

Town of East Gwillimbury
Complete Communities Secondary Plan

Community Facilities and Parks Strategy

November 2025 (DRAFT)

Prepared for:
The Planning Partnership

Prepared by:
Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd.

**MONTEITH
BROWN** 
PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 About the Complete Communities Secondary Plan	2
1.3 Methodology	4
2. PARKLAND	5
2.1 Existing Conditions	5
2.2 Policy Context	6
2.3 Key Considerations	9
2.4 Recommendations for Parkland	12
3. RECREATION FACILITIES (INDOOR AND OUTDOOR)	13
3.1 Existing Conditions	13
3.2 Policy Context	16
3.3 Key Considerations	18
3.4 Recommendations for Recreation Facilities	34
4. LIBRARIES	36
4.1 Existing Conditions	36
4.2 Policy Context	37
4.3 Key Considerations	39
4.4 Recommendations for Libraries	44

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the local community services and facilities that will be required to support future planned growth within the Town of East Gwillimbury Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area. Specifically, this report examines community services and facilities including parkland, recreation facilities (both indoor and outdoor), and libraries¹ – the essential public spaces that provide a sense of place and a complete community.

Significance

Every resident of East Gwillimbury and most visitors to the area will utilize some form of community service and facility throughout their lifetime, including parks, trails, community centres, libraries, and other recreational spaces. Both the current and planned network of community services and facilities serve the daily needs of the population while promoting the health and wellbeing of the East Gwillimbury community and its residents. With the Town's population forecasted to increase threefold by 2051, East Gwillimbury will require enhancements to existing community services and facilities, as well as new investments to support this growth.

Scope

This report incorporates existing inventories within the Town of East Gwillimbury, demographic and growth forecasts, current policy and legislative context, and facility/park provision targets. Through this review, the report identifies potential growth-related gaps and prioritizes community services and facilities needed to serve the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area (also referred to as the Secondary Plan Area or SPA in this report). The findings will inform the development of policies and land use structures within the Complete Communities Secondary Plan. This analysis is subject to revisions based upon the final/approved land use concept and population forecasts.

Context

The Town of East Gwillimbury sits within the northern portion of the Regional Municipality of York. According to the 2021 Census, the population of East Gwillimbury was approximately 34,600 people. Given more recent growth, a more accurate and current estimate of the population is 42,054². York Region has established a 2051 population projection for residential growth in East Gwillimbury of 128,600 persons.

¹ Trails, childcare, schools, social services, and related public services and facilities are excluded from the scope of this assessment.

² Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0155-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2021 boundaries. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1710015501>

1.2 About the Complete Communities Secondary Plan

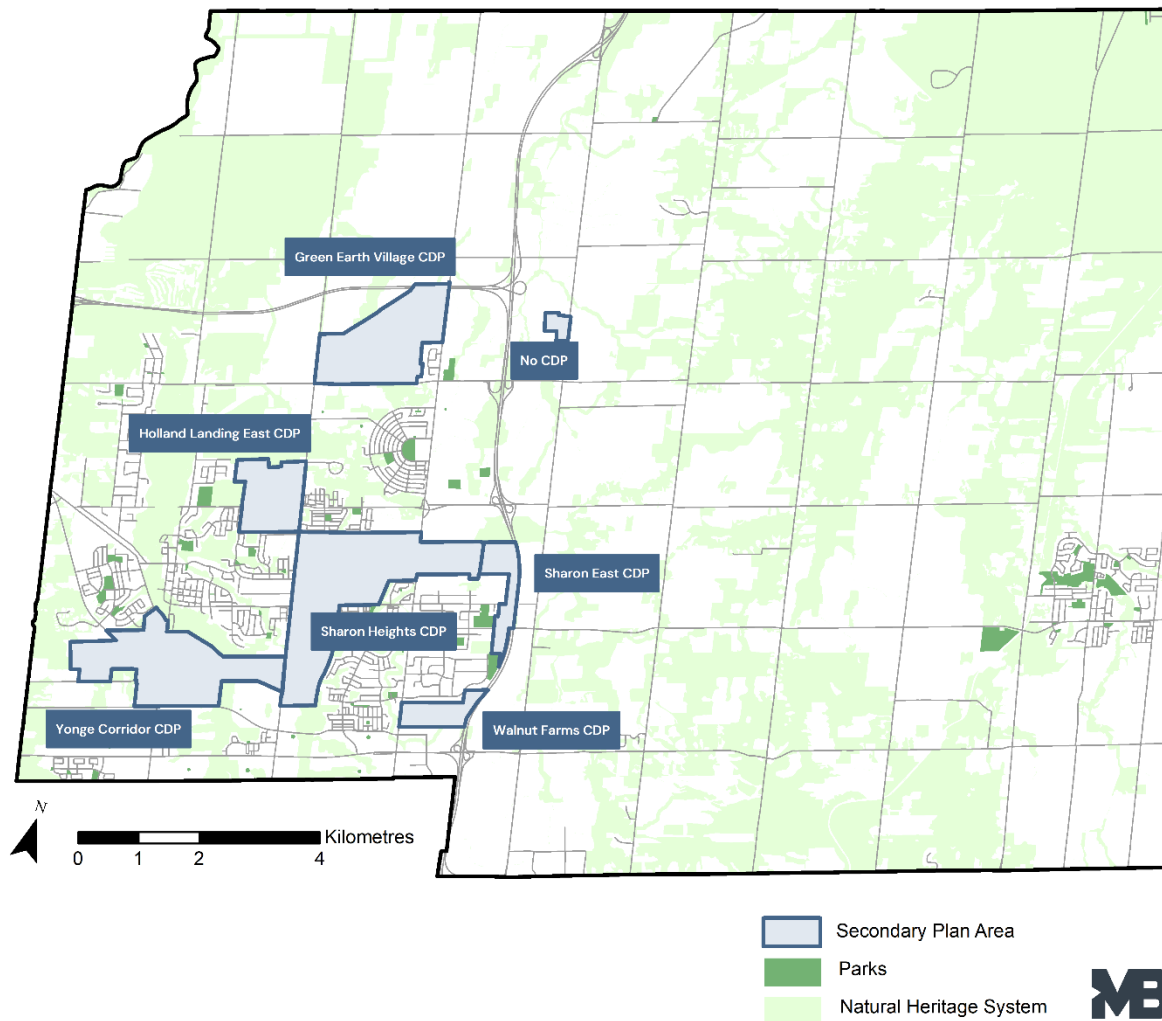
As the Town's population grows, the available land must be equipped to accommodate far more people. In response to the anticipated growth, the Complete Communities Secondary Plan was initiated by the Town of East Gwillimbury in September 2023. The purpose of the document is to provide a detailed planning framework for the long-term development of new community areas, which were historically part of the Whitebelt (the peripheral lands surrounding built areas that have been allocated for future development).

The Secondary Plan will outline the designated land uses for the new community areas in accordance with existing policies such as Provincial Policy, Official Plans, and relevant Master Plans, Guidelines, etc. The Secondary Plan outlines six distinct areas of land demarcated by boundaries (referred to as Community Design Plan Areas, or CDPs), to aid in providing a more cohesive and complete community. The Secondary Plan is meant to complement the Town's vision for a balanced, sustainable, and complete community while specifying both existing and future growth and land uses.

The Town of East Gwillimbury and the Whitebelt Landowners Group are responsible for preparing the Secondary Plan and any associated background studies.

This Community Facilities and Parks Strategy focuses exclusively on the study area (Secondary Plan Area), which will consist of a significant portion of the Town's overall future growth. The Secondary Plan Area alone (outlined in blue in Figure 1) is expected to add at least 46,000 people to the Town's population. It is recognized, however, that growth will occur both within and outside the study area, and therefore the existing and future provision of parks, recreation, and libraries will also serve areas beyond the Secondary Plan Area. There are currently no parks, recreation, or library facilities within the Community Design Plan Areas.

Figure 1: Map of Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area (in blue)



The following table describes the *minimum* number of people that each Community Design Plan Area is being planned to accommodate.

Table 1: Minimum Population targets by Community Design Plan Area

Community Design Plan Area	Population Target
Holland Landing East	3,500
Green Earth Village	11,000
Sharon East	1,500
Sharon Heights	19,000
Walnut Farms	2,500
Yonge Corridor	8,500
Total	46,000 people

With the Town's population projected to reach 128,600 by 2051 and an existing population of 42,054, the Secondary Plan area is expected to accommodate approximately 53.2% of East Gwillimbury's future population growth, while areas outside the Secondary Plan Area will accommodate approximately 46.8% of future population growth.

1.3 Methodology

This report examines existing inventories of publicly available community facilities while considering the relevant and current legislation and policies, demographic and growth forecasts, consultation inputs, local provision targets, and guidance from the Town's supporting documents. Specifically, the report is broken down into the three sections pertaining to different types of facilities considered: Parkland, Recreation Facilities, and Libraries.

To accomplish such tasks, each section in this report contains the following structure:

1. Existing Conditions
2. Policy Conditions
3. Key Considerations
4. Recommendations by Facility Type

The **Existing Conditions** section provides information on the infrastructure's current inventory, needs, or provision features that describe the facility type. The current conditions provide a foundation for further analysis.

The **Policy Context** section summarizes relevant policies and requirements that inform facility and park planning. This section is crucial to understanding potential constraints and policy considerations specific to public facilities and spaces.

The **Key Considerations** section responds to the previous two sections with other influential factors to consider when developing the facility type. This section includes a needs assessment methodology for public spaces that draws upon the provision targets established in the local master plans. These provision targets may be applied flexibly and potentially modified to ensure responsiveness to specific local or changing needs within the community.

