. The changing demographics of East Gwillimbury will require more flexibility of building operation.	88	x	x	x
33. Continue with budget allocations to Capital Repair and Replacement reserve fund to ensure asset integrity.	88	x	x	x
34. Determine whether the greatest public good exists to promote leisure interests.	88	x	x	x
35. Leverage outdoor spaces as presented where practical and applicable.	89	x	x	x
36. Implement program planning and permitting of public space recommendations as practical and applicable.	89	x	x	x
37. Implement facility development/enhancement recommendations including facility design and construction guiding principles where practical and applicable.	89	x	x	x

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Page #</b>	<b>Short Term 1-2 Yrs</b>	<b>Med Term 3-5 Yrs</b>	<b>Long Term 6+ Yrs</b>
<b>Parks, Forestry and Trails</b>				
38. Review potential land assembly strategy.	124		x	x
39. Implement Parks Design Guiding Principles where practical and applicable.	130	x		
40. Continue to support Arts Culture and Heritage with Parks projects and infrastructure, in particular public art.	133	x	x	x
41. Implement Trails recommendations and considerations related to design, construction, maintenance and operations where practical and applicable.	160	x	x	x
42. Continue and enhance consultation with Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee	166	x	x	x
43. The Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee and CPRC should co-host twice annual meetings with trail users.	166	x	x	x
<b>Financial</b>				
44. Implement financial recommendations related to administration and operations as practical and applicable.	181	x	x	x
45. Integrate financial capacity considerations and recommendations to inform business planning.	182	x	x	x
46. Leverage supplementary infrastructure funding and grants where possible.	183	x	x	x
<b>Implementation</b>				
47. Following approval by Town Council, commence the implementation process using the Implementation Table as a guide, and, annually review in the context of setting priorities in the Annual Business Plan.	192	x	x	x

## Best Practices

### Active Living Strategy – Halton Hills

Terms of Reference: <http://www.haltonhills.ca/activeliving/pdf/TermsOfReference.pdf>

A Regional example of an Active Living strategy... there are a few of these but the wellness aspect is difficult to determine. These Active Living plans are also often audience based (Activity Aging, Early years, Active Living for Persons with Disability and not as often holistic re: audience).

Mission Statement: To develop a community-wide Active Living Strategy that supports, engages, and fosters an active, healthy Town of Halton Hills community, where the healthy choices are the easy choices at work, home, and play. Project Deliverables:

- Summary of environmental scan including community resource inventory and services assessment.
- Summary of stakeholder input.
- Comprehensive Active Living Strategy including implementation plan and budget.
- A suggested community coalition committee.

### Toronto – Recreation Service Plan 2013-2017

[https://www1.toronto.ca/city\\_of\\_toronto/parks\\_forestry\\_recreation/community\\_involvement/files/pdf/rsp.pdf](https://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/parks_forestry_recreation/community_involvement/files/pdf/rsp.pdf)

A strategy that is strong on the recreation side (useful if there is to be one central leader in pushing this agenda forward, but not as strong on the spiritual/wellness side of the wheel).

The Recreation Service Plan aims to increase overall participation in recreation, decrease financial barriers to recreation and improve local and geographic access. It outlines the role that the City plays in meeting the recreation needs of Torontonians, within the context of the larger recreation service sector that has many and diverse providers.

- Enhanced engagement and partnership with schools, community agencies, and delivery partners to improve sector coordination (reduce gaps and overlaps) and local planning (respond to local needs).
- Development of quality standards and measures in all programs, facilities, and other services will improve Parks, Forestry and Recreation's capacity to manage, measure progress and report on the overall system.
- An equitable and consistent method of identifying Priority Centres across the city. The new method services the greatest number of low-income census tracts.

## **UK Active - More People/More Active/More Often**

<http://www.ukactive.com/>

Over the last 20 years UKACTIVE has worked to develop sustainable long-term partnerships with government departments, major brands, National Governing Bodies of Sport, charities and many other organisation with an interest in getting more people, more active, more often and improving the health and wellbeing of the nation.

Through these partnerships we have delivered a number of successful consumer-facing campaigns in the following areas:

- Helping children and young people to be more active by helping them to find activities they enjoy, with a particular emphasis on teenage girls.
- Improving adult health and wellbeing.
- Employee health and workplace wellness initiatives.
- Weight management programmes.
- Exercise as medicine.
- Supporting older people to be more active.
- Supporting people with disabilities to be more active and improving their access to activities.

We help our partners develop their strategy and understanding of the active lifestyle sector through offering project management services, platforms for engaging the sector, opening up channels of communication and brokering new relationships.

### **Active for a Lifetime<sup>28</sup>**

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) is a movement to improve the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada. It links sport, education, recreation and health, and aligns community, provincial and national programming. CS4L's mission is to improve the health, wellness, and sporting experiences of all Canadians by advancing physical literacy, improving performance and increasing life-long participation in physical activity.

### **HIGH FIVE Quality Assurance Programming<sup>29</sup>**

HIGH FIVE is an example of best practice in quality assurance programming for recreation and sport programs for children aged 6-12 years. HIGH FIVE provides a range of training, assessment tools and resources to ensure that organizations can deliver the highest quality programs possible. HIGH FIVE ensures leaders, coaches, and instructors have the tools and the knowledge to nurture a child's mental health and create positive experiences for children.

### **Active Canada 20/20**

A multifaceted strategy that outlines:

- Actions for policy development to implement Federal sport policy and work with community organizations.

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<sup>28</sup> Canadian Sport for Life: [www.canadiansportforlife.ca](http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca)

<sup>29</sup> HIGH FIVE [www.highfive.org](http://www.highfive.org)

- Actions for targeted information and public education (e.g. reducing obesity, removing barriers, and making healthy life choices).
- Actions for high quality, accessible programs including linkages to schools, access to facilities, making physical activity and diet part of every program, and encouraging employers to get programs going or access programs.
- Actions for community design to replace barriers to physical activity, safe active transportation linked to public transportation, facilities available for community shared use
- Actions for outreach programs to schools, businesses and health practitioners.
- Actions for training volunteers in delivering HAL programs.

### The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan<sup>30</sup>

This community developed a plan with the goal of “improving the overall quality of life in the community by increasing access to affordable healthy foods and promoting physical activity. The main areas of focus are maximize the prevention of non-communicable diseases, support policies that improve nutrition within school and work environments, and promote opportunities for increased physical activity for all ages.

The community developed a number of sector strategies and tactics that involve community partners in improving the quality of life in the County. Highlights of the sectors and tactics include:

- **Business and Industry** – identify and promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles, flexible work hours for fitness/nutrition breaks, gym membership discounts and incentive programs.
- **Education, Afterschool, Early Childhood** – child care programs linked to healthy activities, safe routes to school, healthy vending, summer meals/activities, afterschool activity programs, partnerships to link youth and their families to healthy lifestyle opportunities in community.
- **Health Care** – actively promote wellness with patients, educational materials in plain language, prescribe healthy eating to programs for inactive people, and maintain web sites to provide resource information.
- **Parks and Recreation, Fitness and Sports** – promote programs and facilities where people learn, live, work, play etc. to provide easy access to safe and affordable healthy lifestyle opportunities, support access in low-resource areas, improve access to facilities, establish funding partnerships for enhancing public spaces, including km markers and calorie trackers on the trails.
- **Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design** – enhance community design for active transportation, enhance signage and viability of transit services and stops, track transit system projects and programs and communication to users and organizations.
- **Volunteer and Non-Profit** – encourage community participation in running, bicycling, walking and fundraising races, continue to promote engagements involving healthy lifestyles to members, volunteers and residents, support

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<sup>30</sup> McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan For a Healthy Lifestyle – Waco, McLennan County, Texas, a project of the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District.



strategies that target low income populations through culturally appropriate programs.

In summary, the program includes deployment of mass media campaigns, gaining support from key community stakeholders, working to change policies and environments in schools and worksites, promoting shared space agreements in communities to increase access to physical activity, and working to increase availability of healthy foods in areas at high risk for obesity and chronic disease.

### Active Living Strategy – Municipality of the District of Chester, Nova Scotia<sup>31</sup>

The municipality Parks Department entered into a partnership with the NS Department of Health Promotion to share the costs of developing an active living strategy for the municipality in 2008. The original plan was updated in 2014. The overarching goal is to “promote an active lifestyle to residents, a way of life in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily living”. Six key goal areas, along with actions and outcomes have been established in 6 strategic areas:

- **Outdoor Recreation** – improve access and provide a wide spectrum of opportunities that match the variety of interests and abilities of citizens.
- **Supportive Environments** – Improve the environments in which girls and females through the lifespan take part in sport and physical activity.
- **Information and Inspiration** – Improve the quality of citizens to access quality, timely information and inspiration on physical activity.
- **Daily Walking and Biking** – Walking and biking are the first-choice people make for getting where they need to go.
- **Recreation and Health** – The recreation and health sectors have a closer collaboration and supportive relationship at the social level (determinants of health), physical level (special needs considered), policy/planning level (inclusion and adaptation policy).
- **Isolated Populations** – Better access to, and service for, isolated and under-represented sub-populations.

