



TOWNSHIP OF GUELPH/ERAMOSIA
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN MAY 2013



Township of Guelph/Eramosa

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

May 2013

Prepared by:



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Acknowledgements

This document is a product of the vision and dedication of the Master Plan Working Group, Township Council, and Staff. We also extend our thanks to the many residents and community groups in Guelph/Eramosa who provided valuable insights and opinions and whose feedback has made the Plan a document that is reflective of the needs of the community.

Township Council Members

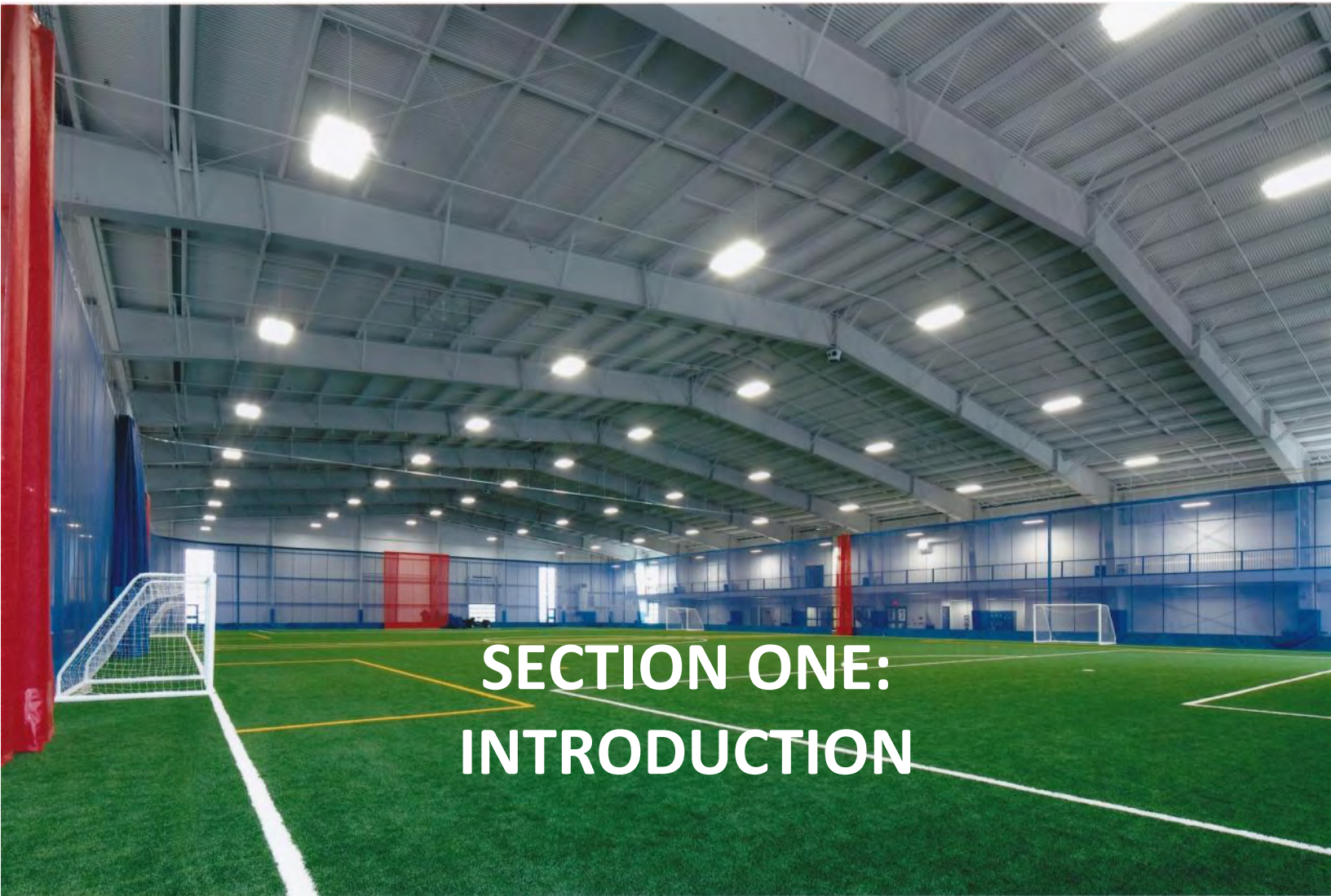
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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is located in the County of Wellington, and was formed in 1999 through the amalgamation of the former Guelph and Eramosa Townships and part of Pilkington and Nichol Townships. Guelph/Eramosa has a population of 12,380 (2011 Census) and is bounded by the City of Guelph, Townships of Centre Wellington and Puslinch, and the Towns of Erin, Halton Hills, and Milton.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides the Township of Guelph/Eramosa with a creative, realistic and clear action plan to lead the development of future recreational infrastructure and services through 2022.

The Terms of Reference for this Study identified several objectives for the master planning process, including:

- Creating a 'vision' for the delivery of parks and recreation that is aligned with the diversity of the Township's community;
- Undertaking a comprehensive and innovative community engagement process (including consultation with the general public, key stakeholders, including community organizations, user groups, staff and Council) to identify and assess needs and trends;

- Establishing 10 year capital priorities for the construction of indoor/outdoor recreation facilities and the development of associated programs and services;
- Infusing the principles of sustainability, accessibility, and integration into the development and delivery of services and programs;
- Assessing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the municipality's parks and recreation system;
- Enhancing community cooperation and partnerships in the planning and delivery of services and programs;
- Reviewing current seniors services within the Township, including demographics, structure, facilities, and programs, including recommendations for alternative service delivery models;
- Promoting healthy living and increased physical activity among all age groups and segments of the community;
- Creating a sense of attachment to and engagement within a larger unique and healthy community, including enhanced community branding and marketing;
- Encouraging volunteer opportunities and participation;
- Enhancing the overall community quality of life and place; and
- Encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation.