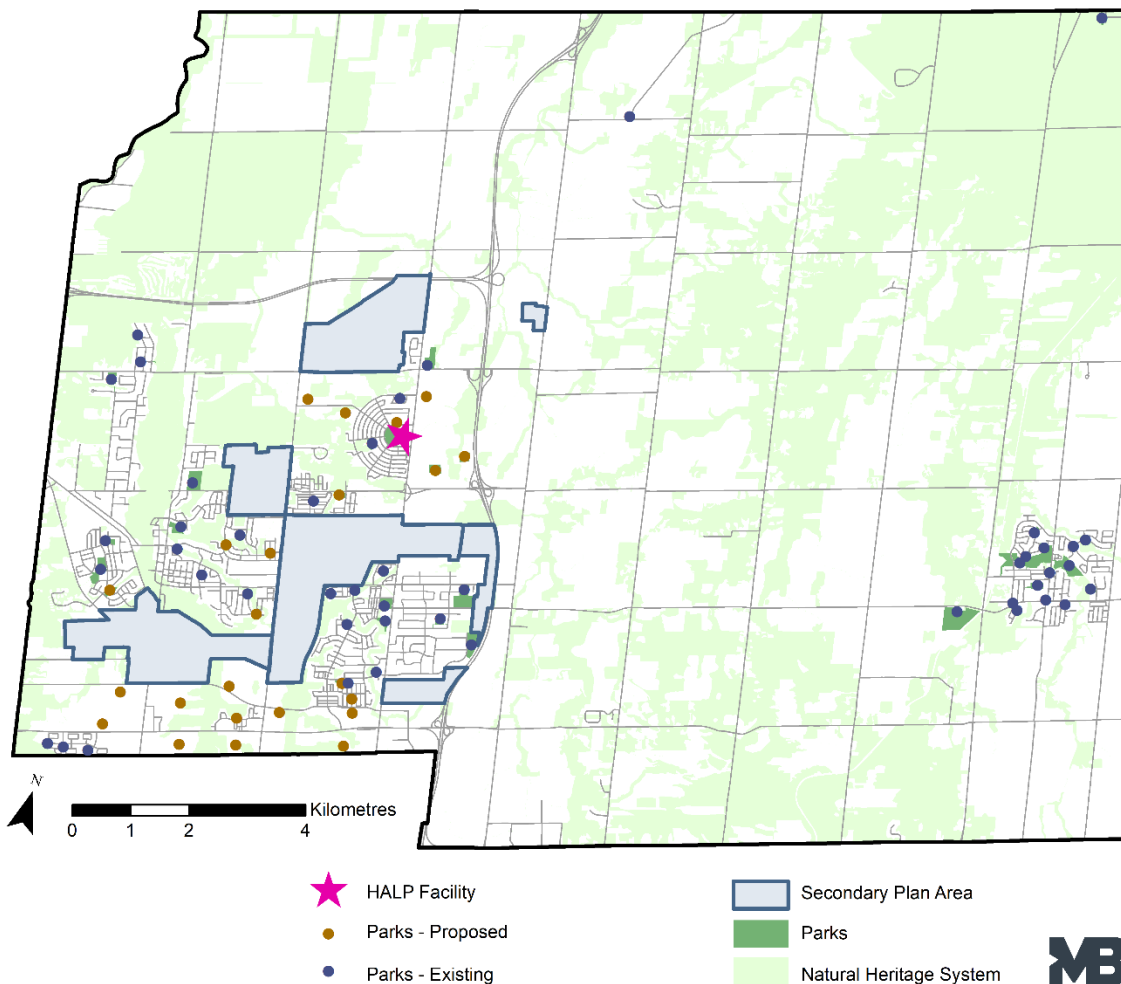
Finally, the **Recommendations by Facility Type** section consolidates the background information, constraints, needs, and opportunities discovered in the previous three sections to recommend and offer policy considerations for the Secondary Plan.

2. Parkland

2.1 Existing Conditions

Information supplied by the Town indicates that there are currently 46 parks within East Gwillimbury, containing a variety of amenities such as playgrounds, soccer fields, splash pads, sport courts, and more. These sites provide 122.6 hectares of parkland, resulting in a provision level of 3.2 hectares per 1,000 people (based on the Town's 2024 estimated population of 42,054)³. Existing and known future parks are shown on the map below.

Figure 2: Parkland in East Gwillimbury (2025)



It is anticipated that as communities outside of the Secondary Plan Area develop, additional parkland will also be secured and developed.

³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710015501>

2.2 Policy Context

Figure 2: Hierarchy of Legislation and Plans relating to the Provision of Parkland in East Gwillimbury



The **Provincial Planning Statement** (2024), recognizes parks as a key element in promoting healthy, active, and inclusive communities. Provincial policy supports the provision and distribution of a full range of publicly accessible parkland which addresses the needs of residents of all ages.

The **York Region Official Plan** (2022, consolidated June 2023) describes parks as essential in the creation of complete communities and contributing to a sense of place and identity. Parks and open space are to be developed in communities near other services and amenities such as schools, libraries, and transit. The Regional Official Plan supports the provision of parkland for community use. While the Region's Official Plan is referred to in this document, it no longer has status and approval authority has been transferred to the Province.

Section 4.8 of the **Town's Official Plan** (2010) describes the intent of the parks and open space system, which is to provide recreational and educational opportunities for existing and future residents. A parks classification system is outlined in this section which defines the various types and sizes of parks present within the Town. Classifications include Central Parks, Town Parks, Community Parks, and Neighbourhood Parks. The Town of East Gwillimbury seeks to provide a minimum provision rate of 4.0 hectares of public parkland per 1,000 people. In Section 4.8.13, the Town also indicates that the majority of residences within a built-up residential area will be serviced by a park classified as Neighbourhood, Community, or Town within an 800-metre radius. It is a policy of the 2010 Official Plan that "The precise distribution of such parks will be determined in Secondary Plans, Community Design Plans or other planning programs in accordance with the policies of this Plan." Open Space lands are not part of the public parkland network, but rather a component of the broader parks and open space system that helps to enhance connectivity and integrate the natural heritage system. Lands that are unsuitable for development due to flood susceptibility, steep slopes, and erosion, as well as lands within the natural heritage system are not accepted as part of the required parkland dedication.

The Official Plan was updated and adopted in 2022 but has not yet received approval by the Province. The current version of the draft Official Plan (2023) keeps the parkland hierarchy largely the same, except for the addition of Urban Parks (which are typically smaller than neighbourhood parks and intended for passive recreational use). Additionally, the 2010 Official Plan outlined provision rates as it relates to parks, whereas the 2022 update is proposing to remove such specifications.

Table 2: Proposed Parkland Classifications (Town Official Plan, 2022) – not yet in force

Parkland Classification	Description
Central Park	A centrally located park designed to accommodate recreational facilities, including, but not limited to, playing fields, indoor activity space, community halls and arenas.
Town Park	Unique destination parks which feature civic, historic, cultural, recreational and heritage significance. The purpose of Town parks is to connect urban and rural residents and visitors. Town parks may include trails and open space linkages and will add to the diversity of the parks system.
Community Park	Intended to serve larger Secondary Plan Areas or a collection of neighbourhoods. Community parks include indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, major sports fields, or field houses.
Neighbourhood Park	Intended to serve local neighbourhoods within an 800-metre walking distance of all residents (without the obstruction of major barriers). Neighbourhood parks may support passive and recreational use (i.e. sports fields, playgrounds, etc.)
Urban Park	Small parks connected by sidewalks; typically intended for passive use rather than programmed recreational use.

While the 2022 Official Plan does not contain specific provision rates, the 2009 Community Parks, Recreation & Culture Strategic Master Plan outlined parkland targets and provision rates for a wide range of recreation facilities. The Strategic Master Plan provided guidance to the Town in developing and maintaining its parks, recreation, arts, culture, and heritage services and facilities until 2018. The Strategic Master Plan was updated in 2018 as the Healthy and Active Living Master Plan to guide future decisions until 2028.

In December 2002, the Town of East Gwillimbury adopted a **Parkland By-law**, which aims to ensure that the Town adequately designates a dedicated amount of parkland as a condition of development in keeping with the policies of the Town's Official Plan. The conveyance rates are described as 5% for lands to be developed as residential or one hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed (alternative rate), whichever is greater. Commercial or industrial conveyance rates are described as 2%. The Town may accept cash in lieu of land as an alternative for any required park dedication. This By-law is now out of date given the many recent changes to the Planning Act.

In December 2009, the Town of East Gwillimbury adopted a **Parks Design Standards Manual** which has since been updated in January 2022. The updated manual describes parks in three sections: community planning context and general guidelines, park design and development, and park facilities and construction standard detail. Section 1.2.2 of the manual discusses the location of parkland within planning areas *“Parkland will be consolidated in a location deemed most appropriate by the municipality for the population it is intended to serve, in the interest of good community planning and the preservation and integration of the natural environment regardless of the disposition of land ownership”*. The Parks Design Standards Manual provides guidance on estimated land requirements by parkland classification as well as features or amenities permitted within each park type. These requirements should be considered through the Community Design Plans, as appropriate.

Table 3. Parkland Requirements (Park Design Standards Manual, 2009/2022)

Parkland Requirements	Estimated Land Requirement	Features or Amenities
Town-Wide Parks	Can vary in size and function	Can vary depending on Town need
Community Parks	1.2 hectares per 1,000 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any combination of two major athletic or sports fields May also include: tennis courts / pickleball courts, bowling greens, basketball or multipurpose courts, soccer pitches, softball or baseball, etc.) Public or historical art Splash pads or water play features Shade structures or washrooms Indoor recreation centres
Neighbourhood Parks	1.0 hectares per 1,000 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May include sports fields including: soccer fields, ball diamonds Junior level sport courts (tennis, pickleball, or multi-use) Playground Seating and other park furniture Passive green space Public art

2.3 Key Considerations

Parks are essential public infrastructure and are vital to improving and sustaining the health of individuals, the community, environment, and the economy. Well-planned parks provide extensive benefits to individuals and communities while attracting investments in tourism, business, industry and housing. They also provide places of respite, improved air quality, venues for physical activity, and conservation of natural and cultural heritage landscapes. Many studies and land development trends suggest that proximity to parks and open spaces can increase property values, making well-planned parks near neighborhoods desirable for homeowners.

The provision of parkland is both a measure of local parkland supply and access. It will be important to ensure that an adequate supply of parkland is available within the new community areas, and within walking distance, to respond to an increase in population over the long-term.

This section will consider some of the strategies that are directly applicable to securing parkland, including legislative provisions and insights from Town Staff.

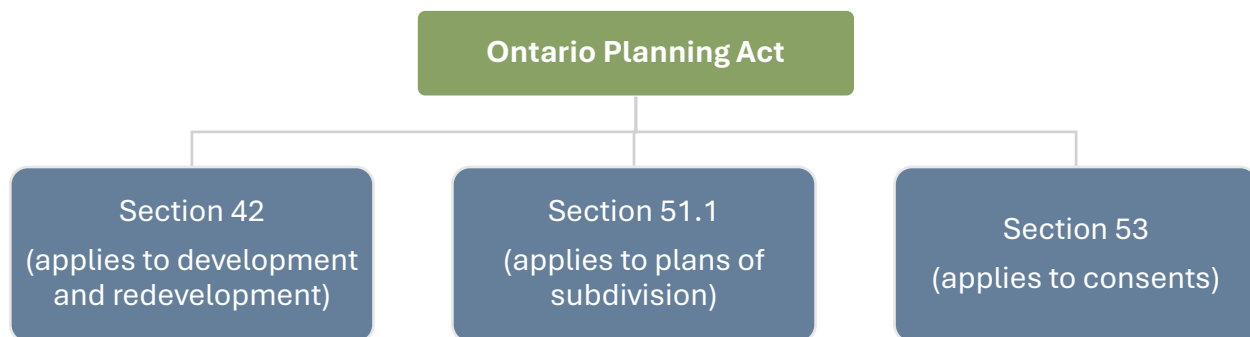
Legislative Provisions

Parkland conveyance, or the allocation of land for parks and public use, is established in the Planning Act and facilitated through the Town’s Official Plan policies (Figure 3).

Specifically, this includes Planning Act, Section 42 (which pertains to parkland conveyances associated with development and redevelopment) and Sections 51.1 and 53 (which pertain to parkland requirements as a condition of plan for subdivision approval and consent).