In summary, this project strategy has clearly defined outcomes for the individual level, the social level, the physical environment level, and the policy planning level, some of which could be easily adapted to the Town of East Gwillimbury HAL Strategy.

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<sup>31</sup> IBID

## **APPENDIX 1**

### Placemaking Principles – developed by PPS

1. The community is the expert.

People who use a public space regularly provide the most valuable perspective and insights into how the area functions. They also can help identify issues that are important to consider in improving the space. Uncovering and incorporating their ideas and talents is essential to creating a successful and vital community place.

2. You are creating a place, not a design.

Design is an important component of creating a place, but not the only factor. Providing access and creating active uses, economic opportunities, and programming are often more important than design.

3. You can't do it alone.

A good public space requires partners who contribute innovative ideas, financial or political support, and help plan activities. Partners also can also broaden the impact of a civic space by coordinating schedules for programming and improvement projects.

4. They'll always say, "It can't be done."

Every community has naysayers. When an idea stretches beyond the reach of an organization or its jurisdiction and an official says, "It can't be done," it usually means: "We've never done things that way before." Keep pushing. Identify leaders in the community who share your vision and build support. Talk to your alderman and get him or her engaged.

5. You can see a lot just by observing.

People will often go to extraordinary lengths to adapt a place to suit their needs. A raised curb can be used as a place to sit, sort mail, and even—believe it or not—cook clams. Observing a space allows you to learn how the space is used.



## 6. Develop a vision.

A vision for a public space addresses its character, activities, uses, and meaning in the community. This vision should be defined by the people who live or work in or near the space.

## 7. Form supports function.

Too often, people think about how they will use a space only after it is built. Keeping in mind active uses when designing or rehabilitating a space can lower costs by discouraging unnecessary and expensive landscaping and monuments, as well as potentially eliminating the need to retrofit a poorly used public space.

## 8. Triangulate.

The concept of triangulation relates to locating elements next to each other in a way that fosters activity. For example, a bench, trash receptacle, and coffee kiosk placed near a bus stop create synergy because they are more convenient for waiting bus passengers and pedestrians than if they were isolated from each other.

Triangulation, as described in the 11 Principles, increases the chances of activity occurring around combined land uses. For example, in Lincoln Square, the library is located adjacent to Welles Park, which has a softball field, playground and food vendors, and is within walking distance of restaurants, the Davis Theatre and the Old Town School of Folk Music. This clustering ensures more activity will occur than if these facilities were sited separately.





(Photo credit, right): Copyright 2006, K. Brugman



Sometimes triangulation occurs spontaneously. For example, on a busy urban street corner there is something of interest—say, one of the life-size fiberglass cow sculptures painted by artists and set up on the streets of various cities as a public art project. The cows create an excuse for people who don't know each other to talk to one another. Farmers' markets also are good places to spot examples of triangulation: You can often find perfect strangers chatting about the attributes of and recipes for everything from sweet corn to Japanese eggplant to Jersey tomatoes.

### **9. Start with the petunias.**

Simple, short-term actions such as planting flowers can be a way of testing ideas and encouraging people their ideas matter. These actions provide flexibility to expand the space by experimenting, evaluating and incorporating results into the next steps and long range planning.

### **10. Money is not the issue.**

A lack of money is often used as an excuse for doing nothing. Funds for pure public space improvements often are scarce, so it is important to remember the value of the public space itself to potential partners and search for creative solutions. The location, level of activity, and visibility of public spaces—combined with a willingness to work closely with local partners—can elicit resources from those involved to activate and enhance these spaces.

### **11. You are never finished.**

About 80 percent of the success of any public space can be attributed to its management. This is because the use of good places changes daily, weekly and seasonally, which makes management critical. Given the certainty of change and

fluid nature of the use of a place at different times, the challenge is to develop the ability to respond effectively. A good management structure will provide that flexibility.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Town of East Gwillimbury**

#### **Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department**

# **Health and Active Living Strategy**

**June 12, 2018**

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## Section One - Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness by government policy makers, health practitioners, social service agencies, etc. of the need for creating healthier living environments in cities, towns, villages and rural populated areas. Healthier living environments provide opportunities in which residents and visitors can make healthy life choices that result in people being healthier and more active.

What Canadians say about parks and recreation:<sup>32</sup>

- 98% say it benefits the community and that it is an essential service.
- 75% say it helps children and youth lead healthy lifestyles.
- 93% say it improves health.
- 77% say it is a major factor in crime reduction.
- 89% say it boosts social cohesion.

The Town of East Gwillimbury Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department (CPRC) recognizes that it can play a key role in changing the health of residents in the community. In this regard it is embarking on a “re-positioning” of parks, recreation and culture program, service and facility delivery. In the future, all decision making will focus on ensuring that the physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs of residents and visitors are considered. The department will take on a new role as “service arranger”, carrying out its core business of parks, recreation and cultural services and facilities, as well as establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with other social service and health agencies and community organizations to augment department services.

This strategy document outlines the framework for those things that are important to consider in the planning, financing and execution of services, programs, facilities and partnerships with respect to the creation of an environment in which the residents and visitors to the Town of East Gwillimbury can make informed, healthy choices in creating their own healthy lifestyle.<sup>33</sup>

**Section One** outlines the need for change and a definition of strategy. **Section Two** is a description of the Health and Active Living Strategy being proposed for adoption by Town Council. **Section Three** is an overview of the rationale for creating the proposed strategy, a detailed assessment of the status of the health of Canadians and why a Health and Active Living Strategy is needed in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

### Strategy

*The art and science of planning and marshalling resources for their most efficient and effective use. A method or plan chosen to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem.*<sup>34</sup>

*A plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major overall aim.*

The goal of a strategy is sustainably superior results, creating long-term success that is based on the needs of the target market. A successful strategy is based on creating

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<sup>32</sup> CPRA : A Framework for Parks and Recreation in Canada 2015 – Pathways to Wellbeing

<sup>33</sup> Adapted From An Article by John Spence, The Key Elements of Strategy 02/19/2013, <http://blog.johnspence.com/2013/02/the-key-elements-of-strategy/>

<sup>34</sup> Business Dictionary <http://businessdictionary.com>



value for the target recipients, focusing the work and then consistently delivering on the value proposition, which is in this instance, is Healthy and Active Living.

There are both *internal and external* strategies that play an important part in the execution of the value proposition. External strategies look to the market area, the Town of East Gwillimbury in this instance, and considers a range of community needs and desires, partner and stakeholder interest and commitment, financial feasibility, long-term sustainability, and capital investments, etc. Internal strategies focus on leadership and talent, culture, accountability, execution, vision, values, and mission, etc.

## Section Two - Moving Forward, The Strategy

The CPRA *Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015* defines Recreation as “the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing”. It also has articulated a new vision for recreation in Canada “where everyone is engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences that foster: individual wellbeing; community wellbeing; and the wellbeing of our natural and built environments.

It goes on to say that recreation is a fundamental human need in all ages and stages of life. People participate in recreation for different reasons including fun, enjoyment, fitness and health and social connection, etc. The recreation experience can include physical activity and sport, artistic and cultural expression, intellectual stimulation, and spiritual growth and development through connecting with nature and helping others through volunteering. The experience can be individual or in a group setting.

The East Gwillimbury Health and Active Living Strategy embraces the fundamental values and principles of the Framework and will position its programs, services and facilities in such a way as to create an environment in which people can make healthy choices in order to achieve their life goals.

This Health and Active Living Strategy is rooted in creating an engaging, holistic experience for people to be able to actualize a healthy and active lifestyle. Parks, recreation and cultural programming and facilities will be focal points for all Community Parks, Recreation and Culture initiatives, but the department will also play a key role in working with community partners to create access for residents and visitors to a variety of health, social, learning, arts and cultural services, one stop government services and linkages to opportunities for personal growth and development.

The Department will provide and/or arrange service opportunities for health excellence, to encourage a culture of collaboration, build on the strengths of the community and empower patrons and partners. At the very least, it is expected that there will be increased awareness and knowledge of personal health and happiness, access to health information and benefits of healthy life choices, exposure to health supporting physical and social environments, and engagement in healthy behaviours. This voluntary participation and contributions by others is just as important as financial tax support for core services. To this end, the CPRC will:

- Work to secure grants, bequests, and donations for the benefit of EG citizens on the basis of combined financial efforts.
- Work to find leisure activities already existent within the community and help to sustain those efforts of clubs, voluntary groups, etc. with the ultimate aim to create many nodes of interest, and support them by occasional provision of meeting room space (monthly, yearly, etc.), and advice of how to operate their organizations.
- Use a “just in time” approach to have shovel-ready plans for when or if infrastructure funding grants become available to reach high quality objectives where tax-only approaches may yield something less.

- Quantify “value for money” of various leisure activities so as to ensure emphasis is put on some quick wins, and rounding out investments later for augmented services not easily provided at first.