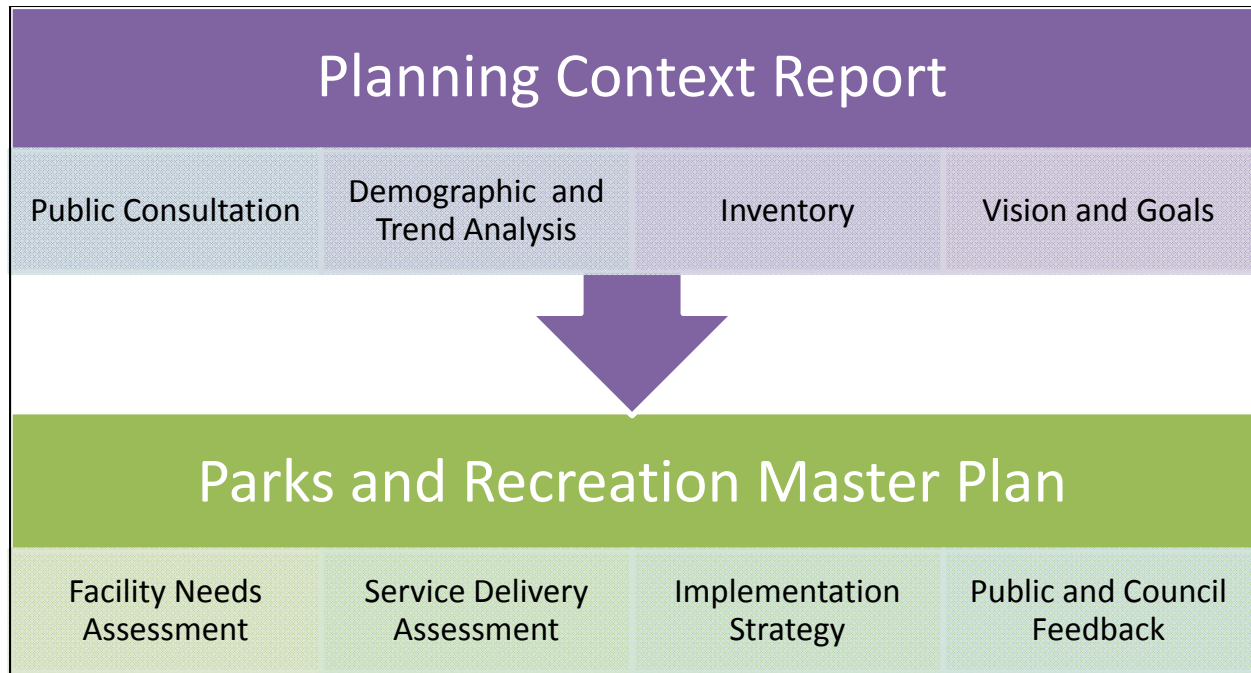
A Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan was prepared by the Township in 2001 but was never adopted by Council. Nevertheless, many key recommendations from this previous report have been implemented and the time has come to create a new vision, direction, and actions for the parks and recreation sector in Guelph/Eramosa.

1.2 Planning Process

The master planning process for this project included two deliverables, conducted in separate phases (the Planning Context Report, and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan). Coordination and assistance was provided by the Township's Working Group (consisting of Township Council and key staff) at key points throughout the planning process.

Phase 1 involved the preparation of a Planning Context Report, which provided the basis for the Master Plan. This report contained research of relevant trends, inventories of the Township's parks and recreation assets, and the results of the community consultation program. The primary sections of the Planning Context Report have been integrated into this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Phase 2 included a number of assessments that led to the recommendations contained within this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The following schematic illustrates the interrelation of the various components of the master planning process.



In identifying the current and future needs relating to recreation facilities, parks, and open space, the assessment examines both provision (i.e., the total number of each facility type as determined by applying population-based ‘targets’) and geographic distribution (where the facilities/parks are physically located, in relation to the population). This analysis includes facilities in adjacent municipalities, as parts of the Township are well served by accessible parks and facilities in the City of Guelph, Town of Halton Hills, and Township of Centre Wellington, to name a few.

Provision targets represent a recommended measure toward which a community should strive in order to meet the demand for parks and recreation facilities. They help to identify current and future facility and park requirements in terms of total demand, but do not provide direction on geographic gap areas. The targets are created based on a combination of accepted industry standards, market-driven factors (such as demand/participation, trends, and demographics), and the past and present circumstances of the community, as well as public and staff input. It should be noted that although these targets may not be realized for a variety of reasons, the key is to continue to work toward meeting them.

‘Provision targets’ can be population-based (e.g., 1 tennis court per 5,000 residents) or participant-based (e.g., 1 soccer field per 65 registered participants). The needs analysis incorporates several local inputs – including public consultation – before deciding on an appropriate target for Guelph/Eramosa.

1.3 Master Plan Organization

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is organized as follows:

- Section 1: Introduction** – Describes the Plan’s purpose and overall objectives.
- Section 2: Community Profile** – Contains an overview of the Township’s socio-demographic characteristics.
- Section 3: Trends in Parks and Recreation** – Contains an overview of major activity and facility provision trends and best practices and their relevance to Guelph/Eramosa’s parks and recreation system.
- Section 4: Community Consultation** – Outlines and evaluates the community’s perceptions of the current state of parks and recreation in Guelph/Eramosa as well as future needs, opportunities and challenges as identified through the public consultation program.
- Section 5: Vision and Goals** – Outlines a Vision Statement for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and a series of corresponding goals.
- Section 6: Service Delivery Assessment** – Presents the benefits of providing parks and recreation and examines the role of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa in the provision of services as well as their current service delivery model. Recommendations are provided to improve the Township’s service delivery, including communication and supports to the community.
- Section 7: Indoor Facility Assessment** – Examines the current supply of indoor recreation facilities (e.g., program space, sports facilities, etc.) with recommendations provided to align provision with community priorities.
- Section 8: Outdoor Facility Assessment** – Examines the current supply of outdoor recreation facilities (e.g., sports fields, trails, playgrounds, etc.), with recommendations provided to enhance the level of service offered by the Township.
- Section 9: Parks and Open Space Assessment** – Examines the current supply of parks and open space, classification system, and acquisition practices.
- Section 10: Implementation Strategy** – Contains a summary of the Master Plan’s recommendations with priority and resource implications identified for each. A process for monitoring and updating the plan is also provided in this section.



SECTION TWO: COMMUNITY PROFILE

Understanding the Township's community profile is an important step towards determining parks and recreation needs. Identification of the characteristics (e.g., ages, incomes, ethnicities, etc.) and number of people residing within a community is imperative in order to truly understand local needs.