Section 42 requires that 5% of residential lands proposed for development or redevelopment be allocated for public recreational use. Similarly, Section 51.1 grants permission to the approval authority to deem 5% of a proposed subdivision plan to be allocated for public recreational purposes pending approval. Similar provisions allow for the conveyance of 2% of industrial or commercial land. At the municipality’s discretion, payment in lieu of dedication may also be accepted.

Figure 3: Parkland Dedication Sections in the Ontario Planning Act



Reduction of Parkland Dedications

The changes introduced by the **More Homes Built Faster Act (Bill 23)** have resulted in reductions to parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu requirements compared to the previous legislation, especially for areas of medium to higher density. Parkland requirements are not scaled to density.

Affordable residential units, attainable residential units, inclusionary zoning residential units, non-profit housing and additional residential unit developments are now also exempt from parkland dedication requirements.

Under the current Planning Act, municipalities may levy a **standard rate** of 5% of developable residential lands (or cash-in-lieu) or 2% of commercial and industrial lands, or an **alternative rate** of up to one hectare of land for every 600 hundred residential units or an equivalent to one hectare of land for every 1,000 units when requiring cash-in-lieu of land. The alternative rate typically generates more parkland when densities exceed 30 units per hectare when accepting land and 50 units per hectare when accepting payment, although recent changes to the Act have instituted caps on this (10% of land or its value for sites under 5 hectares, and 15% for sites 5 hectares or greater).

Figure 4: Parkland Dedication Rates in the Ontario Planning Act



*No conveyance may exceed 10% of the land or value of land for sites under 5 hectares or 15% of the land or value of land for sites 5 hectares or larger.

Town Staff Input

A workshop held with Town staff highlighted some key insights regarding parkland and expressed the desire to keep pace with emerging trends and needs. Staff noted that open space lands are increasingly being used by the public for passive recreation activities like hiking. Thus, it is important that the open space system is connected by trails and other recreational spaces. This allows for a larger parkland system, responding to the further consensus in favour of larger, consolidated parks. Regarding locations, staff suggested that parks be adjacent to public facilities such as community centres, school blocks, and open spaces / NHS lands.

Proposed parkland locations and sizes will be identified through subsequent phases of the Secondary Plan process. Efforts should be made to secure larger tracts of programmable parkland capable of accommodating multiple recreation amenities.

Projection of Parkland Requirements

The 2010 Official Plan has a parkland provision target of 4.0 hectares of public parkland per 1,000 people. This target is further described and applied in the Health & Active Living Master Plan (2018-2028). Applying this provision target to the Secondary Plan Area with a projected population of 46,000 people results in a need for 184 hectares of parkland. It is noted that the Town's 2022 Official Plan does not specify a parkland target, thus this requirement may be outdated and subject to further analysis.

Another way to determine potential parkland needs is to calculate the land base required to accommodate the outdoor recreation facilities needed to support the design population. **Based on the outdoor recreation needs for the Secondary Plan Area (see Section 3), there is a demonstrated need for 88.6 hectares of parkland for recreational uses. This equates to an average of 1.9 hectares per 1000 residents based on a design population of 46,000 persons. Additional land may be required to accommodate a more fulsome range of park types, including urban parks and public spaces.**

Within the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area, it is anticipated that the Town will secure parkland at a rate consistent with the amounts permitted through Provincial and local policies. For the purpose of this assignment, this amount is estimated to be 5% for residential lands and 2% for commercial and industrial lands, at minimum. Policies may also be put into place to support the alternative parkland conveyance rate, which is more appropriate for medium and high-density development. The Town is encouraged to use the most advantageous parkland dedication rate so as to maximize land-based opportunities (acceptance of cash-in-lieu is not recommended through the Secondary Plan, unless it is used to augment the amount of parkland in the subject area).

The parkland dedication opportunity provided by the Planning Act is estimated at between approximately 36 and 40 hectares⁴. **As such, parkland dedication allowances through the Planning Act will not be sufficient to allow the Town to meet the complete parkland needs for the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area. The Town will need to pursue alternative parkland conveyances in order to achieve the recommended parkland and outdoor recreation requirements.** The Secondary Plan has identified the former sewage lagoon site, owned by the Region, as an opportunity (once remediated) to establish a significant Community Park.

The Town is encouraged to secure additional parkland through means such as over-dedication, off-site dedication, purchase, partnership (e.g., use of school lands, etc.), long-term leases, etc. Future parkland provision must address both provision and geographic distribution. Detailed planning of future parks should consider how targets for local and town-wide facilities could be met. Opportunities to facilitate connections to the open space and natural heritage systems, and to expand on the multi-use recreational trail network, should also be explored through the planning process.

⁴ Source: Draft Complete Communities Secondary Plan. November 2025.

2.4 Recommendations for Parkland

The following is recommended for parks and the parkland system in the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area:

1. **Parks System & Design:** Through the Community Design Plans, ensure a high-quality and integrated parks system that supports active recreation and community connections, with a goal of ensuring that most residents are within a five-minute walk of a public park. Where possible, the parks system should be integrated with the open space / NHS network to establish natural corridors and environmental connections with trails opportunities. A variety of park types will be required – with various scales, design characteristics, and functional attributes – throughout the study area. Where possible, larger parks are preferred over smaller parks to allow for more programmable space. Parks may also be planned and coordinated with school sites to allow for maximum community benefit.
2. **Parkland Requirements:** The Complete Communities parks system should be designed to accommodate comprehensive range of outdoor recreation amenities. Based on a calculation of these outdoor recreation facility needs, approximately 85 to 90 hectares of parkland are required to serve the Secondary Plan Area and the forecasted population of 46,000 persons. These lands should be comprised of Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks, and other appropriate park types. Urban Parks and POPs, if provided, would be over and above this amount.
3. **Parkland Hierarchy:** The Town should prepare a Parks Plan to further justify parkland needs and promote a more robust parkland hierarchy to include new elements such as Eco-parks and other park amenities. Further, the Parks Plan should provide the background justification for a new, and up to date Parkland Dedication By-law.
4. **Parkland Acquisition:** Additional parkland above the minimums achievable through the Planning Act will be needed to support the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area and to allow the Town to achieve the targets it has set for recreational spaces. Further study is required to identify parkland allowances and to define potential shortfalls. The Town may work with the development community and consider acquisition in excess of the Planning Act allowances (e.g., through means such as over-dedication, off-site dedication, purchase, partnership (e.g., use of school lands, etc.), long-term leases, or other parkland conveyances, etc.) to achieve the vision for the Community Communities parks system.
5. **Funding for Parks and Park Facilities:** Updates to the Town's Development Charges By-law and the establishment of a Community Benefits By-law will further clarify funding strategies and assist the Town in raising the necessary capital to support the recommendations regarding parks and park facilities.

3. Recreation Facilities (Indoor and Outdoor)

3.1 Existing Conditions

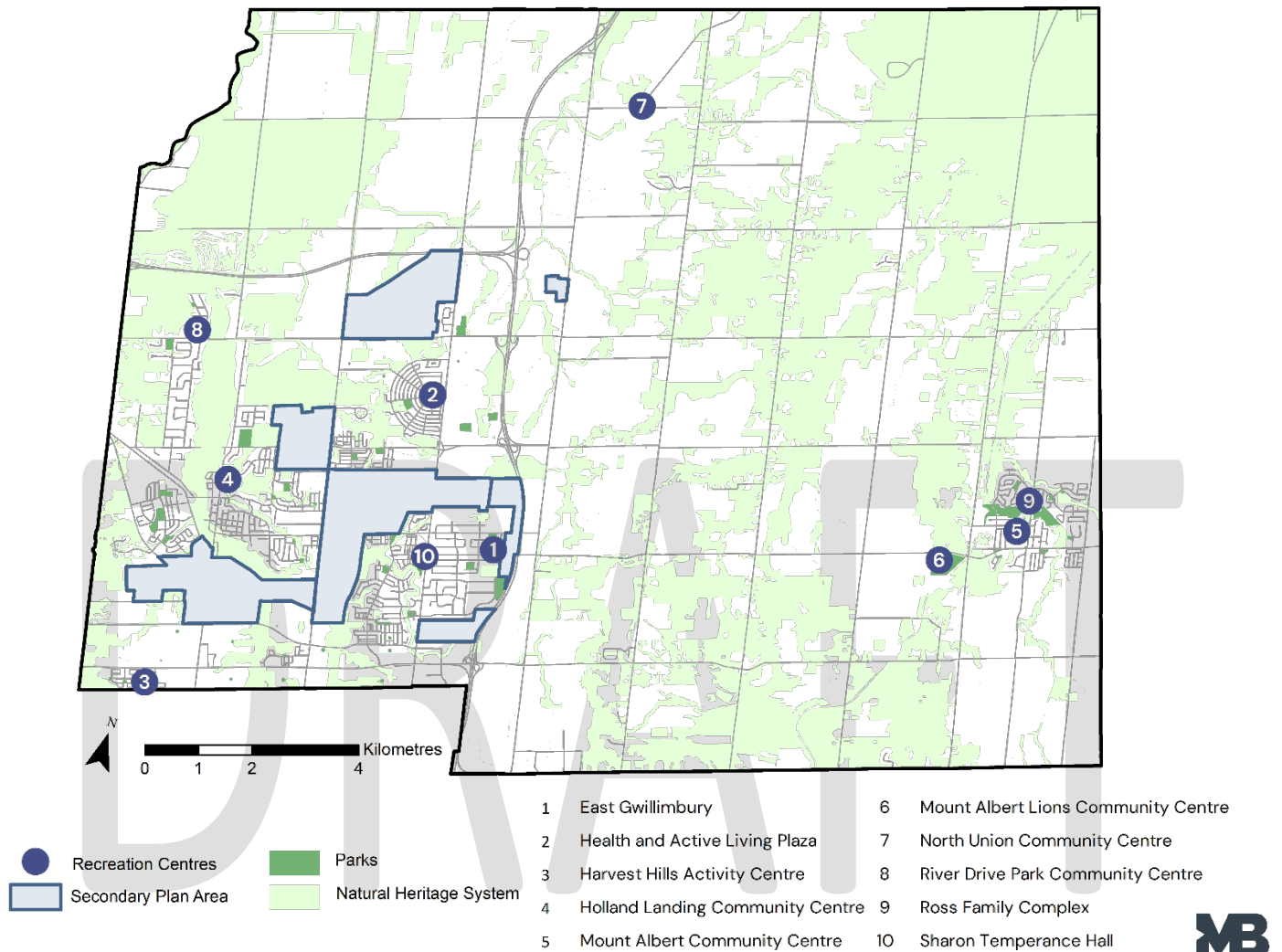
Examining the current inventory of recreation facilities provides a better understanding of local service levels, both current and in the near future. Located within East Gwillimbury are 10 municipal indoor recreation facilities, consisting of community centres, halls, and arenas. The following table identifies major amenities within each Town recreation facility.