While the Town of East Gwillimbury establishes annual service goals through business and strategic planning processes, it will incorporate wherever possible the direction that has been established in the CPRA Framework’s five goal areas:

6. Foster active living through physical recreation. Participation in physical recreation is essential to building healthy, active individuals from infancy to older adulthood.
7. Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation. Bring people together in a non-threatening, pleasurable atmosphere and address the barriers and constraints to participation faced by some people.
8. Help people connect to nature through recreation. Connecting with nature is associated with improved cognitive, mental and physical health, enhanced creativity and positive social behaviours.
9. Ensure provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities. Supportive physical and social environments help people explore their creativity and adopt healthy, active lifestyles by making the “healthy choices the easy choices”, and foster family connectedness, which fosters reciprocal caring.
10. Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field. Leaders in recreation include professional staff and volunteers, who need the knowledge skills and resources to plan and deliver high-quality recreation services.

The Health and Active Living Strategy will also be integrated with other Town of East Gwillimbury Planning Documents, a number of which include:

- The Health and Active Living Master Plan.
- The Town of East Gwillimbury Strategic Plan 2015-2018.
- Growth Plan – Population Projections by Year.
- The Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan.
- CPRC Annual Business Plan.
- Town of East Gwillimbury Sustainability Strategy.
- Town of East Gwillimbury Cultural Master Plan.
- Park and Facility Maintenance Standards.
- Park and Facility Development Standards.

### **Strategy Underpinnings**

The vision, values, principles, core business statement, key factors in planning and the determinants of health, are the underpinnings for all decision making in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all CPRC and partner service and facility provision.

#### Vision

People can make personally constructive choices for enhancing their physical, spiritual, mental and social health and wellness regardless of age, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

## Values

### Public Good

Public recreation will be regarded as a “public good”, not just to users.

### Inclusion and Equity

Inclusion will be an organizational practice.

### Sustainability

The delivery system will be sustainable.

### Lifelong Participation

Early childhood to old age.

### Outcome Driven

Individuals and communities can attain the outcomes they are seeking.

### Quality and Relevance

Safe, high-quality recreation experiences.

### Evidenced Based

Fact based decision-making.

### Partnerships and Collaboration

Nurture partnerships.

### Innovation

Value innovation and recognize the benefits of ingenuity.

## Principles

10. Healthy Personal Choices – make the active choice the easy and most attractive choice.
11. Whole of government approach – wherever possible integrate Healthy Active Living planning principles in all areas of municipal government planning.
12. Comprehensive – use all levels of the socio-ecological model (Determinants of Health) to address factors affecting healthy life decision-making.
13. Partnerships – collaborate with social, health, arts and culture and other similarly positioned stakeholders to deliver a wide range of health and active living services and seek long-term political, financial and organizational sustainability.
14. Community Engagement – involve citizens in ways that are relevant to their interests and desires in creating a healthy and active community, provide leadership training and recognize their achievements.
15. Evidence Informed and Effective – Use the best available evidence and proven best practices to inform decisions and evaluations.
16. Equity – Eliminate disparities in access to physical activity opportunities and reduce disparities that result from geography, socio-economic status, and gender by focusing on inactive groups and groups with inequitable access and other barriers.

17. Engagement – create an environment that educates and creates awareness of opportunities for all citizens and a system of evaluation that provides constructive feedback when setting future programs, facilities and services.
18. Transparency – This strategy and resultant decision making process will involve the community to ensure that residents and visitors feel engaged in the resulting programs, facilities and services.

### Core Business

The department will create opportunities for health excellence, encourage a culture of collaboration, build on the strengths of the community, and empower patrons and partners to:

- Test their limits.
- Develop their skills.
- Achieve their optimal level of self-health actualization.
- Revitalize themselves from other pressures and stresses of daily living.

### Determinants of Health

The Social Determinants of Health provide the framework for the CPRC to ensure annual department priorities include holistic ways and means to enhance the personal health of residents in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

\* Those that have particular interest to recreation

1. Income and Social Status	2. *Social Support Networks
3. *Education and Literacy	4. Employment and Working Conditions
5. *Social Environments	6. *Physical Environment
7. Personal Health Practices	8. *Healthy Child Development
9. Biology and Genetic Endowment	10. *Health Services
11. *Gender	12. *Culture

### Key Factors in Planning

In the future it will be essential that each concept/idea/suggestion related to program, service and facility development is reviewed in the context of the vision, values, principles and core business statement prior to their development to ensure that the department stays focused on creating a healthy community. In the planning of each program, service and facility, the concept of health and active living in the context of this strategy can be intertwined by considering each of the following Key Factors:

6. Healthy People: strengthening our health and social services; providing excellent sport and recreation services and facilities; encouraging healthy lifestyles.

Examples:

- Partnering with York Region to provide extended social and health services in the community and create safe environments.
- Adopting “place making” criteria for public spaces and facilities.
- Programming and spaces that incorporates nutrition, physical activity, and health promotion.

- Timely implementation of the results of master plans, strategies/ studies.
  - Facilities that provide a variety of physical activities, and accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
  - Communicating the availability and benefits of responsible life choices.
7. Engaged Citizens: nurturing a shared sense of community; honouring diversity and inclusion.

Examples:

- Community meetings to develop/re-develop facilities, parks and spaces.
  - Partnerships with key community stakeholders concerned with the welfare and health of the residents in the community.
  - Reaching out to isolated communities (i.e. gender-based, ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, etc.).
8. Vibrant Culture: respecting our heritage; encouraging artistic and cultural expression.
- Examples:
- Honour local cultures and traditions in community spaces.
  - Partner with cultural groups to define artistic and cultural expression and long term needs.
9. Sustainable Environment: protecting and responsibly managing our trails; preserving the natural environment; managing our impact on the environment; stewarding our natural resources.

Examples:

- Development plans that encourage mixed uses, compact design and a variety of transportation options that are safe and accessible to users.
  - Sustainable development and maintenance practices. Great design and high quality are respected by community participants.
10. Dynamic Economy: vibrant and diverse local economy; educational and employment opportunities; affordable housing.

Examples:

- Creating special events that contribute to local businesses and the general economy.
- Health education and leadership development opportunities through recreation program delivery.

### Communication

It will be important to develop a communication strategy that is updated each year that clearly outlines the services and facilities offered by the Town and community partners. This strategy needs to ensure that the right information reaches the right people, in the right format at the right time with residents feeling confident that they have been heard.

### Data Collection

Data will continue to be an important part of annual initiatives to ensure that the health data in this strategy, other related health and demographic data related to the Town of

East Gwillimbury is kept current as the community grows, and used during annual and other service and facility planning events.

### Key Measures

A measure can be quantitative and qualitative in nature, capturing participation numbers, revenues, as well as changes in participant behaviour. Reporting and monitoring measures will help the CPRC gauge progress towards effective implementation of strategy. Outcome measures track the benefits received by the participants and stakeholders as a result of CPRC operations.

For each program, service and facility operation there should be at a maximum two measures established to determine the “difference the CPRC is making in the lives of participants”. This will be helpful in making planning decisions from planning period to planning period.

Five areas of measurement have been established with examples of the types of measures that could be used (others can be added). Once the measures have been selected, indicators can be identified to the level to which it has been achieved (i.e. # of people satisfied with services, more people reporting involvement in programs, people changing the way in which they spend their leisure time, changes in eating habits, etc.).

#### Personal Health

- Increased awareness and accessibility to health and social services.
- Reductions in stress and anxiety levels as a result of being involved.
- Integration of healthy/active principles and determinants of health into everyday decision-making.

#### Individual Level

- Increase participation in established activities and sports.
- Changes in physical activity level and nutritional choices.
- Decreased screen time.
- More awareness of opportunities and their benefits to personal health.

#### Social Level

- More gathering spaces and community design that fosters healthy activities and pursuits.
- More family activities that build on cultural values and traditions.
- Partnerships with social service organizations to strengthen capacity of community to interact.
- Expanded levels of volunteerism and civic involvement.
- Increased awareness of what is available.

#### Physical Environment Level

- Four season facility development, design and programming for all ages.
- Engagement of people in places and spaces {people places}.
- Accessible and affordable buildings and spaces.

### Policy and Planning

- A policy position that increases equity for gender access, affordability and mobility.
- Development policies that promote Active Transportation, trail connectivity and substantially more suitable parks and open spaces and play areas.
- Health and Active Living Leadership standards.
- Integration of Health and Active Living Strategy with broader municipal decision-making.

### CPRA *Framework For Recreation 2015*

- To gain insights into the performance of the CPRC Department in relationship to the National level, the matrix in Appendix I has been developed reflecting the various priorities outlined in each of the Framework's Five Goal Areas. This matrix is a tool that can be used during planning and evaluation meetings to measure the progress being made in East Gwillimbury on the priorities of the Framework.



## Section Three: The Rationale

### Why a Health and Active Living Strategy in East Gwillimbury?

Governments at the federal, provincial, regional and local levels are becoming increasingly concerned with the health of Canadians. There are numerous statistics that point to decreases in individual health, and strategically the Canadian Parks Council<sup>35</sup> has collected specific data that shows how Canadians spend their time and emphasizes the need to get people more active, including:

- 90% is the amount of time it is estimated we spend indoors.
- 90% decline in the radius of play for a nine year old since the 1970's.
- 43 minutes versus 30 minutes in time spent per day by Canadians playing computer and video games since the late 90's compared to the decrease in the time (minutes) spent socializing.
- 28% versus 58% proportion of today's students that walk to school compared to their parents.