2.1 Regional Location and Population

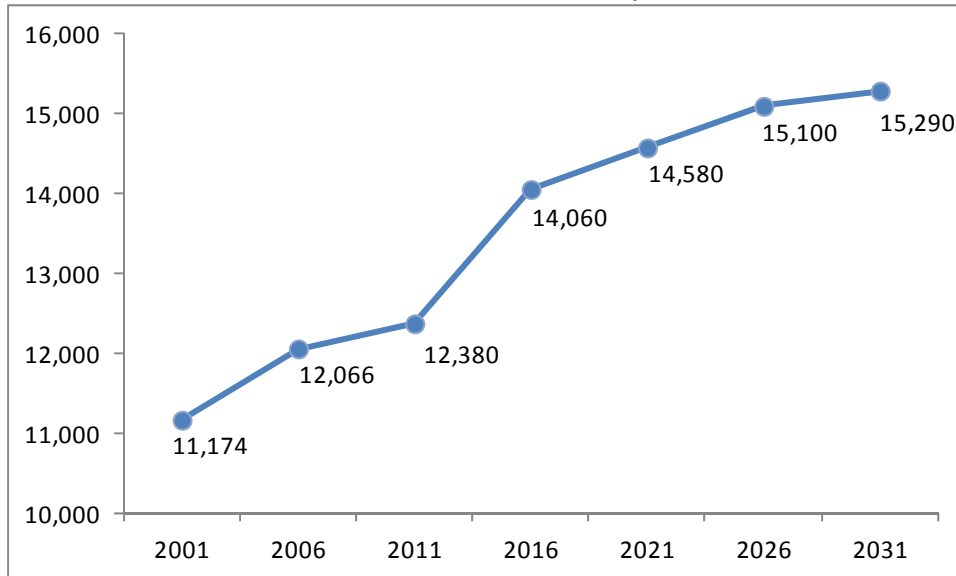
The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is located in the County of Wellington and is bounded by the communities of Guelph, Centre Wellington, Puslinch, Erin, Halton Hills, and Milton.

Since 2001, the Township has experienced approximately 11% growth, with a 2011 reported population of 12,380. The Township's geographic area covers approximately 292 km², and includes the primary urban area of Rockwood as well as a number of smaller communities such as Marden, Ariss, Everton, and Eden Mills.

The 2011 Census reports that 31% (3,870 residents) of Guelph/Eramosa's population lives in Rockwood, with the remaining 8,510 spread across the rural area of the Township. Guelph/Eramosa's population is forecasted to grow to 15,290 by the year 2031, which represents a 24% increase over the 2011

population. The primary growth area will continue to be Rockwood, which is projected to reach 6,150 residents by 2031¹.

Historic (2001-2011) and Forecasted (2011-2031) Population Growth



Source: Historic Data – Statistics Canada Census, 2001-2011.

Forecasts – Wellington County Official Plan (revised February 24th, 2011).

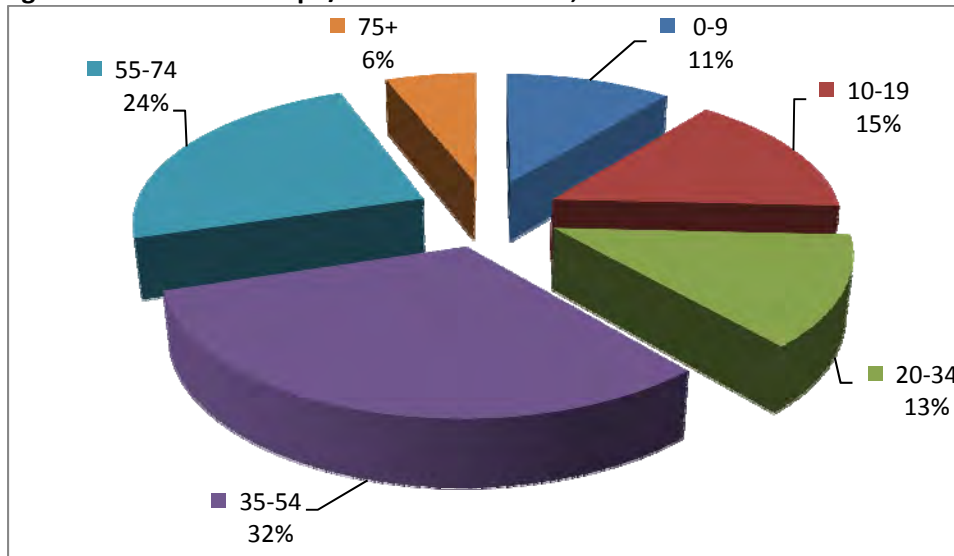
2.2 Age Profile

According to the 2011 Census, the Township’s median age is 43.2 years, a considerable increase over the 2001 figure of 38.6 years, meaning that Guelph/Eramosa is aging as a whole. The Township median age was slightly older than the provincial median of 39.5 years, the latter of which is also on the rise. Age can play an important role in determining the types of activities that are pursued by residents, as children and teens are more likely to participate in organized active sports, and many older adults may prefer more passive activities that can be undertaken at one’s own pace, such as hiking and fitness.

The Township’s population is currently distributed in such a way that older adults (55+) comprise 30% of the population, and the 35-54 age cohort represents 32%. In other words, the existing older adults and those that will be older adults within the next 20 years comprise more than half of the Township’s population. This breakdown will impact the types of recreation programs and facilities required in the years to come.

¹ Wellington County Official Plan – revised February 24th, 2011.

Age Distribution of Guelph/Eramosa Residents, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011.

2.3 Income, Education and Ethnicity

Note: This section relies on data from the 2006 Census. Data from the 2011 National Household Survey will not be available until mid-2013.

Generally speaking, lower levels of income can be a barrier to participation in recreation and leisure activities. Conversely, higher levels of income and education tend to correlate with higher community-wide participation in recreation activities. The 2006 Census reported Guelph/Eramosa's median household income at \$90,239, which was significantly higher than the provincial average of \$69,156. This suggests that recreational participation in Guelph/Eramosa may be at an above average rate.

The level of education attained can also impact participation rates, with many studies correlating increased participation levels with higher degrees of education. A review of the 2006 Census data revealed that residents of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa have attained nearly identical levels of education to those of the province as a whole. This data suggests that the Township of Guelph/Eramosa may expect similar participation rates as compared to the provincial average.