Table 4: Existing Municipal Indoor Recreation Facilities (2025)

Municipal Recreation Facilities	Indoor Amenities	Square Footage
East Gwillimbury Sports Complex	2 ice pads, 2 halls	71,379
Harvest Hills Activity Centre	1 gymnasium (shared with school), 1 program room	n/a
Health and Active Living Plaza	1 aquatics centre (multi-tank), 1 gymnasium, program rooms	80,000 (approx.)
Holland Landing Community Centre	4 halls	15,333
Mount Albert Community Centre	1 hall	6,700
Mount Albert Lions Community Centre	1 hall	5,597
North Union Community Centre	1 hall	2,860
River Drive Park Community Centre	1 hall	4,920
Ross Family Complex	1 gymnasium, 1 program and seniors' room	9,760
Sharon Temperance Hall	1 hall	2,272

Source: Town of East Gwillimbury, 2024.

Figure 5: Indoor Recreation Facilities in East Gwillimbury (2025)



Various outdoor recreation amenities and facilities are provided throughout the Town's parks, as documented in the following table. This may not be a complete list of amenities.

Table 5: Existing Municipal Outdoor Recreation Amenities (2025)

Outdoor Recreation Facility Type	Number
Ball Diamonds	9 (7 lit, 2 unlit)
Basketball Courts	19
Disc Golf	1
Outdoor Fitness Equipment Sites	6
Pickleball Courts	4
Playgrounds	36 (35 locations)
Skateboard Parks	2
Soccer Fields	15 (4 lit, 11 unlit)
Splash Pads	5
Tennis Courts	12 (5 locations)

Source: Town of East Gwillimbury, 2024

In addition, the Town's new **Health and Active Living Plaza (HALP)** opened in late 2025, with development of park amenities being phased in. Notable outdoor facilities include:

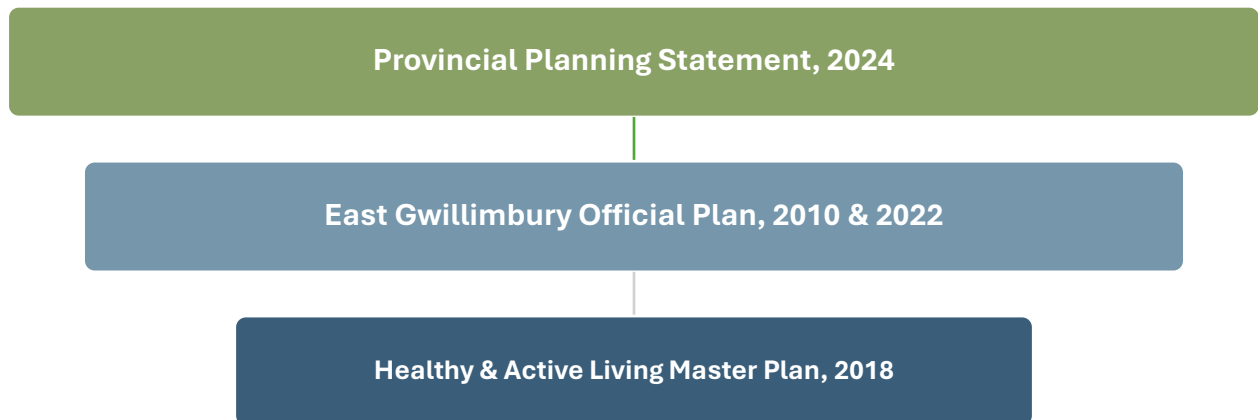
- Play Areas: playground (2) and a splash pad; shade structures (3)
- Sports Courts: multi-purpose court; pickleball courts (4); shuffleboard lanes (2)
- Active Recreation Areas: beach volleyball (2); skate park and pump track; 3v3 soccer fields (2)
- Passive Recreation Areas: stage / amphitheatre; cooking centre; free play / passive areas (2); multi-use path; teaching garden

Figure 6: Health and Active Living Plaza Design Concept



Source: Town of East Gwillimbury

3.2 Policy Context



The **Provincial Planning Statement** (2024) emphasizes the role that recreation facilities and community centres contribute to the creation of complete communities. The planning of these facilities is suggested to be based on both current and future projected needs (for the needs of persons of all ages and abilities), while also ensuring optimization of existing facilities. Facilities should be planned and co-located with one another, along with parks and open space where appropriate, to promote cost-effectiveness and facilitate service integration, access to transit, and active transportation.

The **Town's 2010 Official Plan** supports the provision of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and programs to meet the needs of all residents in accordance with the Town's Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan (section 4.5). Provision of recreational uses are supported within the early stages of growth and through co-location where possible (section 2.3).

The Town's recently adopted but not yet approved Official Plan (2022) includes recreation as part of its definition for complete communities. One of the objectives for ensuring social sustainability also addresses the provision of recreational uses within the early stages of growth. Section 4.8 discusses the intent of the parks and open space system, to provide recreational opportunities for both current and future residents of East Gwillimbury.

The Town's **Healthy & Active Living Master Plan** (2018) encourages continued efforts to create facilities where residents can "play and stay" with a focus on indoor placemaking. The Master Plan describes the Community Parks Recreation & Cultural Services Department (CPRC) mission as "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 Master Plan aims to incorporate five key factors into every discussion and decision-making process:

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.

The Master Plan outlines parks, recreational, and cultural opportunities for the next 10 years in East Gwillimbury. These recommendations include a mix of growth-related and redevelopment initiatives for a community that – at the time – was projected to grow to 46,846 by 2028. While some of these recommendations may be suitable for addressing a portion of future needs anticipated through the Complete Communities Secondary Plan, the Town’s 2051 population forecast has since been updated and extended to 128,600. An update to the Town’s Healthy and Active Living Master Plan is anticipated to begin in 2026.

Key capital recommendations from the Health and Active Living Master Plan for recreation include:

- The development of the Health and Active Living Plaza, which is located in Queensville, is scheduled to open in 2025. This facility will include a variety of amenities such as an aquatic centre, gymnasium with a walking track, youth and seniors’ space, program spaces, arts and culture performance space, and more. There will also be a new library branch sharing the Health and Active Living Plaza indoor space. There may be potential for a contract fitness provider in this space through future phasing.
- In the mid-term (4-6 years), the Holland Landing Community Centre is expected to be expanded and enhanced. It will include a gymnasium, program and youth space, and expanded seniors space. The Holland Landing Library is also expected to be expanded to increase programming space.
- Also in the mid-term, the Sports Complex is planned to be expanded with a third ice pad and supporting amenities.
- Further, the Mount Albert Community Centre is planned to be expanded and enhanced by adding space for fitness, child and youth programming, and a dedicated youth space.
- In the longer term (7-10 years), other initiatives to consider include expanding the Ross Family Complex, developing a multi-use recreation complex within the Green Lane secondary plan area, and a future high school partnership.

Key capital recommendations for parks and outdoor recreation from the Health and Active Living Master Plan include:

- Notable short-term initiatives (1-3 years) include the redevelopment of Mount Albert Park and Queensville Park and the creation of additional off-leash dog zones. The Health and Active Living Plaza Park will also open, including a senior lit baseball diamond, senior lit artificial turf field and track, skateboard park, events space, and playground structures.
- Notable mid-term initiatives include adding two senior lit soccer fields to Mount Albert Lions Park and redeveloping the Sports Complex.
- In the long-term, the Town plans to explore needs in the Green Lane area, trails, and partnership opportunities with future high schools.

3.3 Key Considerations

Residents today are seeking multi-use, inclusive, and inter-generational spaces that allow for flexibility in programming and that can support the function of community centres as destinations. Planned growth within the study area, coupled with the ease of accessing the area via future public transit, could result in higher demand and longer wait lists and will strain the area's existing recreation facilities. Furthermore, families in smaller residential units will place additional pressure on public spaces to provide both informal gathering spaces and organized activities.

The planning of recreation facilities are generally guided by the 2018 Master Plan provision targets that identify how many facilities should be provided for a given number of residents. These targets are used to guide recommendations in the Secondary Plan analysis. Additionally, this section considers input from Town staff and typical provision targets in similar growing communities in Ontario.

Town Staff Input

A workshop with East Gwillimbury Town Staff identified the need for a future recreation facility (similar to the newly added HALP facility) near Green Lane and 2nd Concession to address growth-related needs in this area. Future updates to existing infrastructure such as ice pads were also identified.

Projection of Facility Requirements

The following tables calculate, at a high level, the number of new indoor and outdoor amenities required to support the Secondary Plan Area population.

Where applicable, these recommendations are based on the provision targets established in the 2018 Healthy and Active Living Master Plan, with additional analysis to reflect local options and contemporary standards. In some cases, the 2018 Master Plan did not provide facility targets or the targets have become outdated. It is anticipated that the Town will undertake an update to the 2018 Master Plan to address these limitations, however, for the purpose of this report, interim targets are utilized, where appropriate, to reflect service levels being utilized in similar communities in Ontario.

The recommendations provided in the following tables place a focus on the needs of the Secondary Plan Area, although it is understood that growth is also expected to occur outside of these areas. Demands for specific facilities may also change depending on the town-wide provision of facilities, emerging leisure interests, non-municipal providers, and demographic composition of new residents moving into the area. The recommended amenities will not all be required to be delivered at one time but rather should be phased to coincide with the development of the community and conveyance of parkland. The Town may use a variety of strategies beyond those identified herein to address the needs of the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area.

Table 6: Indoor Recreation Facilities Assessment

Indoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Major Community Centres	1	N / A	<p>2018 Master Plan - Recommended a new category of indoor facility referred to as “major community centre”, which contains a wide range of indoor recreation facilities under one roof (e.g., aquatics, gymnasium, library, ice pads, meeting/program rooms, walking track, etc.). A provision target of one major community centre per 50,000 residents was established.</p> <p>Comments - While the development of the HALP facility may address some of the very early development needs of Secondary Plan Area residents, this new facility will primarily serve the needs of existing and planned populations outside the Secondary Plan Area. Furthermore, while a new community centre has been identified for the Green Lane Secondary Plan Area (Schedule B-5 of the Town’s Official Plan), this facility is required to serve growth planned for the area around Green Lane and 2nd Concession, which is the location of the GO Station and higher density residential and mixed development. The size and scope of the community centre in the Green Lane/2nd Concession area has yet to be defined.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the established target (1:50,000), the Town will require one new major community centre to meet the future needs of the Secondary Plan Area. The preferred location should aim to provide an equitable geographic distribution given existing and planned facilities.</p>

Indoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Minor Community Centres	2	1 : 21,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – A provision target of one minor community centre per 10,000 residents was identified and appeared to be largely based upon the existing supply of two facilities, being Ross Family Complex and Holland Landing Community Centre. These facilities primarily provide programmable and rentable spaces such as halls and meeting/program rooms (but are not anchored by an aquatic centre or ice pads). The Town is not meeting the established target.</p> <p>Comments – Existing minor community centres will continue to play a role in addressing localized needs and strengthening the roles these facilities play in the delivery of parks, recreation and culture service delivery will be important. The 2018 Master Plan recommended an expansion and enhancement of the Holland Landing Community Centre in the mid-term to add more programmable space. Expansion and enhancement of this facility may provide some opportunity to serve the Secondary Plan Area given its proximity. A mid-term recommendation from the 2018 Master Plan to expand and enhance the Mount Albert Community Centre would elevate this facility to a minor community centre. Programmable space to serve the Secondary Plan Area may be augmented through a combination of existing and planned spaces, expansions, and enhancements identified in the 2018 Master Plan as well as potentially expansion of existing community halls in the vicinity of the Secondary Plan Area population.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – The 2018 Master Plan provision target is outdated and not applicable to the Secondary Plan Area. No new minor community centres are recommended within the Secondary Plan Area. As the Town continues to grow into a larger urban centre, the focus of future indoor recreation space has shifted toward major community centres while access to existing minor community centres will augment programmable space needs.</p>

Indoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Community Halls (unstaffed)	13 halls, meeting, program rooms	1 : 3,200	<p>2018 Master Plan – Recommended a provision target of one community hall per 2,000 residents. The Town is not currently meeting the established target.</p> <p>Comments – Historically, community halls in East Gwillimbury are comprised of facilities that offer a range of programmable spaces such as meeting rooms and halls serving smaller settlement areas and the rural community. These existing facilities will continue to play a role in serving the rural community and ensuring good distribution of facilities within the Town. Minor expansions and enhancements may be required to maintain these facilities in a state of good repair.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation - The 2018 Master Plan provision target is outdated and not applicable to the Secondary Plan Area. As the Town continues to grow into a larger urban centre, the provision of meeting/program rooms should be directed to new major community centres.</p>
Indoor Ice Pads	2 ice pads (at 1 arena)	1 : 21,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – Recommends a provision target of one ice pad per 10,000 residents. The Town has not kept pace with this target. The provision target is outdated, and a new target is recommended for the Secondary Plan Area.</p> <p>Comments - The 2018 Master Plan identified a longer-term expansion of the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex to provide one additional ice pad and plan for the further expansion of a fourth ice pad at this location.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation - The provision of ice pad facilities has been slowing in communities across the province as ice sport participation evolves. A provision target of one ice pad per 1:15,000 residents is recommended for the Secondary Plan Area, resulting in a need for three new ice pads to serve the Secondary Plan Area. Based on this modified target (1:50,000), land within the Secondary Plan Area will be needed to accommodate a 2-pad arena facility at minimum, recognizing the potential for expansion of the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex to accommodate a portion of ice needs of the Secondary Plan Area (while also serving the existing and future populations outside the SPA).</p>

Indoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Indoor Aquatic Centres	1	N / A	<p>2018 Master Plan – Recommended a provision target of one indoor aquatic centre per 40,000 residents. This target is appropriate for consideration within the Secondary Plan Area.</p> <p>Comments – Incorporating aquatic centres into modern recreation facilities is a common practice across the province. The HALP facility includes an aquatic centre that will serve the needs of existing and planned populations outside the Secondary Plan Area. As such, the Town will need to plan for another indoor aquatic centre to meet growth-related needs, to be provided as part of a future major community centre.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the established target, the Town will require one new indoor aquatic centre to meet the future needs of the Secondary Plan Area, which should ideally be located within the major community centre recommended above.</p>
Older Adult Centres	1	1 : 42,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – A provision target was established at one older adult centre per 10,000 residents. The Town has not kept pace with this target. The target is considered outdated to apply directly to the Secondary Plan Area.</p> <p>Comments – The Town currently has a seniors’ room at the Ross Family Complex and various minor community centres and community halls that are often used by this age group. The HALP facility provides additional programmable space to accommodate the needs of older adults while benefiting from other amenities such as the aquatic centre, gymnasium, walking track, etc. Communities across the province have provided spaces for seniors in a variety of manners from dedicated buildings to integrated spaces within modern multi-purpose, multi-generational community centres.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – As the Town continues to grow into a larger urban centre, embedding spaces into major community centres as either dedicated to, or priority programmed for, seniors should be provided. This may include a larger seniors’ centre (as part of a future community centre), which has been a need expressed by the Town. To address the needs of the Secondary Plan Area, space for seniors should be part of the recommended major community centre.</p>

Indoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Youth Centre	0	N / A	<p>2018 Master Plan – A target of one youth centre per 20,000 was identified. The Town currently has no dedicated youth spaces. The target is considered outdated to apply directly to the Secondary Plan Area.</p> <p>Comments - The HALP facility provides an opportunity to offer youth space/programs (although not dedicated space).</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation - Communities across the province have provided spaces for youth in a variety of ways, from dedicated buildings to integrated spaces within community centres. As the Town continues to grow into a larger urban centre, embedding spaces into community centres that are either dedicated to, or priority programmed for, youth should be provided. To address the needs of the Secondary Plan Area youth, space(s) to accommodate youth programming should be part of new major community centres.</p>
Gymnasiums	3 (one shared with school)	1 : 42,000	<p>2018 Master Plan - A provision target of one gymnasium per 25,000 residents was established. The Town will meet this target for the existing population between the gymnasium located at the Ross Family Complex and the gymnasium housed in the new HALP facility.</p> <p>Comments - The 2018 Master Plan recommended provision of a gymnasium as part of a Holland Landing Community Centre expansion and enhancement. While this gymnasium may meet some needs of Secondary Plan Area residents, it will also be serving both the needs of the existing population of East Gwillimbury as well as future growth outside the Secondary Plan Area.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – The Town should plan space for one to two gymnasiums to meet the needs of the Secondary Plan Area as part of the recommended major community centre (in the Green Line area).</p>

Notes: Minor Community Centres include Holland Landing Community Centre and Ross Family Complex.

Community Halls include Ross Family Complex (1), East Gwillimbury Sports Complex (2), Harvest Hills Activity Centre (1), Holland Landing CC (4), Mount Albert CC (1), Mount Albert Lions CC (1), North Union Community Centre (1), River Drive Park CC (1), and Sharon Temperance Hall (1).

* Based on a population estimate of 42,054 persons (2024).