The survey also identified that 1.1 million Canadians have a Vitamin D deficiency and there is a shift to more self-centredness with declines in intimacy and empathy in children. One in 4 Canadians are obese and rates are climbing, and due to obesity and health issues, today's children may in fact have shorter and lower quality lives than their parents.

Other data from the 2015 Canadian community health survey 12+ years<sup>36</sup> provides a more detailed view of the health condition of Canadians from a more clinical point of view.

- 18.1% of Canadians were smokers,
- 17.9% are heavy drinkers,
- 17.7% have high blood pressure,
- 54% of adults and 23.1% of youth 12-17 years are overweight or obese,

Only 53.7% of Canadians are active, but 85.1% have access to a Physician. Overall, 93.2% of those surveyed reported that they were satisfied with life.

In a Report of the Chief Public Health Officer on the Health Status of Canadians 2016<sup>37</sup> it was noted that the proportion of Canadians who reported a strong sense of community belonging in 2014 was lowest among those aged 20-34 years. Most Canadians (70%) considered their mental health to be either very good or excellent, but people living in lower income households had lower perceived health. The proportion of Canadians saying they had been diagnosed with a mood disorder increased from 5% in 2003 to 8% in 2014.

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<sup>35</sup> Connecting People With Nature 2014, Canadian Parks Council

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/health/index>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/publications/departement-ministere/state-public-health-status-2016-etat-sante-publique-statut/alt/pdf-eng.pdf>

In the same report, it was noted that the proportion of Canadians 20 years and older with diabetes almost doubled between 2000 and 2011, up from 6% to 10% with cancer as the leading cause of death in Canada. A significant finding was that the vast majority of Canadians do not meet the recommended levels of physical activity and of special note was that 9 out of 10 children and youth do not meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines. And lastly, In 2011-2013 more than 1 million, or just under 1 in 10 Canadians households, were living with moderate to severe food security.

Physical inactivity, poor nutrition and being overweight are the leading causes of chronic health problems in non-smokers of Ontario (Chief Medical Officer of Health 2004). In Canada the increasing prevalence of obesity is the fastest growing epidemic of our time (Di Ruggiero et al. 2004). In Ontario almost 50% of adults are overweight or obese (Chief Medical Officer of Health 2004).

Obese people are more likely than people with healthy weights to develop type 2 diabetes (WHO 2002); cancer (Calle et al. 2003); coronary heart disease and stroke (Health Canada 2003). Taking immediate action on a plan for healthy eating and physical activity will help to create a healthier Ontario.<sup>38</sup>

## **Trends**

In addition to the health statistics, it is important to be aware of governance, funding and demand trends that impact the manner in which services and facilities are delivered in the both the short and long term. These trends are best captured in the Active Living Strategy of the Municipality of the District of Chester<sup>39</sup> and have been adapted for use in this Health and Active Living Strategy.

8. Fundamental shifts in the directions regarding health delivery being taken by governments at the federal, provincial, regional and local level.
9. Directions and priorities being increasingly driven by the health agenda.
10. A broadening and more complex set of expectations and responsibilities from politicians and constituents for recreation departments in general.
11. A challenging fiscal environment and other competing interests and the impact on infrastructure.
12. The changing nature of communities/municipalities, particularly with the escalation of new home development.
13. A changing social/demographic landscape as a result of anticipated growth.
14. Increasing influence of technology as both an enabler and competitor for healthy and physically active lifestyle.

## **New Growth**

The new growth that is anticipated in East Gwillimbury will bring some people to the community, who have needs specific to their cultural background and sources of origin.

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<sup>38</sup> Ontario Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy Consultation Document 2008  
[http://www.ocdpa.ca/sites/default/files/publications/OCDPA\\_MovingHEALForward.pdf](http://www.ocdpa.ca/sites/default/files/publications/OCDPA_MovingHEALForward.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Active Living Strategy - A Partnership between the Parks Department and the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion (Now Health and Wellness)  
<http://www.chester.ca/explore/active-transportation-living/active-living-strategy/file>

Active 2010 (a Province of Ontario initiative) states that newcomers to Canada face a special set of barriers to an active lifestyle. Even though they may know that they should be physically active, people from other parts of the world sometimes find it difficult to become involved.

This difficulty could be due to: customs, a lack of familiar activities, not having social support or others with whom to be active, not being able to afford some activities or transportation to the activity, lack of awareness as to what is available and/or not having time because of competing priorities.

Newcomers may become isolated. Instead of being able to participate and feel part of their community, they may feel that they are on the outside looking in. Physical activity that considers cultural context can be an important tool for both health and inclusion, and begin the process of building community in these diverse populations.

### **Challenges and Opportunities for Recreation that Create Need for HAL Strategy**

The CPRA Framework for Recreation In Canada 2015 has identified a number of key challenges and opportunities facing the recreation sector. It is without a doubt, a time in the history of the Town of East Gwillimbury when special attention will need to be given to the impacts and influences of these outside factors on the creation of a healthy active community. These statements have been considered in the development of this strategy and include:

- Demographic Changes Aging of the population, increasingly rich diversity, more immigration due to government policy changes, and a younger Indigenous community all create service challenges.
- Economic Inequities While visible minority groups face some of the worst effects of Canada's growing economic inequality, this trend affects all Canadians.
- Social Challenges Rapid changes like increasing inequities, unemployment, rapid development, use of social media instead of face-to-face interaction etc. compounded feelings of social isolation and social connectivity.
- New and Emerging Technologies The recreation field is challenged by rapidly changing technologies and the resultant increasing amounts of time people spend in sedentary and solitary digital pursuits.
- Infrastructure Deficit Most communities have deficiencies of walking and cycling routes, facilities and green spaces and need to make facilities more functional and easy to access.
- Threats to the Natural Environment Failing fish stocks, extreme weather, decreasing biodiversity, new invasive species, the loss of green spaces to urban sprawl and the warming of northern regions are indicators of environmental stress, as well as more frequent and more violent weather events that has the opportunity to present costly damage or elimination of many natural and purpose-built amenities.

### **Other Best Practices**

There are few examples of best practices that fit within the context of health and active living that are envisaged by the Town of East Gwillimbury. Many similar community-based programs tend to focus on physical activities and healthy eating, with few

references to health care, mental health and other social services that are fundamental to the wellbeing of a community.

As the Health and Active Living Plaza vision outlines, it is The Town of East Gwillimbury's intent is to create a community in which residents can make healthy life choices in direct relationship to their needs and desires, and access the type of services that best suit their lifestyle.

The Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department's (CPRC) Vision of "We engage our communities in quality parks and recreation experiences that are relevant to the Town of East Gwillimbury" and will set the stage for this strategy. Its Core Business is to "deliver innovative, high quality health and active living services for residents and visitors to the Town of East Gwillimbury" will help to focus priorities. Health and Active Living will be the thread that ties all types and forms of department services together. This includes the determination of community needs, the planning and delivery of a host of convenient and complimentary services, and measurement of results in conjunction with community residents and partners.

To illustrate the ways and means of creating an environment in which people are encouraged to make healthy life choices, two other community initiatives are profiled in the Appendix. It is noted that one (McLennan County, Waco Texas) is focused on improving the overall quality of life by increasing access to affordable healthy foods and promoting physical activity. The second (Municipality of the District of Chester, Nova Scotia) is focused on promoting an active lifestyle in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily living. This is in contrast to the Town of East Gwillimbury who will be promoting healthy, active lifestyles in the context of physical, spiritual, emotional and safety initiatives with community partners.

### **The Benefits of Recreation**

There are in excess of 50 Benefits to Recreation that are based in extensive research and have been validated for their accuracy by practitioners and educators. They are based on the sub themes of Personal Health, Human Development, Quality of Life, Anti-Social Behaviour, Families/Communities, Prevention, Economic, and the Environment.

It is important to consider the Benefits of Recreation in the context of the Town of East Gwillimbury Health and Active Living Strategy as they provide a baseline of credible information for emphasizing the importance of recreation in the lives of residents. The CPRA Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 describes five of these Benefits that serve as a jumping off point in addressing existing challenges and opportunities of creating a healthy and active community.

**Enhance mental and physical wellbeing.** Public recreation and parks services have an important role in enhancing physical activity, which in turn is a critical factor in improved physical and mental health. Recreation provides opportunities for personal growth and development for people of all abilities and can be especially helpful to people living with disabilities.

**Enhance social wellbeing.** For both children and adults, recreation can facilitate and support social relationships, help decrease anti-social behaviours, and enhance social wellbeing.

**Help build strong families and communities.** Recreation is a strong vehicle to promoting family cohesion, adaptability and resilience. Participation in cultural and artistic programs has been shown to promote social connectedness and social cohesion, and positively influence civic behaviour, mutual care and voluntarism. Recreational activities can help to build welcoming communities for people and families from diverse cultures.