The 2006 Census reported that 14% of Guelph/Eramosa's population is comprised of immigrants, compared to the provincial figure of 28%. National trends suggest that the level of ethnic diversification is increasing, which is a trend that could be seen locally over time, albeit in smaller amounts. As such, consideration of non-traditional programming options may increase over time, as well as sensitivity to a variety of leisure preferences and expectations.

Educational Attainment within Guelph/Eramosa and the Province of Ontario

Level Attained	Population (15 years and over)	
	Guelph/Eramosa	Ontario
No certificate, diploma or degree	20%	22%
High school certificate or equivalent	28%	27%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	8%	8%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	19%	18%
University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level	4%	4%
University certificate, diploma or degree	20%	20%

Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2006.

2.4 Place of Work

Note: This section relies on data from the 2006 Census. Data from the 2011 National Household Survey will not be available until mid-2013.

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa’s proximity to the Greater Toronto Area and other population centres has made it popular amongst commuters, which is evidenced by the fact that 67% of the Township’s working population worked outside of the municipality in 2005. Of these, 57% work in a different municipality within Wellington County and 43% work in a different county altogether. 8% of the working population work outside the home within Guelph/Eramosa, and an additional 15% work within the home. The implications of a large commuting population may include a need to offer later start times for evening programs for commuters, offering evening programs that are more easily accessed by these families. The Township of Guelph/Eramosa grew by 11% between 2006 and 2011, and observed slow population growth prior to 2006.



SECTION THREE: TRENDS IN PARKS AND RECREATION

3.1 Participation Trends

Regional and national trends are used to supplement local data to provide a picture of what may occur in Guelph/Eramosa's future. Trends pertaining to demographics, lifestyle, participation in recreation, and facility design can provide ideas and directions that could make sense in the local context. This section summarizes the major trends affecting parks and recreational services and is considered in conjunction with public consultations for this Master Plan to establish preliminary thoughts regarding Guelph/Eramosa's unique context.

Lack of free time

General Trend

- Our research in a variety of communities shows that the number one barrier to recreation participation for both youth and adults is lack of free time.
- Multi-purpose facilities / parks provide opportunities for families to participate in different activities concurrently, thus making efficient use of limited free time.

Local Implications

- Of those household survey respondents who indicated they were not able to participate in parks and recreation activities as often as they would like, 55% indicated that a 'lack of personal time' was the primary barrier to participation.

Aging Population

General Trend

- Interests of the present generation are shifting away from traditional seniors' activities and towards more active opportunities, driven by the Baby Boomer population (the leading edge of which just turned 65 in 2011).
- Expectations are growing for recreation and parks services that provide quality wellness and active living opportunities.
- 'New Seniors' are wealthier, but may also have more debt than previous generations.

Local Implications

- The Township of Guelph/Eramosa's older adults (55+) make up 30% of the population.
- East Wellington Community Services conducted a needs assessment for senior services in Erin and Guelph/Eramosa, with health and independence, housing, transportation, and community emerging as key areas of concern. Promotion and implementation of social activities and leisure programming was suggested as a way of improving quality of life amongst this population.
- The Eden Mills Community Club hosts Friendly Seniors at the Eden Mills Community Centre and the Rockwood and Marden community centres are often rented for seniors' programs, aerobics, and events.

Overcoming challenges for persons with disabilities

General Trend

- Physical, attitudinal, communicational and policy/practice barriers can deter persons with disabilities from participating in recreation.
- AODA Customer Service Standard ensures that persons with disabilities are treated with respect and in a way that enables participation.

Local Implications

- Since 2002, the Township of Guelph-Eramosa has participated in the County of Wellington's Joint Accessibility Committee with members of six other County municipalities.
- In 2010-2011, the Township developed its Accessible Customer Service Policy, as well as feedback, support, and alternate format request procedures. During this time, the Town provided a variety of training to its staff, volunteers, and election workers.
- Through 2011 and 2012, the Township is focusing on creating an accessible communications policy, as well as an overall accessibility policy.

Economic influences on leisure participation

General Trend

- Level of income can be a significant barrier to participation in leisure pursuits.
- There is increasing pressure for affordable municipal recreation and programs and subsidies.
- Family income increases with age – older adults have more disposable income to spend on leisure pursuits.
- 'Ability to pay' involves setting pricing points and subsidies based on income instead of age.

Local Implications

- The 2006 Census reported that the median household income in the Township to be \$90,239, which is significantly higher than the provincial figure.
- 60% of respondents to the household survey reported household incomes over \$80,000, suggesting that the Township may see higher than average participation in leisure pursuits.

Emerging recreation activities

General Trend

- Communities have been faced with a growing emphasis on non-traditional and non-structured activities.
- Emerging passive and active outdoor recreation activities include hiking, bird watching, casual cycling, Ultimate Frisbee, rugby, dog walking, outdoor ice skating, etc.
- Growth is strongest in self-scheduled, unorganized activities.

Local Implications

- **14% of Guelph/Eramosa's population are immigrants, suggesting that the majority of residents are well established in Canadian culture and can generally be expected to seek recreation programs and services of a more traditional nature.**
- **The Township provides numerous casual outdoor recreation spaces, including a splash pad, basketball courts, trails, outdoor ice rinks, playgrounds, and toboggan hills.**

Increased interest in the environment and stewardship

General Trend

- Naturalized park spaces (whether by 'maintaining' a site in its natural state or 'returning' a site to its natural state) are becoming more accepted and requested.
- Incorporating energy efficiency (e.g., LEED certification, solar power, etc.) and water conservation measures into facility and park design can contribute to the overall greening of the community and showcase leadership in addressing environmental issues.

Local Implications

- The Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre was designed in such a way that the environmental impacts were minimized through facility setback, storm water management, native tree plantings, placement of a new primary entrance to reduce road salt in the creek, and the use of environmentally friendly materials and utility systems in facility construction.
- Marden Park and Sarah Ransom Woodlot and Trails have natural space areas for exploration.
- Rockwood Conservation Area is a very popular local attraction that offers caving, camping, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, hiking, swimming, etc.
- The Eden Mills Community Club is in the process of installing solar panels at this facility and the village of Eden Mills, with support from the Eden Mills Millpond Conservation Association, is attempting to become the first North American village to achieve carbon neutrality.

Connecting recreation to improved health

General Trend

- Participation in recreation and leisure activities can positively impact quality of life through enhanced physical activity and social interactions.
- Providing additional opportunities and incentives to exercise may help to address the issues of physical inactivity and obesity, particularly in children and youth.
- More and more, municipalities are focusing on policies, programs and other opportunities targeted at improving the activity levels, health and well-being of their residents.