Table 6: Outdoor Recreation Facilities Assessment

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Soccer Fields	15 Lit: 4 Unlit: 1	1 : 2,800	<p>2018 Master Plan - The Town's 2018 Master Plan provides a target of one soccer field per 80 participants.</p> <p>Comments – Current registration data has not been made available to enable updating of progress; however, at the time of the previous Master Plan, the Town was exceeding this target. A population-based target is required to enable application within the SPA. Industry benchmarking suggests that Ontario municipalities are typically offering one soccer field per 2,500 to 3,000 residents. The higher end of this range will be used in this analysis.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on this modified target (1:2,500), plan for the provision of up to 15 soccer fields in the Secondary Plan Area. Soccer fields may be considered in each of the CDP areas although there is a preference for multi-soccer field sites. The number of soccer fields required could potentially be reduced if they were irrigated, lighted, equipped with artificial turf, and/or if new school fields can be consistently permitted for community use. Larger Community Park sites are required as Neighbourhood Parks are not always appropriate for greater intensity of use, traffic, parking, etc. Multi-field parks are preferred to support league play, tournaments, efficiency of maintenance, etc.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Ball Diamonds	9 Lit: 7 Unlit: 2	1 : 4,700	<p>2018 Master Plan - The Town's 2018 Master Plan provides a target of one ball diamond per 100 participants. Additionally, there is a target of one hardball diamond per 40,000 residents.</p> <p>Comments - Current registration data has not been made available to enable updating of progress; however, at the time of the previous Master Plan, the Town was exceeding this target. Industry benchmarking suggests that Ontario municipalities are typically offering one ball diamond per 3,000 to 3,500 residents. The higher end of this range will be used in this analysis.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on this modified target (1:3,500), plan for the provision of up to 13 ball diamonds plus one hardball diamond to meet the needs of the Secondary Plan Area. Ball diamonds may be considered in each of the CDP areas although there is a preference for multi-diamond sites. The number of ball diamonds required could potentially be reduced if they were lighted. However, larger Community Park sites would be required as Neighbourhood Parks are not always appropriate for greater intensity of use, traffic, parking, etc. Multi-diamond parks are preferred to support league play, tournaments, efficiency of maintenance, etc.</p>
Cricket Pitches	0	0	<p>2018 Master Plan – There is no cricket provision target, and the Town does not presently provide any cricket fields.</p> <p>Comments - Cricket has been experiencing increasing demand in many communities, largely driven by residents with cultural backgrounds of countries where this sport is very popular.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – As the Secondary Plan Area is likely to attract a diverse population (as per broader trends in Ontario's population), a provision level in the range of one cricket field per 50,000 persons would be reasonable for East Gwillimbury. This would result in the need for one cricket field to meet the needs of the Secondary Plan Area with its location being influenced by park fit and suitability.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Football Fields	<p>7</p> <p>Lit: 0 Unlit: 7</p> <p><i>All fields are mini fields at Brenner Park currently being used for flag football</i></p>	1 : 6,100	<p>2018 Master Plan - There is no football field target, although the Town does provide 7 mini fields at Brenner Park.</p> <p>Comments - The 7 mini fields at Brenner Park are used by a local flag football league. It is not known currently whether the fields are sufficient to meet their needs or if there are other football organizations seeking field access. Future need may also be partially accommodated on the proposed soccer fields, especially if any are artificial turf.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – No dedicated football fields are recommended, rather the Town is encouraged to work with the school boards to gain access to football fields at secondary school sites, as required.</p>
Tennis Courts	<p>12</p> <p>Lit: 8 Unlit: 4</p>	1 : 3,500	<p>2018 Master Plan - A target of one tennis court per 2,500 residents was established. The Town is currently below this target. Note: industry benchmarks would suggest that the average level of provision in Ontario is closer to one court per 5,000 persons.</p> <p>Comments – The Town has dual-lined some of their existing tennis courts to also accommodate pickleball although this is generally considered an interim measure until sufficient pickleball courts can be provided in a community.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the Town’s established target (1:2,500), up to 18 tennis courts will be required to meet the needs of the Secondary Plan Area. Tennis courts may be considered in each of the CDP areas. Generally, 2 to 4 courts should be provided per site with consideration of club use in keeping with Town policy. Although up to 18 tennis courts are identified as needed to serve the Secondary Plan Area, lighting of courts, where appropriate, could potentially reduce this number.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Pickleball Courts	4 Lit: 4 Unlit: 0	1 : 11,500	<p>2018 Master Plan - The Town has not established a provision target for pickleball courts.</p> <p>Comments – The Town’s existing pickleball courts along with the planned courts will help to address current pressures and allow for selected dual-lined tennis courts to revert to tennis court use only. The ultimate target for pickleball courts should be determined through an update to the 2018 Master Plan.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation - A target of one pickleball court per 5,000 residents is recommended, in-line with best practices in other communities. This would result in the need for 9 new pickleball courts within the Secondary Plan Area. Pickleball courts may be considered in multiple CDP areas. Generally, 2 to 4 courts should be provided per site with consideration of future club use.</p>
Basketball Courts	19 Half-court: 15 Full court: 2 Junior play court: 2	1 : 2,200	<p>2018 Master Plan - The Town’s target for the provision of basketball courts is one court per 500 youth (ages 10 to 19). Based on the 2021 Census, this would roughly translate into one court per 4,000 persons. With the provision of 19 courts, the Town is exceeding the target.</p> <p>Comments - Given the geographic area of the Town and its historic growth pattern, the current supply of basketball courts (although high) is not unexpected. An update to the 2018 Master Plan should review the distribution of existing courts and general condition to determine an appropriate level of service across the town.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the Town’s established target (1:4,000), there will be a need for approximately 12 basketball courts within the Secondary Plan Area. These needs are likely to be met through a variety of different design types (half court, full court, multi-use court).</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Playgrounds	36	1 : 1,200 residents	<p>2018 Master Plan – A target of one playground within 800-metres of residential areas or alternatively one playground per 1,000 residents was established.</p> <p>Comments – With higher density residential development, the provision of nearby playgrounds is critical to new residential developments to meet playground needs of children. Industry standards generally range from playgrounds within 400- to 800-metres of residential areas, unobstructed by major barriers.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – There are no existing playgrounds within proximity to the Secondary Plan Area that could serve its future residents. At a 500 to 800-metre radius, it is estimated that approximately 20 playgrounds would be needed to serve the Secondary Plan Area. As such, approximately 20 playgrounds are recommended within the Secondary Plan Area across all six CDPs.</p>
Outdoor Fitness Locations	6	1 : 7,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – The Town does not have a provision target for outdoor fitness stations but does presently provide stations at six different locations within its park system.</p> <p>Comments - Communities across the province have been adopting the provision of outdoor fitness stations at varying rates. East Gwillimbury is at the leading edge with the current provision of six outdoor fitness stations, resulting in a provision level of one per 7,000 residents.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – With six Community Design Plans (CDP) within the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area, it is recommended that a total of one outdoor fitness location be provided within each CDP for a total of six (maintaining the current level of provision) within the Secondary Plan Area.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Splash Pads	5	1 : 8,400	<p>2018 Master Plan - A target of one splash pad 5,000 children ages 0 to 14 was established. The Town is exceeding this target with the current provision of 5 splash pads, resulting one splash pad per an estimated 1,600 children (or one per 8,400 total residents). A splash pad is also planned for the outdoor park associated with the HALP facility.</p> <p>Comments – Splash pads have become a common park feature in communities across the province, typically located within larger parks or at a neighbourhood scale serving primarily the under 10 age group. The Town’s 2018 Master Plan target largely preceded the level of service more commonly seen today and is no longer applicable. A distribution-based target is preferred, whereby each community has convenient access to splash pads.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation - With six Community Design Plans within the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area, it is recommended that one splash pad per CDP (for a total of six locations, or one per 7,500 residents) be provided within the Secondary Plan Area.</p>
Skateboard Parks	2	1 : 21,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – A target of one skateboard park per 5,000 youth ages 10 to 19 was established. With an estimated 2,500 youth per skateboard park, the Town is currently exceeding this target and is adding another skateboard park to the HALP facility park area, which will resulting in a provision rate of one facility per 14,000 residents.</p> <p>Comments – Provision of skateboard parks should ensure reasonable access to youth, recognizing many do not have access to a vehicle. The facilities are best located in high-visibility areas.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Provision of 3 skateboard parks within the Secondary Plan Area is recommended to support proper distribution. This would generally maintain the provision rate of one skateboard park per 14,000 residents that the Town will be achieving in 2025. Priority for skateboard park provision should include the Green Earth Village CDP, Sharon Heights CDP, and Yonge Corridor CDP.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Off-Leash Dog Zones	0 There is one non-municipal dog park at York Regional Forest: Bendor and Graves Tract	N / A	<p>2018 Master Plan – A target of one off-leash dog zone per 20,000 residents was established. The Town is not meeting this target as there are no Town-owned off-leash dog parks. However, there is one non-municipal off-leash dog park located in East Gwillimbury provided at the York Region Forest.</p> <p>Comments - Off-leash dog parks are designated areas where dogs are allowed to run, play, and interact without the constraints of a leash, promoting their physical activity, mental stimulation, and social skills. These spaces help enhance dogs' overall wellbeing and can contribute to better behavior. Off-leash parks also offer owners a chance to connect with fellow pet owners, helping to reduce feelings of social isolation.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the established target of one off-leash dog zone per 20,000 residents, there will be a need for a minimum of 2 off-leash dog parks within the Secondary Plan Area. The provision of amenity space by developers within Secondary Plan Areas should also be encouraged to serve localized needs.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
Outdoor Rinks	2	1 : 21,000	<p>2018 Master Plan – There is no target for outdoor skating rinks although the Town does provide two locations (natural rinks, weather dependent) at Ridge View Park (Holland Landing) and the Mount Albert Community Centre, providing an existing level of service of one natural outdoor skating rink per 21,000 residents.</p> <p>Comments – Provision strategies for outdoor skating rinks vary by municipality and are influenced by weather conditions and often by having enough volunteers for maintenance. These facilities enhance winter-time recreation opportunities. The changing climate is causing some communities to reconsider their approach to provision. Outdoor refrigerated rinks are one way to extend the season, but their high-cost limits widespread provision. The 2018 Master Plan envisioned an artificial skating area within the Heath and Active Living Plaza, which is not included in the current phase of construction.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the existing level of provision, allowances for two outdoor skating rinks (natural, non-refrigerated) should be made in the Secondary Plan Area, one in the Green Earth Village CDP and the other in the Sharon Heights CDP or the Walnut Farms CDP. These rinks may be accommodated through winter use of other assets, such as sport courts, ball diamonds, infields, or open space.</p>

Outdoor Recreation Facility	Existing Facilities	Provision Rate (2024/2025)*	Recommendations/Comments
BMX Parks / Trails Mountain Bike Parks	2 1	1 : 21,000 residents 1 : 42,000 residents	<p>2018 Master Plan – The Town’s target for the provision of BMX Parks/Trails is one facility per 5,000 youth. With the provision of 2 locations, Vivian Creek Park west of Highway 404 and Manor Hampton Park east of Highway 404, the Town is exceeding the target at an estimated 2,500 youth per facility (or one BMX Park/Trail per 21,000 residents). The Town’s target for the provision of Mountain Bike Parks is also one facility per 5,000 youth and, with the provision of one location at Anchor Park, the Town is generally meeting its target.</p> <p>Comments – The need for an additional Mountain Bike Park should be determined through an update to the Town’s 2018 Master Plan. It is noted that the Town is developing a park at the HALP facility which will provide a Pump Track. While this facility serves a different function biking experience from a BMX Parks/Trails and a Mountain Bike Parks, the combination of the three bike park types provides for a well-rounded range of opportunities within the Town.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – Based on the Town’s established targets, a total of one BMX park/trail and one mountain bike park should be provided in the SPA, possibly in the Yonge Corridor CDP and either the Holland Landing East CDP or the Green Earth Village CDP. The existing Vivian Creek Park location should serve the Sharon Heights CDP and Walnut Farms CDP.</p>
Disc Golf Courses	1	1 : 46, 000	<p>2018 Master Plan – The Town does not have a target for disc golf courses but does offer the activity at Sharon Hills Park (9 holes).</p> <p>Comments - Disc golf courses are typically provided on an ‘opportunity-basis’ to meet identified needs. An update to the Town’s 2018 Master Plan should assess the demand for an additional disc golf course to serve the Town’s current and projected population.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – No disc golf courses are specifically recommended for the Secondary Plan Area, but may be accommodated within appropriate open space lands, subject to further study.</p>

* Based on a population estimate of 42,054 persons.

Several recreational components have been identified to support the Secondary Plan Area population, including a Twin Pad Arena and a Major Community Centre with an aquatic centre, space to accommodate older adult and youth programming (e.g., seniors' centre), gymnasium, and meeting/program rooms. The land requirements to support these facilities are estimated to be approximately 6 hectares. The following assumptions are applicable to this estimate:

- The estimates include building square footage and land to accommodate these facilities, including associated amenities such as parking, service access, landscaping, etc.
- Two separate sites are assumed. The major community centre is anticipated to be in the same size range as the Health and Active Living Plaza. The future arena is based on similar sizing for contemporary builds in Ontario.
- Facility types that are not currently part of the Town of East Gwillimbury's level of provision (e.g., indoor sports courts, indoor turf facilities, etc.) are not assessed herein. Additional land may be required should these facilities be included in future strategies.

Table 7: Indoor Recreation Facilities – Estimate of Square Footage and Land Needs

Recommended Indoor Recreation Facilities	Estimated Space per Facility Component (square feet)	Estimated Land Required (hectares)
Major Community Centre (includes Aquatic Centre, Gymnasium, Activity Rooms, Seniors' Centre, Branch Library, etc.)	85,000	3.0
Twin Pad Arena	70,000	3.0
Total	155,000	6.0
Square Feet Per Capita (based on 46,000 people)	3.4 ft² (0.31 m²) per capita	N/A

Note: All figures are preliminary and should be reassessed through Master Plan updates and/or more detailed design tasks.

The total land requirement to support the recommended outdoor park amenities amounts to an estimated **88.6 hectares**. The following assumptions are applicable to this estimate:

- This figure is based on standard amenity sizing and includes land for buffering associated with facilities.
- Not identified herein – but presumed to form part of future park construction – are amenities such as benches, gathering areas, shade, washrooms, etc.
- A gross-up of representing 10% of parkland needs has been added to recognize the need for non-programmed parkland (e.g., picnic areas, seating, walking paths, etc.).
- Open space lands and lands associated with the natural heritage system are excluded from these estimates, but may have potential for passive recreational use (e.g., trails, etc.).
- Land requirements could be increased or decreased depending on the site context and park design. For example:
 - Opportunities to enhance capacity of future sports field through the use of lighting, artificial turf, and/or permitting of school fields may allow for the projection of field needs to be modestly reduced.
 - Additional land may be required should supplementary recreation uses or support spaces such as off-street parking be required.

Table 8: Outdoor Recreation Facilities - Estimate of Square Footage and Land Needs

Primary Recommended Park Amenities	Number of Amenities Recommended	Space Required per Amenity (hectares)	Estimated Total Land Requirement, including buffer (hectares)
Soccer Fields	15	1.50	22.5
Ball Diamonds	13 + 1 hardball diamond	2.15	30.1
Cricket Pitches	1	5.00	5.0
Tennis Courts	18	0.20	3.6
Pickleball Courts	9	0.15	1.35
Basketball Courts	12	6 full courts: 0.40 6 half courts: 0.20	3.6
Playgrounds	20	0.25	5.0
Outdoor Fitness	6	0.25	1.5
Splash Pads	6	0.35	2.1
Skateboard Parks	3	0.25	0.75
Off-Leash Dog Parks	2	1.50	3.0
Outdoor Rinks	2	Included with other amenities	
BMX and Mountain Bike Parks	2	1.0	2.0
Sub Total			80.5 hectares
Non-Programmed Parkland	10%		8.1 hectares
TOTAL PARKLAND NEEDS			88.6 hectares

Note: All figures are preliminary and should be reassessed through Master Plan updates and/or more detailed design tasks.