**Help people connect with nature.** Enhancing opportunities for connecting people with nature can result in both environmental and human benefits. From lowering blood pressure, to reducing stress levels, to supporting children's cognitive development, nature has a profound ability to support both physical and mental health. Recreation has a key role as a steward of natural environments.

**Provide economic benefits by investing in recreation.** Recreation is a contributor to community economic development and cost reductions in other services provided by municipal and upper-tier governments. Upstream investments in recreation can lead to improvements in individual and community wellbeing, which helps to reduce costs in health care, social services and justice.

### **The Government Thinks It Is Important to Take Action on Healthy and Active Living**

The government of Canada in 2013 worked with provinces and territories to promote healthy living, reduce risk of obesity and help young Canadians have the healthiest start in life. Various initiatives and actions included:

- *The Children's Health and Safety Campaign* ([www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids)).
- *The Eat Well and Be Active Educational Tool Kit* supporting health educators.
- *The Nutrition Facts Education Campaign* to understand the nutrition table.
- The Food Innovation Strategy promoting public health at community level.
- *Funding to ParticipACTION* to promote active lifestyles.
- *Information and Tools* for incorporating physical activity into daily life.
- Promoting healthy eating through *Eating Well With Canada's Food Guide*.
- *Project with Right to Play International* partnered with private sector for Indigenous communities.
- *Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy Framework 2010*. Established in 2005 and updated in 2010, makes it clear that there is a need to take a population health approach to address the increasingly complex challenges in health. Its twin goals of improving overall health outcomes and to reduce disparities in health among Canadians focus on the Determinants of Health (explained following and taking intersectoral action. While this Framework focuses on physical inactivity and unhealthy eating, its three other strategies of leadership and policy development, knowledge development and exchange, and community development and public information could easily be adapted to the Town of East Gwillimbury.

This work continues at the Provincial level as well through:

- *The Ontario Seniors Strategy*, improving the lives of older adults.
- *The Aging Community initiative*, aimed at developing strategies for helping people "age in place".

- *Ontario's Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL)* was developed as a response to Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health's Healthy Weights, Healthy Lives 2004 report which addressed an epidemic of overweight and obesity in Ontario; it is also part of a world wide response to reduce chronic disease by targeting nutrition and physical activity (Ministry of Health Promotion 2006).
- *Ontario's After-School Program*.  
Ontario's After School Program provides funding to help sport and recreation organizations deliver quality programs for children and youth in priority neighbourhoods across the province. Funding supports after school programs that offer activities in three core areas:
  - 1. Physical activity  
Get students moving through participation in structured activities like basketball, hip hop dancing or soccer, or simply through unstructured play time.
  - 2. Healthy eating  
Teach participants about nutrition and cooking healthy foods, with a focus on fruits and vegetables. Students prepare their own healthy after-school snacks such as fruit smoothies or quesadillas.
  - 3. Health and wellness  
Build self-esteem, resiliency, confidence and self-reliance among participants and raise awareness about anti-bullying and enhance positive relationships.

### **What the Data Suggests**

The statistical data outlined in this document in many ways provides the justification for the CPRC extending its traditional role of sport, cultural, physical activity, and general programming, arena, and community centre facilities, and parks, trails and open spaces to the broader context of facilitating the creation of an environment that encourages and facilitates healthy active living.

It is a fact that there has been a decline in physical activity nationwide, that obesity and resultant diseases like diabetes are on the rise, and a substantial number of Canadians still smoke and have high blood pressure, are all reasons for concern. External pressures from government policy changes, financial restrictions, and the changing nature of the health care system and communities that are rapidly expanding like East Gwillimbury, creates a sense of urgency, in making sure the proper services and supports are available in the community for those who need them.

While the CPRC should not try to be "all things to all people" it is in the unique position of being able to be a "service catalyst" for convenient and complimentary services delivered through a series of partnerships with community organizations, the private sector, agencies and other levels of government to further the health agenda. This initiative will work towards eliminating duplication of services maximizing resources and make for prudent use of financial and physical resources. These partnerships are essential to ensure that a wide range of health, safety, recreation and other related services are available in the Town of East Gwillimbury, all focused on creating a healthy and active community environment.

## **Foundations of a Healthy Community**

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, there is a growing body of evidence about what makes people healthy. The *Lalonde Report* set the stage in 1974, by establishing a framework for the key factors that seemed to determine health status, which included: lifestyle, environment, human biology and health services. Since then, much has been learned that supports, and at the same time, refines and expands this basic framework. There is mounting evidence that the contribution of medicine and health care is quite limited, and that spending more on health care will not result in significant further improvement in population health. *On the other hand*, there are strong and growing indications that other factors such as living and working conditions are crucially important for a healthy population.

The evidence indicates that the key factors which influence population health are: income and social status; social support networks; education; employment/working conditions; social environments; physical environments; personal health practices and coping skills; health child development; biology and genetic endowment; health services; gender; and culture (the Social Determinants of Health).

Health is complex and is influenced by a variety of factors. According to the World Health Organization, the Social Determinants Of Health are conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These conditions are shaped by economic, social, cultural and political systems and policies. These socio-economic factors are estimated to account for 50 percent of health outcomes (The Conference Board of Canada). Health care, biology and genetics, and physical environment account for the remainder of health outcomes combined.

Addressing the Social Determinants Of Health can create opportunities for individuals to achieve their best possible health results. Health differences between population groups resulting from unfair distribution of these opportunities are referred to as health inequities. Equity is achieved by creating targeted resources for all individuals to achieve their best possible health. Health differences between population groups resulting from unfair distribution of these opportunities are referred to as health inequities.<sup>40</sup>

*It is fundamentally important that these key factors are entwined with the services delivered and arranged for by the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. All planning and actions need to be linked to creating vitality in the community at numerous levels using *The Key Determinants of Health*<sup>41</sup>. They are briefly described below, of which those marked \* can be directly related to parks, recreation and culture service provision and arranging.*

1. Income and Social Status – Health status improves at each step up the income and social hierarchy. High income determines living conditions such as safe housing and ability to buy sufficient food. The healthiest populations are those in societies which are prosperous and have an equitable distribution of wealth

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<sup>40</sup> York Region Committee of the Whole Report February 2, 2017

<sup>41</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/determinants-eng.php>

2. \* Social Support Networks – Support from families, friends, and communities is associated with better health. Such social support networks could be very important in helping people solve problems and deal with adversity, as well as maintain a sense of mastery and control over life circumstances.
3. \* Education and Literacy – Health status improves with level of education. Education is closely tied to socioeconomic status, and effective education for children and lifelong learning for adults are key contributors to health and prosperity for individuals, and for the country.
4. Employment and Working Conditions – Unemployment, underemployment, stressful or unsafe work are associated with poorer health. People who have more control over their work circumstances and fewer stress related demands of the job are healthier.
5. \* Social Environments – Civic vitality refers to the strength of social networks within a community, region, province or country. It is reflected in the institutions, organizations and informal giving practices that people create to share resources and build attachments with others.
6. \* Physical Environment – At certain levels of exposure, contaminants in our air, water, food and soil can cause a variety of adverse health effects. In the built environment, housing, indoor air quality, and community design and transportation systems can influence our physical and psychological well-being.
7. \* Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills – These are the actions by which individuals can prevent diseases and promote self-care, cope with challenges and develop self-reliance, solve problems and make choices that enhance health.
8. \* Healthy Child Development – A young person’s development is affected by his or her housing and neighbourhood, family income and level of parent’s education, access to nutritious foods and physical recreation, genetic makeup and access to dental and medical care.
9. Biology and Genetic Endowment – Genetic endowment provides an inherited predisposition to a wide range of individual responses that affect health status. Active living and the provision of opportunities for lifelong learning may be important for maintaining health and cognitive capacity in old age.
10. \* Health Services – Health services, particularly those that are designed to maintain and promote health, to prevent disease, and to restore health and function contribute to population health. The health services continuum of care includes treatment and secondary prevention.
11. \* Gender – Gender refers to the array of society-determined roles, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to sexes on a differential basis. Gendered norms influence the health system’s practices and priorities.
12. \* Culture – Some persons or groups may face additional health risks due to a socio-economic environment, which is largely determined by dominant cultural values that contribute to the perpetuation of conditions such as marginalization,



stigmatization and lack of access to culturally appropriate health care and services.

A healthy community goes beyond participation in parks and recreation services. The Town of East Gwillimbury is well positioned to extend its reach into creating a more well-rounded community because of its recent dialogue with other key stakeholders in the community that have an interest in partnering at the soon to be constructed Health and Active Living Plaza. An opportunity exists for the CPRC to be a multi-faceted service catalyst by engaging the community in a holistic approach to service planning and delivery and engaging citizens in helping to increase their awareness and motivation toward healthy life choices.

### **The 5 Pillars of Community Wellbeing**<sup>42</sup>

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing has adopted the following definition of wellbeing, which is in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the thinking to date of staff in the Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. It is, *“The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture”*.