Local Implications

- The Township has a partnership with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph *in motion* to promote the benefits of physical activity and provide programs and events that get residents active and promote *in motion* and its partners.
- Live Well Online is a physical activity and nutrition education website run through Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health that provides support for living a healthy lifestyle, including meal planning, physical activity, and recipes.

3.2 Facility Trends

Aging infrastructure

General Trend

- The majority of recreation facilities in Ontario are over 25 years old and their capital renewal/replacement is under-funded. Recent provincial and federal funding programs have sought to reduce this shortfall.
- There is a desire for modern and high quality facilities.

Local Implications

- The Township's marquee indoor recreation facility, Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre opened in 2010, but its other facilities (Eden Mills Community Centre, Rockmosa Community Centre, Marden Community Centre) are much older (but are well maintained). For example, the Eden Mills Community Centre was constructed in the early 1900s, and has had updates and renovations completed since 2003.

Multi-use indoor facilities and parks

General Trend

- Communities are moving away from single-purpose, stand-alone facilities in favour of multi-use parks and facilities that integrate numerous activities and offer economies of scale by consolidating recreation, library, cultural and other municipal services at a single location. These designs are easier to achieve in denser urban environments due to geographic accessibility.
- Multi-use parks and facilities are often designed with flexible spaces and potential to expand in order to easily respond with changing trends and demands of future populations.

Local Implications

- The Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre at Marden Park is an example of a multi-use site, as it includes both indoor (track, turf field, office space, meeting room, as well as a nearby community centre and library branch) and several outdoor (lit fields, picnic areas, pond) amenities. Rockmosa Park offers similar multi-use opportunities between the park, community centre, and library.

Increased interest in trails and hiking

General Trend

- A 2011 study found that proximity to trails has a positive impact on the value of homes, reporting that “for the average home, homeowners were willing to pay a \$9,000 premium to be located one thousand feet closer to the trail”.²
- The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention found that the “creating or enhancing access to parks led to a 26.5% increase in the percentage of people exercising more than three times per week.”³

Local Implications

- Walking for leisure ranks as the most popular activity in most communities, including Guelph/Eramosa, with 86% of households participating in the past 12 months according to the household survey.
- Wellington County is currently undertaking an Active Transportation Master Plan.

² Fuller, D. (2011). *New research finds that homeowners and city planners should ‘hit the trail’ when considering property values.* Available from: <http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.aspx?id=14300>.

³ Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). *Increasing physical activity.* pp.11.

Parks design

General Trend

- Similar to trails, parks are closely associated with quality of life, providing a variety of benefits to communities.
- Parks are valued by all ages, and can provide access to both active and passive activities, as well as structured and unstructured opportunities.
- Integration of natural features into parkland is a growing trend.
- Sports fields and higher intensity uses (e.g., splash pads, off-leash parks, etc.) are being promoted in Community Parks, where adequate site infrastructure (e.g., washrooms, parking, lighting, etc.) can be provided.

Local Implications

- The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is home to Guelph Lake Conservation Area and Rockwood Conservation Area (operated by the Grand River Conservation Authority), both of which contain beaches and trails, providing opportunities for camping, canoeing, fishing, hiking, cycling, swimming, etc. In addition, Guelph Lake is home to a unique concert venue that hosts the Hillside Festival each July, as well as several other events.

3.3 Service Delivery Trends

Financing and partnerships

General Trend

- Local municipalities are often a primary provider of community recreation infrastructure, but partnerships, alliances and cost sharing relationships with community-based providers are essential to providing a more complete range of leisure services and activities.

Local Implications

- The Township offers very little direct recreation programming; as such, there is a great reliance upon community groups, places of worship, other public institutions, and private companies to offer these services.
- The Township has many partnerships within the community, including those with Wellington Public Health and Wellington-Guelph-Dufferin *in motion* for the promotion of healthy lifestyles, the School Boards for the use of school space, the County of Wellington for regional services, and private fitness providers, among others.
- Eden Mills Community Centre is operated entirely by volunteers through a partnership with the Township.

Volunteerism

General Trend

- There is a growing concern regarding volunteer shortages, which may require the pursuit of unique strategies to foster future volunteerism.
- Older adults and seniors contribute the largest amount of volunteer hours.
- The secondary school system requirement of 40 hours of volunteer service by each student presents opportunities for increasing volunteer participation.

Local Implications

- The Township relies heavily on community organizations for the provision of direct recreation and leisure programming, many of which are staffed by volunteers (e.g., Eden Mills Community Centre).
- The Township's outdoor ice rinks are operated by volunteer groups who construct, maintain and inspect the rinks with the support of the Township through materials, lighting, and inspections.



SECTION FOUR: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

4.1 Overview of Consultation Efforts

Community consultation is a key component of the master planning process as it provides insight into the perceived needs of the public, stakeholders, staff, and members of local government. Residents of Guelph/Eramosa were consulted in the following ways:

- a random sample household telephone survey;
- two community workshops;
- two input sessions with older adults;
- an open house to review the draft Master Plan; and
- an open invitation for written correspondence;

Each consultation method is designed to achieve a different result, reach a specific group, and/or present information to a variety of stakeholders. Efforts were also made to engage those that attended Family Day activities at the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre; while there was limited uptake of the questionnaire that was available at this event, efforts were moderately successful in generating awareness of the Master Plan.

4.2 Household Telephone Survey

To assist in the preparation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a statistically significant household telephone survey of residents of Guelph/Eramosa was conducted in February and March 2012. The survey was administered to residents from both urban and rural communities within the Township and is considered to be representative of the population. A total of 378 surveys were completed, yielding a confidence interval of $\pm 5\%$ (i.e., the survey provides for an accuracy of $\pm 5\%$, 19 times out of 20). To qualify, respondents were required to be 16 years of age or older and reside in the Township of Guelph/Eramosa. Please note that responses and graphical illustrations reflect the opinions of only those participating in the household survey. Detailed responses can be found in Appendix A.

The survey collected information on the attitudes of respondents towards various aspects of recreation and park activities, usage, facilities, opinions, and priorities. This subsection summarizes and correlates the principal findings of the household survey based upon a variety of factors; this Planning Context Report has noted where the differences between these variables are considered to be significant. Although representative of Guelph/Eramosa's residents, the survey did not specifically target those that participate in leisure activities. Where possible, the survey results were separated into subsets based on socio-demographic characteristics and inferences were drawn on this basis.