3.4 Recommendations for Recreation Facilities

The recommendations for recreation facilities to meet the needs of the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area include the following:

1. **New Indoor Recreation Spaces:** New recreation facilities will be needed to support the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area and to allow the Town to maintain its service levels. New and planned space (such as the Health and Active Living Plaza and a planned community centre near Green Lane/2nd Concession) are designed to serve growth outside of the Secondary Plan Area. A community centre like the HALP facility (aquatic centre, gymnasium, meeting/program rooms, library branch, etc.) and a twin pad area are recommended to address needs within the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area and its design population of 46,000 persons. Preliminary estimates identify space needs of 155,000 ft² (14,400 m²), which would provide a GFA of 3.4 ft² per capita (0.31 m² per capita).

The preferred locations should aim to provide an equitable geographic distribution given existing and planned facilities.

2. **New Outdoor Recreation Amenities:** Co-locating outdoor and indoor recreation facilities can allow for efficiencies and provide opportunities to address parkland recommendations by offering amenities such as playgrounds, splash pads, sport courts, sports fields, or off-leash areas within appropriate park types. Larger Community Parks are preferred for amenities such as sport fields and facilities serving broader audiences (e.g., pickleball complexes, off-leash dog areas, etc.), while Neighbourhood Parks will allow for convenient access to localized amenities (e.g., playgrounds, basketball courts, etc.).
3. **Enhanced and Expanded Programming:** Current and future recreation programming should reflect the socio-demographic makeup and needs of the community while keeping pace with growth-related demand. Supporting community access to non-municipal spaces (e.g., school gymnasiums, sport fields, etc.) should be encouraged to allow for expanded programming opportunities for future residents.
4. **Funding for Recreation Facilities:** Updates to the Town's Development Charges By-law and the establishment of a Community Benefits By-law will further clarify funding strategies and assist the Town in raising the necessary capital to support the recommendations regarding recreation facilities.

4. Libraries

4.1 Existing Conditions

Examining the current inventory of library facilities allows for a better understanding of the services that are available to East Gwillimbury residents. There are currently two public library branches located within the town, one in Holland Landing and the other in Mount Albert. As an extension of the Town’s library services, there are “library lockers” located at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex that allow residents to place holds, borrow books, or return items. The map below depicts the existing library system locations.

Figure 7: Libraries in East Gwillimbury (2025)

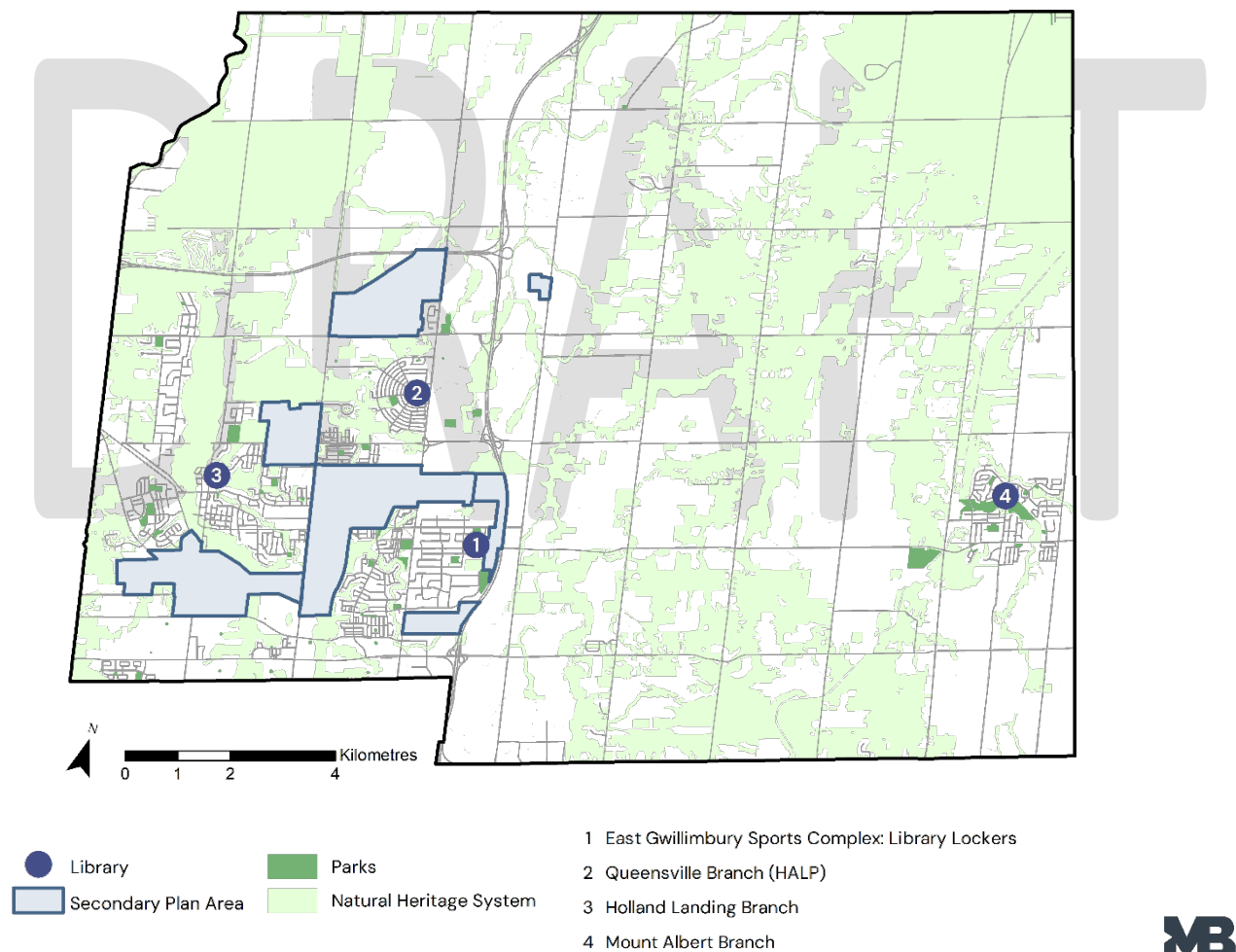


Table 9: Inventory of Existing Libraries Serving East Gwillimbury Residents

Library	Address	Square Footage (ft ²)	Characteristics
Holland Landing Branch	19513 Yonge Street	7,500 ft ²	Attached to community centre
Mount Albert Branch	19300 Centre Street	6,000 ft ²	Part of Ross Family Complex Park
Queensville Branch	160 Jim Mortson Drive	15,000 ft ²	Health and Active Living Plaza
East Gwillimbury Sports Complex: Library Lockers	1914B Mount Albert Road	N/A	Part of East Gwillimbury Sports Complex
Total – 2 Branches	--	28,500 ft²	0.67 ft² per capita

Notes:

* Based on a population estimate of 42,054 persons.

The Queensville Branch (which opened in late 2025 as part of the Health and Active Living Plaza) features the Town's newest library branch (approximately 15,000 ft²). In addition to tradition library services, this location includes a Makerspace, a sound recording studio and editing room, bookable boardrooms and meeting spaces, and a reading garden.

4.2 Policy Context



Libraries are one of many facilities and services that the **Provincial Planning Statement** (2024) acknowledges as a key element in promoting healthy, active, and inclusive communities. Investments for public service facilities should be given priority to help support strategic growth and areas of intensification, while considering co-location and partnerships.

The **Town's 2010 Official Plan** supports the provision of library facilities within close proximity to residential neighbourhoods (section 1.4), within the early stages of growth, and through co-location where possible (section 2.3).

The Town's recently adopted but not yet approved Official Plan (2022) identifies libraries as an institutional land use which works to meet the needs of the community and work force. These spaces should be located within close proximity to residential areas where the community is able to easily access libraries to meet their daily needs.

The **Healthy & Active Living Master Plan** (2018) outlines parks, recreational, and cultural opportunities for the next 10 years in East Gwillimbury. Several major capital projects are aligned with the library's development program as the co-location of spaces is encouraged, such as with the Queensville Branch and Health and Active Living Plaza. In the mid-term (4-6 years), the Holland Landing Library is also expected to be expanded to increase programming space as part of a larger community centre revitalization project.

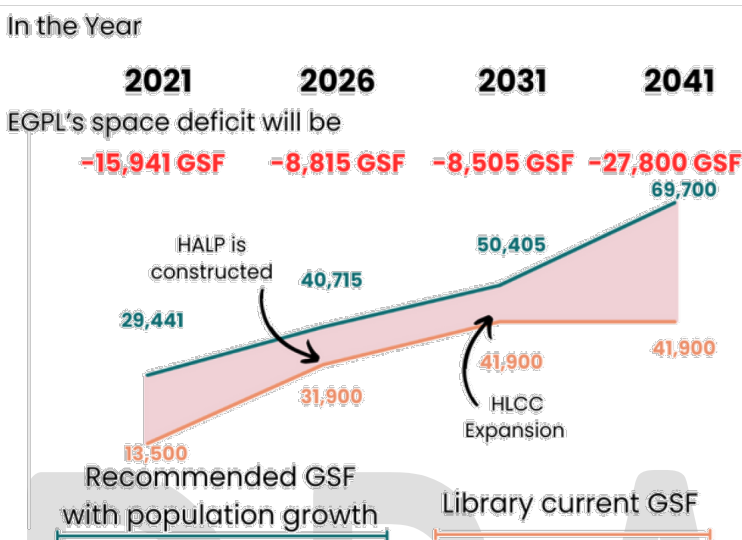
The **East Gwillimbury Public Library Strategic Plan** (2023-2036) outlines the core values which provide a foundation for their services. These core values include literacy, sustainability, inclusion, connection, and curiosity. The priorities of this Strategic Plan include building healthy communities, expanding access, and providing exceptional experiences. Specific goals to respond to these priorities include the opening of the new branch in the Health and Active Living Plaza (2025), expanding access to technology and digital literacy, and enhancing existing library spaces.

The **East Gwillimbury Library Services Growth Plan** (2024) provides recommendations for library services to 2032 in response to a growing and diversifying community. A standard of 0.85 gross square feet of library space per capita was recommended to meet the library space needs of East Gwillimbury residents. The growth plan describes the new Health and Active Living Plaza Branch (2025), which was recommended to provide 18,400 square feet of library space, including study rooms, a recording studio, a children's area, maker and program space. An expansion to the existing 7,500 square foot Holland Landing Branch is planned by 2032, resulting in a total of 17,500 square feet of library space at this location. An additional library branch of 10,000 square feet has been recommended for the 2032+ timeline to be located along the Green Lane corridor (potentially as part of a future community centre in the Green Lane/2nd Concession area). These renovations and additions to the library inventory are aligned with the Town's expected growth and evolving community.