This definition reflects those things that are fundamentally important to creating a vibrant and healthy community environment. While the HAL Strategy is focused primarily on health, social and recreation related initiatives, it brings to light the need for broader action by the municipality in the other key areas. The following overview highlights five key strategy areas that fulfill the WHO vision, and that are fundamentally important in creating a vibrant, healthy community. It shows that for every action there is a positive reaction or outcome (indicators) towards building a healthy and active community.

The Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department will adopt numbers one through four of following as the “Key Factors in Planning” to guide decision making during the planning, implementation and evaluation of future department services and facilities. Of particular note are the suggested indicators of a healthy community that could be a baseline for measuring department and partner success in the future. The department, while not directly responsible for sustainment of the local economy, is well positioned to influence housing, economic development, social services, etc. decisions through the implementation of the Healthy Active Living Plan. Key Factors in Planning include:

1. **Healthy People:** strengthening our health and social services; providing excellent sport and recreation services; encouraging healthy lifestyles.

Indicators of a healthy community:

- Personal health (e.g. physical and mental).
- Accessible and quality services (e.g. availability of physicians, outreach, etc.).

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<sup>42</sup> University of Waterloo, Canadian Index of Well-Being Report 2016  
<http://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/reports/2016-canadian-index-wellbeing-national-report>

- Personal and community safety (e.g. low crime rates, perception of safety, etc.).
  - Recreation and parks programs, facilities and other services that meet the needs of the residents in measured ways.
2. **Engaged Citizens:** nurturing a shared sense of community; honouring diversity and inclusion.

Indicators of a healthy community:

- Volunteerism and political engagement.
  - Cultural inclusion (e.g. race, gender, ability, etc.).
  - Connection to the community (sense of belonging).
3. **Vibrant Culture:** respecting our heritage; encouraging artistic and cultural expression.

Indicators of a healthy community:

- Arts and culture activities (e.g. programs available, library, etc.).
  - Cultural and social diversity (e.g. services available to newcomers, etc.).
  - Protecting heritage (e.g. protecting heritage sites and rural feel, etc.).
  - Embraces lifelong learning for all ages (e.g. preschool to senior).
  - Availability of recreational areas (e.g. parks, trails, playgrounds, facilities etc.).
4. **Sustainable Environment:** protecting and responsibly managing our trails and natural environment; managing our impact on the environment; stewarding our natural resources.

Indicators of a healthy community:

- Natural resource usage (e.g. extraction, industrial use of resources, etc.).
  - Water quality (e.g. safe drinking water, clean river/lake water, etc.).
  - Air quality (e.g. industrial/vehicle emissions, etc.).
  - Wetlands/flora and fauna (e.g. preservation of natural rural areas, etc.).
  - Built environment (e.g. management of growth, water, transportation, etc.).
  - Personal environmental responsibility (e.g. recycling, local food, etc.).
5. **Dynamic Economy:** vibrant and diverse local economy; educational and employment opportunities; affordable housing.

Indicators of a healthy community:

- Community economic sustainability (e.g. business diversity, etc.).
- Personal economic sustainability (e.g. employment, income, debt level, etc.).
- Range of housing (e.g. liveability of housing, options available, etc.).
- Post-secondary education including trades, apprenticeships (e.g. measured by local opportunities and adult literacy rates, etc.).
- Work life balance/worker well-being (e.g. free-time, work enjoyment, etc.).

## **Health and Active Living Defined**

### **Introduction**

Healthy Cities/Communities create and improve the physical and social environments and community resources, which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential. Several cities and communities in Canada have adopted Healthy City strategies. *WHO Healthy Settings* (accessed September 2014)<sup>43</sup>.

To be a part of this growing trend, it is of utmost importance for The Town of East Gwillimbury, to develop strategies, policies and initiatives that create an environment in which people can pursue healthy and active lives, establish their sense of community and safely interact with others and their environment.

The research has shown that there is no one definition for health and active living. Rather, definitions that have been developed are generally ‘organization’ or municipality specific and are in close alignment with those organization’s purpose and mandate.

The Community Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has articulated what they believe health and active living to be in the context of the concept of an anticipated newly constructed Health and Active Living Plaza. This view includes references to creating an experience that people are able to:

- Test their limits.
- Develop their skills.
- Achieve their optimal level of self-health actualization.
- Revitalize themselves from other pressures and stresses of daily living.

To help people achieve this the CPRC will use a holistic approach so that people can experience convenient and complimentary health, social, recreation and cultural services and facilities. To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources, the CPRC is committed to delivering on its core business of parks, recreation and culture services and facilities as well as engaging key community stakeholders and residents in service delivery.

The department will create opportunities for health excellence, encourage a culture of collaboration, built on the strengths of the community, and empower patrons and partners.

The following definitions provide a further insight into the concepts of healthy living, healthy lifestyle, emotional health, spiritual health, wellbeing and diversity.

### **Healthy Living**

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<sup>43</sup> World Health Organization [http://www.who.int/healthy\\_settings/types/cities/en/](http://www.who.int/healthy_settings/types/cities/en/)

At a population level, healthy living refers to the practices of population groups that are consistent with supporting, improving, maintaining and/or enhancing health. As it applies to individuals, healthy living is the practice of health enhancing behaviours, or put simply, living in healthy ways. It implies the physical, mental and spiritual capacity to make healthy choices. *PHAC Healthy Living Strategy, Nov. 18, 2013*<sup>44</sup>

### **Healthy Lifestyle**

A healthy lifestyle can be thought of as a broad description of people's behaviour in three inter-related dimensions:

1. Individuals in their social environments (e.g. family, peers, community workplace, etc.).
2. The relationship between individuals and their social environment.
3. Interventions to improve health through lifestyle choices can use comprehensive approaches that address health as a social or community (shared) issue.<sup>45</sup>

Further, healthy active living refers to a holistic lifestyle including eating nutritious foods, being physically active, and balancing stress. *Hospital For Sick Children (Sick Kids)*

### **Emotional Health**

A positive state of wellbeing, which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life. *Mental Health Foundation*

### **Mental Health**

Positive mental health is a state of being that allows people to feel, think and act in ways that enhance the ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges. *Public Health Agency of Canada*

### **Wellbeing**

The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture. *Canadian Index of Wellbeing*

### **Challenges to Wellness**<sup>46</sup>

Achieving wellness through healthy, active living is not without its challenges.

- Shifts in government policy and programs often lead to resultant shifts in local priorities regardless of the needs.
- Agendas and directions of health organizations and government departments sometimes don't reflect the broadening expectations of the constituents served.

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/index-eng.php>

<sup>45</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/determinants-eng.php>

<sup>46</sup> *Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition*

- We are operating in a challenging political and fiscal environment, one in which there are at times conflicting priorities that sometimes don't get the attention they require.
- The social and demographic landscape in communities is continually evolving and changing, affected by immigration policies and Newcomer adaptation to living in Canada.
- Technology is both an enabler, and a competitor for promoting a healthy and active lifestyle, which requires adaptation and updating of traditional approaches to programming and communication of information.
- Diversity is a broad term that refers to the variety of differences among people, often within the context of culture, education, organizations or workplaces. Diversity among people can exist along several dimensions which include, but are not limited to: race; ethnicity; cultural traditions; age; religion; place of origin; citizenship; geographical location; gender; sexual orientation; mental or physical ability; educational background; literacy; economic status; work experience; and marital, parental or family status. It is challenging to find appropriate ways to describe people and plan service delivery accordingly.

These in effect are “touch points”, reminders in fact, for ensuring that research is ongoing to assess and determine how each of these challenges is affecting the local landscape. Awareness of these effects sets the stage for devising strategies that result in new health and recreation opportunities at the local level that extend resources, create better informed political decision makers, reduce adversity, duplication of effort and increase a general state of wellbeing in the population.

It is then critical that municipalities are well-positioned and equipped to address shifts in policy, community service agency interests and changing community needs to be able to deliver a holistic approach to health and active living.

### **Underlying Principles**

Planning and delivering on a promise of a healthy and active community requires thoughtful decision making and execution that is based on a set of principles everyone in an organization can agree to and articulate.

*Principles are fundamental norms, rules or values that represent what is desirable and positive for a person, group, organization or community, and help it in determining the rightfulness or wrongfulness of its actions. Principles are more basic than policy and objectives, and are meant to govern both.<sup>47</sup>*

The following abridged principles are easily adapted to the Town of East Gwillimbury Health and Active Living Strategy. *From The Municipality of the District of Chester Active Living Plan.*

1. **Healthy Personal Choices** – make the active choice the easy and most attractive choice.
2. **Whole of government approach** – wherever possible integrate Healthy Active Living planning principles in all areas of municipal government planning.