Household Participation in Recreation Activities

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their households had participated in a variety of recreation and leisure programs in the past twelve months. The response format is *yes* or *no*; all activities are listed in the figure below.

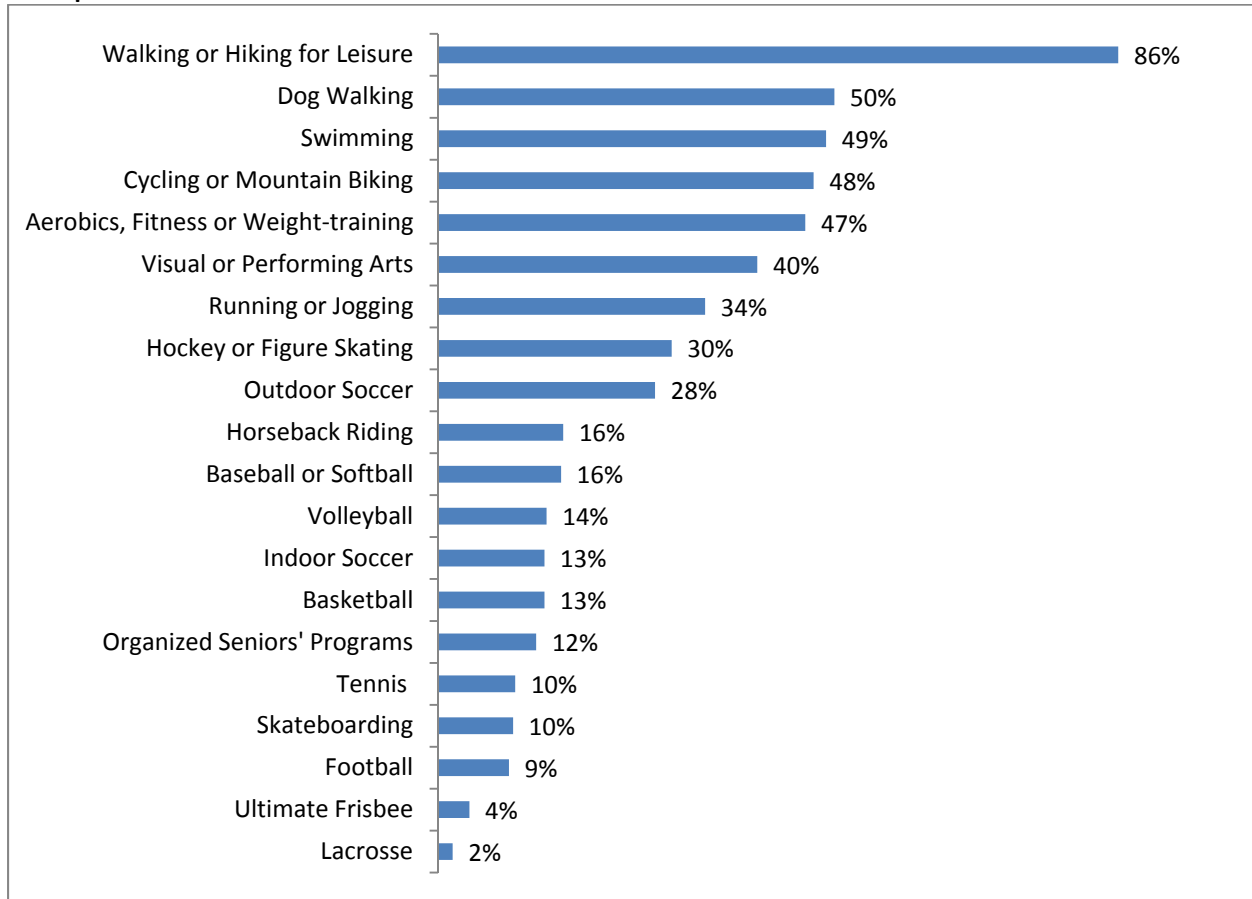
As in other communities within which we have undertaken this kind of market research, *walking or hiking for leisure* (86%) was also ranked as the most popular activity. The use of *unpaved nature trails* (69%) was the second most popular activity, followed by *dog walking* (50%), *swimming* (49%), *cycling or mountain biking* (48%), and *aerobics, fitness or weight-training* (47%). It is worth noting that the top seven most popular activities are generally undertaken as drop-in activities that are flexibly scheduled, which has become a common trend throughout Ontario in the experience of the Consultants.

Households with children were more likely to have participated in the following activities in the past twelve months than those without children:

- running or jogging;
- cycling or mountain biking;
- dog walking;
- volleyball;
- outdoor soccer;
- unpaved nature trails;
- horseback riding;
- swimming;
- hockey or figure skating;
- basketball;
- baseball or softball;
- indoor soccer;
- paved multi-use trails;
- skateboarding; and
- visual or performing arts.

Respondents with a household income of more than \$80,000 were more likely than those with lower incomes to have participated in *aerobics, fitness or weight-training, running or jogging, swimming, hockey or figure skating, and visual or performing arts*, many of which may have higher membership / registration fees than other activities.

Participation in Parks and Selected Recreation Activities



Barriers to Participation

To gain an understanding of overall participation, respondents were asked whether they and members of their household were able to participate in parks and recreational activities as often as they would like; 63% reported that they were able to participate as often as they would like, 36% were not, and 1% replied *don't know*. For those that were not able to participate as often as they would like, the most common responses were: *lack of personal time / too busy* (55%); *lack of desired facilities or programs* (23%), and *health problems / disability / age* (17%).

Each respondent was asked what percentage of their household's parks and recreation needs are met within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa. 42% reported that *all* of their needs are met within the Township, 17% reported *most*, 18% reported *some*, 16% reported *about half*, and 5% reported that *none* of their parks and recreational needs are met within the Township.

Households with an income of less than \$80,000 were more likely than higher income households to report that *all* of their parks and recreational needs are met within Guelph/Eramosa than those with an income of \$80,000 or more.