The following figure compares the recommended gross square feet (GSF) in blue with the current GSF in orange. The graph shows an overall space deficit when accounting for the projected growth of the Town in the years 2021, 2026, 2031, and 2041. The construction of the Queensville/HALP library branch in 2025 reduces the space deficit 15,941 GSF to 8,815 GSF, even when accounting for population growth. A planned library expansion to the existing Holland Landing Library Branch will further reduce the space deficit, however, there remains an overall lack of space within the Town's library system. Without a more aggressive building program, the growth now planned for the Complete Communities Secondary Plan areas will further add to this deficit.

Figure 8: Library Space Deficit in East Gwillimbury

Source: East Gwillimbury Library Services Growth Plan (2024)



4.3 Key Considerations

Public libraries provide lifelong learning opportunities, and their extensive benefits are well documented. Even in today's digital age, libraries are proving their worth and strengthening their value proposition through offering new opportunities for learning, discovery, and connecting people and ideas. Several societal and technological changes are also impacting how the library serves residents. Where lending and early literacy were once the library's primary roles, these roles are now broadening to include aspects related to lifelong learning, community collaboration, innovation, curation, and more.

As a general trend, library usage is growing, and needs are diversifying. Library services in highest demand at present include those that are literacy-focused (core literacies, early childhood literacy/school readiness, ESL), family activities, study space, educational support for JK to Secondary, teen services, seniors services, business /employment services, digital literacy and programs, makerspaces, STEAM programs, civic engagement, social gathering spaces, and access to meeting rooms.

There are several factors at play when planning for the long-term growth of a library system. Although trends suggest a decline in the size of the physical collection size over time, the demand for flexible and community space is on the rise. Libraries serve as valuable "third places" that support a diverse urban population, including residents of high-rise buildings, students, local workers, new immigrants, vulnerable populations, and more. Families in smaller units put more pressure on public spaces, as does the emerging remote worker population. On balance, trends relating to the modern role and function of public libraries suggest larger (not smaller) libraries.

Libraries and library plans are informed by the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) guidelines for library systems, which recommend a space standard of 1.0 square feet per capita (Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems, 2023, 4th edition).

Space Allocations

The assessment of local needs may be assisted by documents such as the East Gwillimbury Public Library (EGPL) Master Plan (2014). EGPL had initially set a target of offering 0.75 square feet of library space per resident with the goal of dispersing libraries, so that they are convenient to all residential communities. This target was subsequently amended by the Library Services Growth Plan (2024) and increased to 0.85 square foot per capita and remains below the standard identified in the ARUPLO guidelines. As this is the Board-approved guideline, this target (0.85 sf/capita) will be applied to identify needs in the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area.

In planning for new public libraries, it will be important to consider other community infrastructure requirements and partnership opportunities that offer “one stop shopping” convenience, economies of scale, and opportunities to collaborate on service delivery. The most likely candidates are public sector agencies, such as the Town’s Recreation Services Department and School Boards, although options to work with other non-traditional partners may also be considered. Other co-location options might include other civic uses (e.g., fire halls), day care providers, residential providers (e.g., seniors/affordable housing, multi-storey residential, etc.), non-profit sector (e.g., YMCAs, etc.), health care, and more. As the planning for the area continues to take shape, these and other examples may be considered further.

Ultimately, facility provision is the responsibility of the municipality – with direction provided by the Library Board – and will be dependent on financial resources and partnership opportunities. EGPL should seek to further refine their provision target through more detailed analysis at the appropriate point in time, following approval of the Secondary Plan.

Projection of Facility Requirements

The library space target of 0.85 square feet per capita as referenced in the East Gwillimbury Library Services Growth Plan (2024) has been applied to the Secondary Plan to determine the library space needed to serve the Complete Communities Area. The result is a total of 39,100 square feet of library branch space based on a Secondary Plan area population of 46,000 persons.

Table 10: Projected Library Space Needs for the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Areas

Library Space Target	Existing Library Space (2025)	Study Area Requirements (46,000 pop.)	Recommendations / Comments
0.85 ft ² per capita	28,500 ft ²	+ 39,100 ft ²	<p>2024 Growth Plan Target – The target for library space in East Gwillimbury is identified as 0.85 square feet per capita.</p> <p>Comments – The addition of the branch library in Queensville has resulted in a library provision level of approximately 0.67 square feet per capita (still below the current target). There are plans to add 10,000 square feet to the existing Holland Landing Branch around 2032 and a longer-term development of a 10,000 square foot branch in the Green Lane area, which have been planned to serve growth outside of the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area. Beyond this, the East Gwillimbury Public Library may wish to reassess the number, size(s), and locations of future and/or expanded branch libraries through future Master Planning exercises.</p> <p>Secondary Plan Recommendation – There is a need for 39,100 square feet of branch library space to serve the Secondary Plan Area.</p>

The following table has been prepared to identify branch library space needs by CDP Area. Potential strategies for meeting needs have been identified, considering facility planning contained in the East Gwillimbury Library Services Growth Plan (2024). However, it is recognized that the Library Board will need to review its current library space provision strategy to determine the location(s), size(s), and timing of branch development and expansions considering the Secondary Plan Area populations.

As noted above, a total need for 39,100 square feet of library space will be required in the Secondary Plan Area based on the East Gwillimbury Public Library target of 0.85 square feet per capita. Looking ahead, the East Gwillimbury Public Library, through its Library Services Growth Plan, has plans to expand the Holland Landing Branch from 7,500 square feet to 17,500 square feet (adding 10,000 square feet) and a longer-term plan to build a new branch of 10,000 square feet near Green Lane/2nd Concession. These expanded and new spaces are planned to address growth outside of the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area. It is recommended that new branch libraries be considered within the Yonge Corridor CDP, Sharon Heights CDP, and Green Earth Village CDP to promote improved access for the Town's growth areas. Where possible, these facilities should ideally be provided as part of community and recreation centres or other civic uses.

To deliver on the stated needs of 39,100 square feet, two to three new library locations will be required. The decision between fewer, larger facilities versus more, smaller neighbourhood branches should be guided by EGPL’s service philosophy, operational considerations, accessibility goals, and community context.

- **A “centralized” approach means creating larger but fewer libraries that can serve as community destinations.** Most library systems are experiencing pressure for additional space to account for emerging technologies, increased use as a “third space” (including for work and study), and shared services (business, culture, social, etc.) that embed the library as a true community hub. This would support the provision of larger facilities, generally up to 20,000 square feet – beyond this size, two storey designs are often considered, which can increase both capital and operating costs.
- **A “decentralized” approach means creating smaller and more libraries that improve accessibility and proximity at the neighbourhood level.** EGPL’s service delivery model has emphasized accessibility and the creation of additional services points as the community grows, including alternative delivery models. And with rising land and construction costs, smaller library facilities can sometimes be more quickly implemented, allowing EGPL to maximize growth-related funding and to grow in step with the population.

Two scenarios are offered below for future library facility development in the Complete Communities Secondary Plan. These models may be considered further through the Community Design Plans.

Table 11: Library Facility Planning Scenarios, by Community Design Plan Area

Community Design Plan Area	Population Target	Library Space Needs Generated (sq. ft)*	Library Branch Development Strategy	
			Centralized Model (2 branches)	Decentralized Model (3 branches)
Holland Landing East	3,500	2,975	None	None
Green Earth Village	11,000	9,350	New branch (approx. 19,000 sq. ft.)	New branch (approx. 9,000 sq. ft.)
Sharon East	1,500	1,275	None	None
Sharon Heights	19,000	16,150	New branch (approx. 20,000 sq. ft.)	New branch (approx. 15,000 sq. ft.)
Walnut Farms	2,500	2,125	None	None
Yonge Corridor	8,500	7,225	None	New branch (approx. 15,000 sq. ft.)
Total	46,000 persons	39,100 square feet	39,000 square feet	39,000 square feet

* Based on EGPL target of 0.85 sq ft./capita.

For the purposes of this study, the “decentralized” approach has been selected due to its enhanced flexibility and improved accessibility to the population served. Estimated land

requirements for the three new branches (decentralized model) within the Secondary Plan Area are presented below. It is noted that the branch library for the Green Lane Corridor has been accounted for as part of the Major Community Centre identified in Section 3 Recreation (Table 7).

Table 12: Proposed Branch Libraries – Estimate of Square Footage and Land Needs

Recommended Library Branch Space	Estimated Space Needs (square feet)	Estimated Land Required (hectares)
Sharon Heights CDP	15,000	Counted as part of the Major Community Centre – location to be determined
Yonge Corridor CDP	15,000	0.75
Green Earth Village CDP	9,000	0.5
Total	39,000	1.25
Square Feet Per Capita (based on 46,000 people)	0.85 ft² (0.08 m²) per capita	N/A

Note: All figures are preliminary and should be reassessed through Master Plan updates and/or more detailed design tasks.

Innovations in Library Servicing

Lastly, it is recognized that new approaches to library provision may be necessary in higher density areas, one that places a greater focus on partnerships, co-locations, and community hubs. Additionally, alternative delivery models – such as unstaffed express library kiosks at transit stations or recreation centres, mobile libraries, all-digital/paperless libraries, and more – are increasingly being implemented in growing communities. Aimed at increasing convenience to library users, most models incorporate a mixture of newer concepts and older versions of strategies that have worked in the past. These and other options – like the library lockers at the East Gwillimbury Sports Complex – may be considered as part of an interim library service and space strategy in advance of establishing permanent library branches in the Complete Communities Area.

4.4 Recommendations for Libraries

The following library recommendations will address the future needs of the Complete Communities Secondary Plan Area.

1. **Expanding the Library Inventory:** Available library facilities (including the Queensville Library Branch and other planned spaces) are designed to address the needs of existing populations – new library facilities will be needed to support the Complete Communities Secondary Plan area and to allow the Library Board to achieve the growth-related targets it has set for these spaces. To meet these needs, new library branches should be provided to fulfill space and land requirements described in Tables 11 and 12. Based on a “decentralized” facility distribution approach, this includes three proposed library branches totalling 39,000 square feet or 1,200 square metres (0.85 ft² or 0.08 m² per capita):
 - a. One branch is proposed to be in the Sharon Heights CDP (being at least 15,000 ft²). This facility may be co-located with a major community centre if one is developed in this area.
 - b. One branch is proposed to be in the Yonge Corridor CDP (being at least 15,000 ft²). This facility may be co-located with another civic use if one is developed in this area.
 - c. One branch is proposed to be in the Green Earth CDP (being at least 9,000 ft²), potentially located with the arena/recreation centre proposed for this area.
2. **Alternative Library Services:** As interim strategies and alternative delivery options, the East Gwillimbury Public Library may consider additional service points to extend convenient library services to residents in the form of library lockers, self-serve kiosks, temporary satellite locations, etc.
3. **Funding for Libraries:** To assist the Town in raising the necessary capital to address the Library recommendations in this report, updates to the Development Charges By-law and the establishment of a Community Benefits By-law will further clarify funding strategies.