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<sup>47</sup> Business Dictionary <http://businessdictionary.com>

3. **Comprehensive** – use all levels of the socio-ecological model (Determinants of Health) to address factors affecting healthy life decision-making.
4. **Partnerships** – collaborate with social, health, arts and culture and other similarly positioned stakeholders to deliver a wide range of health and active living services and seek long-term political, financial and organizational sustainability.
5. **Community Engagement** – involve citizens in ways that are relevant to their interests and desires in creating a healthy and active community, provide leadership training and recognize their achievements.
6. **Evidence Informed and Effective** – Use the best available evidence and proven best practices to inform decisions and evaluations.
7. **Equity** – Eliminate disparities in access to physical activity opportunities and reduce disparities that result from geography, socio-economic status, and gender by focusing on inactive groups and groups with inequitable access and other barriers.

### **Values**<sup>48</sup>

The CPRA *Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015* is an excellent point of reference in positioning the work of a municipality in addressing the challenges and opportunities that currently impact the delivery of relevant and timely programs, services and facilities.

The Framework was developed by professionals and volunteers in the parks and recreation sector across Canada. It is based on a number of values that are fundamentally important in guiding decision-making for the management of policies and practices in recreation organizations.

It is appropriate to embrace these values in addition to the preceding Principles in the context of the Town of East Gwillimbury's Health and Active Living Strategy so that parks, recreation and culture initiatives are being delivered in manner consistent with national standards.

#### **Public Good**

Public recreation will be regarded as a “public good” and accessible to all in the community, not just to users.

#### **Inclusion and Equity**

Inclusion will be an organizational practice in which all groups and individuals are welcomed and valued with fairness in access to resources, opportunities and experiences.

#### **Sustainability**

The delivery system will be sustainable in terms of human resources, economics, and the environment and that balances the needs of natural ecosystems with those of users.

#### **Lifelong Participation**

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<sup>48</sup> Adapted from The CPRA Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015

Individuals and communities will benefit from lifelong participation in recreational experiences, from early childhood to old age.

#### Outcome Driven

Recreation will be outcome driven, striving to help individuals and communities attain the outcomes they are seeking, such as improved health and wellbeing.

#### Quality and Relevance

Recreation will be committed to offering safe recreation experiences of the highest possible quality while addressing the unique needs and capacities of each community.

#### Evidenced Based

Recreation will be committed to “fact based” decision-making – getting the best evidence and using it to guide policy and practice.

#### Partnerships and Collaboration

Recreation will nurture partnerships with public/non-profit providers, public and private planners and developers, all orders and levels of government, multiple sectors and disciplines that influence wellbeing and share common goals.

#### Innovation

Recreation practitioners will value innovation and recognize the benefits of ingenuity, the co-creation of new policies, programs and services with people.

## APPENDIX I - Measurement

### **CPRA Framework For Recreation 2015**

To gain insights into the performance of the CPRC Department in relationship to the National level, the following matrix has been developed reflecting the various priorities outlined in each of the Framework’s Five Goal Areas. This matrix is a tool that can be used during annual planning and evaluation meetings.

Goal and Priorities	Initiated
<b>1. Foster active living through physical recreation.</b>	
<p>1.1 Enable participation in physically active recreational experiences, continuing to focus on children and youth but expanding to meet the needs and foster the participation of the growing number of older people in Canada.</p> <p>1.2 Incorporate physical literacy in active recreation programs for people of all ages and abilities. Physical literacy is recognized as a precondition for lifelong participation in and enjoyment of sport in the Canadian Sport Policy 2012.</p> <p>1.3 Support the child’s right to play, and to participate freely and fully in “age-appropriate recreational experiences, cultural life, and artistic and leisure activities”, as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Enhance opportunities for children and youth to play outdoors and interact in nature in school, community and neighbourhood settings. Engage parents and provide safe, welcoming, low- or no-cost opportunities for families and multiple generations to experience the joy of spontaneous active play together.</p> <p>1.4 Inform recreation leaders about the importance of reducing sedentary behaviours, and enable them to explore and implement strategies and interventions that address this important public health issue.</p>	
<b>2. Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.</b>	
<p><i>2.1 Develop and implement strategies and policies, which ensure that no families or individuals in Canada are denied access to public recreation opportunities as a result of economic disadvantage.</i></p> <p><i>2.2 Enable people of all ages to participate in recreation. Address constraints to participation faced by children and youth from disadvantaged families and older adults who are frail and/or isolated.</i></p> <p><i>2.3 Build trust and participation through the provision of recreational opportunities and experiences that are respectful and appropriate for various ethnocultural groups. Actively engage persons of diverse and racialized backgrounds in developing, leading and evaluating recreation and park activities.</i></p>	



<p><i>2.4 Recognize and enable the experience of Aboriginal peoples in recreation with a holistic approach drawn from traditional values and culture. Work with Aboriginal communities in pursuit of all five goals outlined in the Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015.</i></p> <p><i>2.5 Enable and encourage women and girls of all backgrounds and circumstances to achieve their potential and participate fully in all types of recreation. Address the historical, cultural and social barriers to participation experienced by girls and women, and apply a gender equity lens when developing and monitoring policies, programs and practices.</i></p> <p><i>2.6 Enact policies of non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. Provide a welcoming and safe environment for people with all sexual orientations and sexual identities.</i></p> <p><i>2.7 Provide leadership, support, encouragement, information, policies and programs that facilitate full participation in recreation by people of all abilities across all settings. Work with persons with disabilities and special needs to create inclusive opportunities and build leadership capacity. Ensure that recreation environments are accessible, and remove physical and emotional barriers to participation.</i></p> <p><i>2.8 Address the unique challenges and capacities in rural and remote communities. Seek community leadership in decision-making regarding the provision of and access to appropriate spaces and places, opportunities and experiences in recreation.</i></p>	
<p><b>3. Help people connect to nature through recreation.</b></p>	
<p>3.1 Work in partnership with community and provincial/territorial planners and Aboriginal communities to provide natural spaces and places in neighborhoods, communities and regions through the retention and addition of natural areas, forests, parks, trails and recreational waters (rivers, lakes, canals and beaches).</p> <p>3.2 Work collaboratively at all orders and levels of government (local, regional, provincial/territorial, federal and with Aboriginal governing bodies) to create and maintain a coordinated, comprehensive system of parks and protected areas across Canada that allows year-round access to nature. Share best practices and findings in planning, design, management, ecosystem monitoring and public information.</p> <p>3.3 Develop public awareness and education initiatives to increase understanding of the importance of nature to wellbeing and child development, the role of recreation in helping people connect to nature and the importance of sustainability in parks and recreation.</p> <p>3.4 Ensure that operational policies and practices in parks and recreation limit the use of non-renewable resources and minimize negative impacts on the natural environment.</p>	
<p><b>4. Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities.</b></p>	

<p>4.1 Provide recreation facilities and outdoor spaces in under-resourced communities (including on-reserve and in remote and rural areas), based on community and/or regional needs and resources.</p> <p>4.2 Work with partners to increase the use of existing structures and spaces for multiple purposes, including recreation (e.g. use of schools, churches, vacant land and lots).</p> <p>4.3 Enable communities to renew recreational infrastructure as required and to meet the need for green spaces by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing dedicated government funding at all levels, as well as partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors for the necessary development, renewal and rehabilitation of facilities and outdoor spaces.</li> <li>• Developing assessment tools and evidence-based guidelines for investing and reinvesting in aging recreation infrastructure.</li> <li>• Developing and adopting innovative renewal strategies that will endure over time, use less energy and provide affordable access for all.</li> </ul> <p>4.4 Lead and support community efforts and planning processes for active transportation and public transit. Participate in the planning and design of communities to encourage the placement of workplaces, schools, shops libraries, parks, and sport and recreation facilities in close proximity so that active modes of transportation are easier to use. Encourage development and maintenance of active transportation routes that connect people to the places they want to go.</p> <p>4.5 Enhance mental and social wellbeing by creating supportive social environments in the settings where people live, learn, work and play. This requires strengthened partnerships with schools, social service groups, the arts community, law enforcement, transportation and urban planners, community organizations and the private sector.</p> <p>4.6 Develop and implement targeted recreation education campaigns that increase knowledge about how recreation contributes to enjoyment and quality of life, and help people acquire the skills and attitudes they need to plan for making recreation a part of their lives.</p> <p>4.7 Develop a common understanding of community wellbeing through the development and use of standardized assessment tools and indices that will help communities assess and measure their status on community wellbeing.</p> <p>4.8 Adopt a strategic approach to community building that features alignment and collaboration with other community initiatives (e.g. Age-Friendly Communities, Healthy Cities/Communities, Community Food Centres).</p>	
<p><b>5. Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.</b></p>	

<p>5.1 Increase collaborative efforts among provincial/territorial governments, local governments, voluntary organizations, Aboriginal communities, the private sector and recreation associations to support and nurture a vibrant recreation system that serves as the primary means for achieving the vision and goals in this Framework.</p> <p>5.2 Implement career awareness, preparation and development strategies to attract and educate new leaders.</p> <p>5.3 Support advanced education in recreation. Use long-term market studies to inform curricula development and capture supply and demand needs in the industry.</p> <p>5.4 Develop and implement high-quality training and competency-based capacity development programs for organizations and individuals (professionals and volunteers) working in recreation, particularly in under-resourced rural and remote areas.</p> <p>5.5 Develop a strategy to enhance community-based leadership in recreation.</p> <p>5.6 Rejuvenate and update volunteer strategies to reflect societal changes and take advantage of community and individual capacities. Engage volunteers of all ages and from all walks of life. Make a special effort to recruit and support volunteers from a variety of ethno cultural and racialized populations and other groups that face constraints to participation. Recognize and support the role of the not-for-profit sector in developing and engaging volunteers.</p> <p>5.7 Support a pan-Canadian, comprehensive knowledge development strategy that increases support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Recreation research and data collection carried out by universities and colleges, the not-for-profit sector, provincial/territorial, local and Aboriginal governments, with special attention to applied research at the community level.</li><li>· The national recreation information system so that all those planning and delivering recreation services have access to the latest evidence.</li><li>· Collaborative efforts among governments, recreation associations and colleges and universities to develop new recreation programs and services that meet the evolving and expanding needs within communities.</li></ul>	
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## Appendix II - Other Initiatives

### Active Living Strategy – Halton Hills

Terms of Reference:

<http://www.haltonhills.ca/activeliving/pdf/TermsofReference.pdf>

A Regional example of an Active Living strategy... there are a few of these but the wellness aspect is difficult to determine. These Active Living plans are also often audience based (Activity Aging, Early years, Active Living for Persons with Disability and not as often holistic re: audience).