All respondents that replied that anything less than *all* of their parks and recreational needs are met within Guelph/Eramosa (n=220) were asked three follow-up questions:

- What parks and recreation activities do you or members of your household participate in outside of Guelph/Eramosa?
- Where do you or members of your household choose to participate in activities outside of Guelph/Eramosa?
- Why does your household participate in these activities outside of Guelph/Eramosa?

With respect to activities in which respondents participate outside of the Township, the top six responses were: swimming (33% of the subset); hockey (21%); hiking (15%); fitness (9%); biking (7%); and soccer (7%).

The *City of Guelph* was the most commonly mentioned municipality outside Guelph/Eramosa for recreation participation (33% of the subset), followed by *other* (14%; most common examples that received five or more mentions – Mississauga and Bruce County), and *Halton Hills* (10%). Households with children were more likely to participate in the City of Guelph than households without children.

The most common reasons given for participating outside of the Township include: *facility / program is not available in the area* (33% of the subset; most common examples that received 7 or more mentions – swimming pool, arena, hockey, fitness) and *connected to the other community / used to live there* (10%). Households with children were more likely to participate outside of Guelph/Eramosa because of a lack of facility or program in the area.

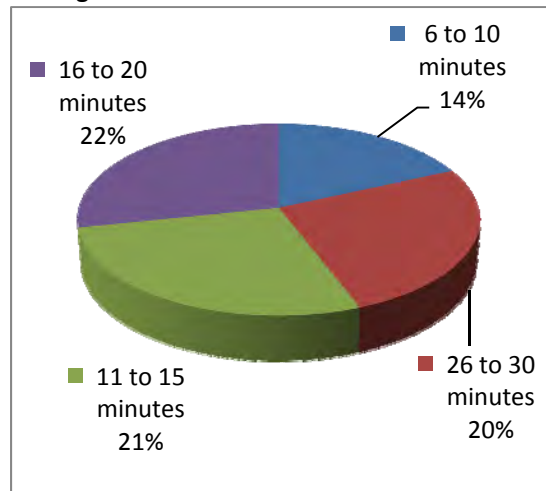
When asked if there were any parks and recreation activities that the respondent and their household would like to see offered that are not currently available in Guelph/Eramosa, 39% replied *yes*. Of these, there were 37 unique responses, including *swimming* (16% of the subset), *hockey* (9%), *skating* (8%), and *tennis* (4%). Households with children, households in built-up areas, and households that have an income of \$80,000 or more were more likely to report that there were parks or recreation activities missing in Guelph/Eramosa than households without children, households in rural areas, and households that have an income of less than \$80,000, respectively.

Respondents were asked to identify a reasonable amount of time to travel to parks and recreation activities that their household does the most, with the following results (*don't know* response is excluded):

- 5 minutes or less (10%);
- 6 to 10 minutes (14%);
- 11 to 15 minutes (21%);
- 16 to 20 minutes (22%);
- 21 to 25 minutes (1%);
- 26 to 30 minutes (20%); and
- more than 30 minutes (10%).

These responses suggest that two-thirds of respondents (67%) feel that a reasonable travel time to reach parks and recreational activities is under 20 minutes.

Willingness to Travel

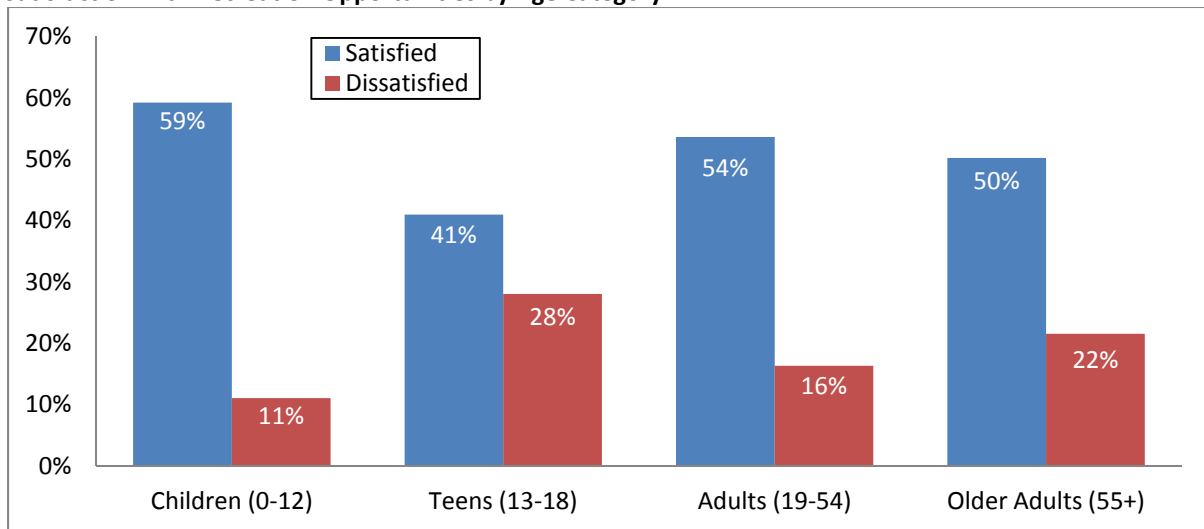


Assessment of Parks and Recreation Opportunities and Facilities

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with recreational opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa for four age groups: *children ages 0 to 12*; *teens ages 13 to 18*; *adults ages 19 to 54*; and *older adults age 55 plus*. Overall, respondents were most satisfied with opportunities for *children* (59%), followed by *adults* (54%), *older adults* (50%), and *teens* (41%).