Mission Statement: To develop a community-wide Active Living Strategy that supports, engages, and fosters an active, healthy Town of Halton Hills community, where the healthy choices are the easy choices at work, home, and play. Project Deliverables:

- Summary of environmental scan including community resource inventory and services assessment.
- Summary of stakeholder input.
- Comprehensive Active Living Strategy including implementation plan and budget.
- A suggested community coalition committee.

### Toronto – Recreation Service Plan 2013-2017

[https://www1.toronto.ca/city\\_of\\_toronto/parks\\_forestry\\_recreation/community\\_involvement/files/pdf/rsp.pdf](https://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/parks_forestry_recreation/community_involvement/files/pdf/rsp.pdf)

A strategy that is strong on the recreation side (useful if there is to be one central leader in pushing this agenda forward, but not as strong on the spiritual/wellness side of the wheel).

The Recreation Service Plan aims to increase overall participation in recreation, decrease financial barriers to recreation and improve local and geographic access. It outlines the role that the City plays in meeting the recreation needs of Torontonians, within the context of the larger recreation service sector that has many and diverse providers.

- Enhanced engagement and partnership with schools, community agencies, and delivery partners to improve sector coordination (reduce gaps and overlaps) and local planning (respond to local needs).
- Development of quality standards and measures in all programs, facilities, and other services will improve Parks, Forestry and

Recreation's capacity to manage, measure progress and report on the overall system.

- An equitable and consistent method of identifying Priority Centres across the city. The new method services the greatest number of low-income census tracts.

### **UK Active - More People/More Active/More Often**

<http://www.ukactive.com/>

Over the last 20 years UKACTIVE has worked to develop sustainable long-term partnerships with government departments, major brands, National Governing Bodies of Sport, charities and many other organisation with an interest in getting more people, more active, more often and improving the health and wellbeing of the nation.

Through these partnerships we have delivered a number of successful consumer-facing campaigns in the following areas:

- Helping children and young people to be more active by helping them to find activities they enjoy, with a particular emphasis on teenage girls.
- Improving adult health and wellbeing.
- Employee health and workplace wellness initiatives.
- Weight management programmes.
- Exercise as medicine.
- Supporting older people to be more active.
- Supporting people with disabilities to be more active and improving their access to activities.

We help our partners develop their strategy and understanding of the active lifestyle sector through offering project management services, platforms for engaging the sector, opening up channels of communication and brokering new relationships.

### **Active for a Lifetime<sup>49</sup>**

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) is a movement to improve the quality of sport and physical activity in Canada. It links sport, education, recreation and health, and aligns community, provincial and national programming. CS4L's mission is to improve the health, wellness, and sporting experiences of all Canadians by advancing physical literacy, improving performance and increasing life-long participation in physical activity.

### **HIGH FIVE Quality Assurance Programming<sup>50</sup>**

HIGH FIVE is an example of best practice in quality assurance programming for recreation and sport programs for children aged 6-12 years. HIGH FIVE provides

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<sup>49</sup> Canadian Sport for Life: [www.canadiansportforlife.ca](http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca)

<sup>50</sup> HIGH FIVE [www.highfive.org](http://www.highfive.org)

a range of training, assessment tools and resources to ensure that organizations can deliver the highest quality programs possible. HIGH FIVE ensures leaders, coaches, and instructors have the tools and the knowledge to nurture a child's mental health and create positive experiences for children.

### **Active Canada 20/20**

A multifaceted strategy that outlines:

- Actions for policy development to implement Federal sport policy and work with community organizations.
- Actions for targeted information and public education (e.g. reducing obesity, removing barriers, and making healthy life choices).
- Actions for high quality, accessible programs including linkages to schools, access to facilities, making physical activity and diet part of every program, and encouraging employers to get programs going or access programs.
- Actions for community design to replace barriers to physical activity, safe active transportation linked to public transportation, facilities available for community shared use
- Actions for outreach programs to schools, businesses and health practitioners.
- Actions for training volunteers in delivering HAL programs.

### **The McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan<sup>51</sup>**

This community developed a plan with the goal of “improving the overall quality of life in the community by increasing access to affordable healthy foods and promoting physical activity. The main areas of focus are maximize the prevention of non-communicable diseases, support policies that improve nutrition within school and work environments, and promote opportunities for increased physical activity for all ages.

The community developed a number of sector strategies and tactics that involve community partners in improving the quality of life in the County. Highlights of the sectors and tactics include:

- **Business and Industry** – identify and promote opportunities for healthy lifestyles, flexible work hours for fitness/nutrition breaks, gym membership discounts, incentive programs.
- **Education, Afterschool, Early Childhood** – child care programs linked to healthy activities, safe routes to school, healthy vending, summer meals/activities, afterschool activity programs, partnerships to link youth and their families to healthy lifestyle opportunities in community.
- **Health Care** – actively promote wellness with patients, educational materials in plain language, prescribe healthy eating to programs for inactive people, maintain web sites to provide resource information.

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<sup>51</sup> McLennan County Active Living and Healthy Eating Plan For a Healthy Lifestyle – Waco, McLennan County, Texas, a project of the Waco-McLennan County Public Health District.

- **Parks and Recreation, Fitness and Sports** – promote programs and facilities where people learn, live, work, play etc. to provide easy access to safe and affordable healthy lifestyle opportunities, support access in low-resource areas, improve access to facilities, establish funding partnerships for enhancing public spaces, including km markers and calorie trackers on the trails.
- **Transportation, Land Use, and Community Design** – enhance community design for active transportation, enhance signage and viability of transit services and stops, track transit system projects and programs and communication to users and organizations.
- **Volunteer and Non-Profit** – encourage community participation in running, bicycling, walking and fundraising races, continue to promote engagements involving healthy lifestyles to members, volunteers and residents, support strategies that target low income populations through culturally appropriate programs.

In summary, the program includes deployment of mass media campaigns, gaining support from key community stakeholders, working to change policies and environments in schools and worksites, promoting shared space agreements in communities to increase access to physical activity, and working to increase availability of healthy foods in areas at high risk for obesity and chronic disease.

### **Active Living Strategy – Municipality of the District of Chester, Nova Scotia<sup>52</sup>**

The municipality Parks Department entered into a partnership with the NS Department of Health Promotion to share the costs of developing an active living strategy for the municipality in 2008. The original plan was updated in 2014. The overarching goal is to “promote an active lifestyle to residents, a way of life in which physical activity is valued and integrated into daily living”. Six key goal areas, along with actions and outcomes have been established in 6 strategic areas:

- **Outdoor Recreation** – improve access and provide a wide spectrum of opportunities that match the variety of interests and abilities of citizens.
- **Supportive Environments** – Improve the environments in which girls and females through the lifespan take part in sport and physical activity.
- **Information and Inspiration** – Improve the quality of citizens to access quality, timely information and inspiration on physical activity.
- **Daily Walking and Biking** – Walking and biking are the first-choice people make for getting where they need to go.
- **Recreation and Health** – The recreation and health sectors have a closer collaboration and supportive relationship at the social level (determinants of health), physical level (special needs considered), policy/planning level (inclusion and adaptation policy).
- **Isolated Populations** – Better access to, and service for, isolated and under-represented sub-populations.

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<sup>52</sup> IBID

In summary, this project strategy has clearly defined outcomes for the individual level, the social level, the physical environment level, and the policy planning level, some of which could be easily adapted to the Town of East Gwillimbury HAL Strategy

**CPRA, A Framework for Recreation in Canada, Pathways to Wellbeing**

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57a2167acd0f68183878e305/t/5926efacebbd1a74b7b584d8/1495723950196/Framework+For+Recreation+In+Canada\\_2016+w+citation.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57a2167acd0f68183878e305/t/5926efacebbd1a74b7b584d8/1495723950196/Framework+For+Recreation+In+Canada_2016+w+citation.pdf)