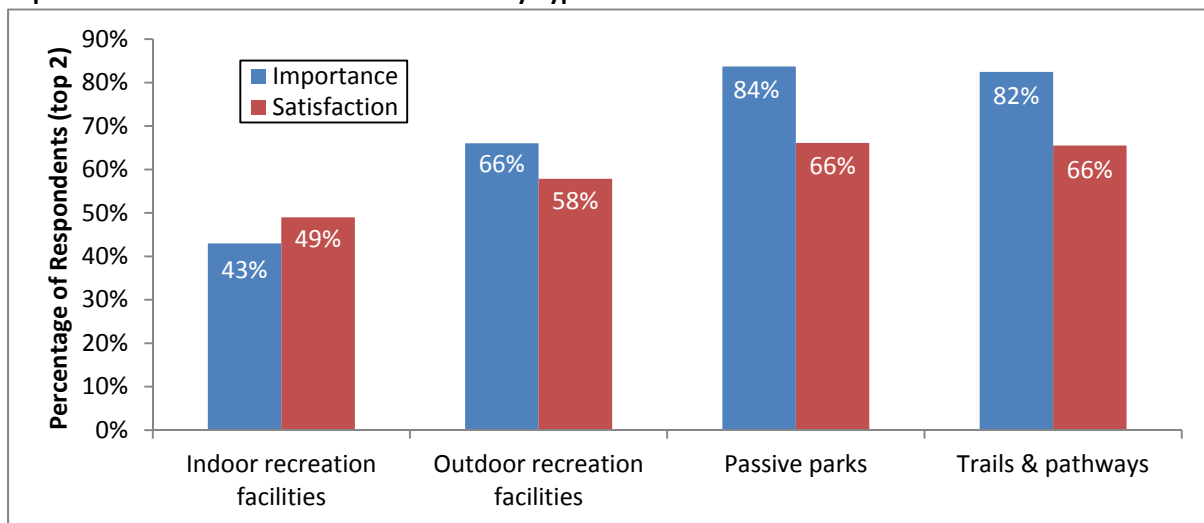
Households with children were more likely to report satisfaction with opportunities and households without children were more likely to report satisfaction with opportunities for older adults. When compared with other local communities in which the Consultants have conducted household surveys, the levels of satisfaction in each age group are lower in Guelph-Eramosa.

Satisfaction with Recreation Opportunities by Age Category



In addition to rating satisfaction based on age, respondents were asked to rate how important certain facility types were to their household and their level of satisfaction with those within Guelph/Eramosa.

Importance and Satisfaction of Selected Facility Types

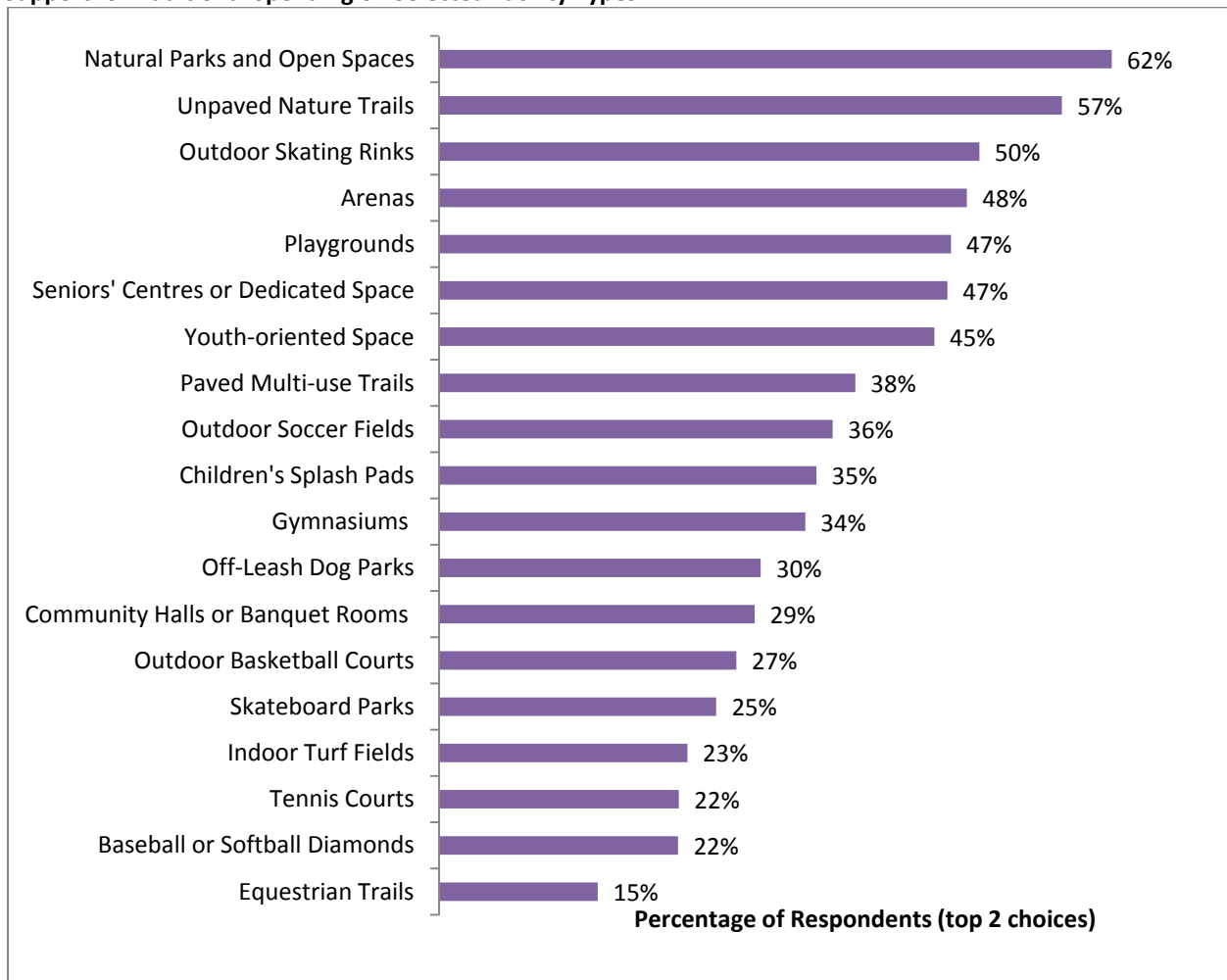


With respect to outdoor recreation facilities, passive parks, and trails and pathways, respondents reported higher levels of importance than satisfaction, suggesting that the Township’s facilities are not meeting expectations. In the case of indoor recreation facilities, satisfaction slightly exceeds importance, although both values are under 50%.

Households with children were more likely to consider both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities to be important than households without children. Additionally, households with children were more likely to be satisfied with outdoor recreation facilities than households without children, likely since children represent major users of such facilities. Similarly to satisfaction with recreation opportunities by age category, satisfaction with Guelph-Eramosa’s facilities is generally lower than those in other local communities within which the Consultants have undertaken similar research.

In order to build and/or improve parks and recreation facilities, municipal tax dollars are often used. To assess more specifically where respondents felt municipal resources should be allocated, they were asked which facilities should receive additional public funding. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant *don’t spend* and 5 meant *definitely spend*.

Support for Additional Spending on Selected Facility Types

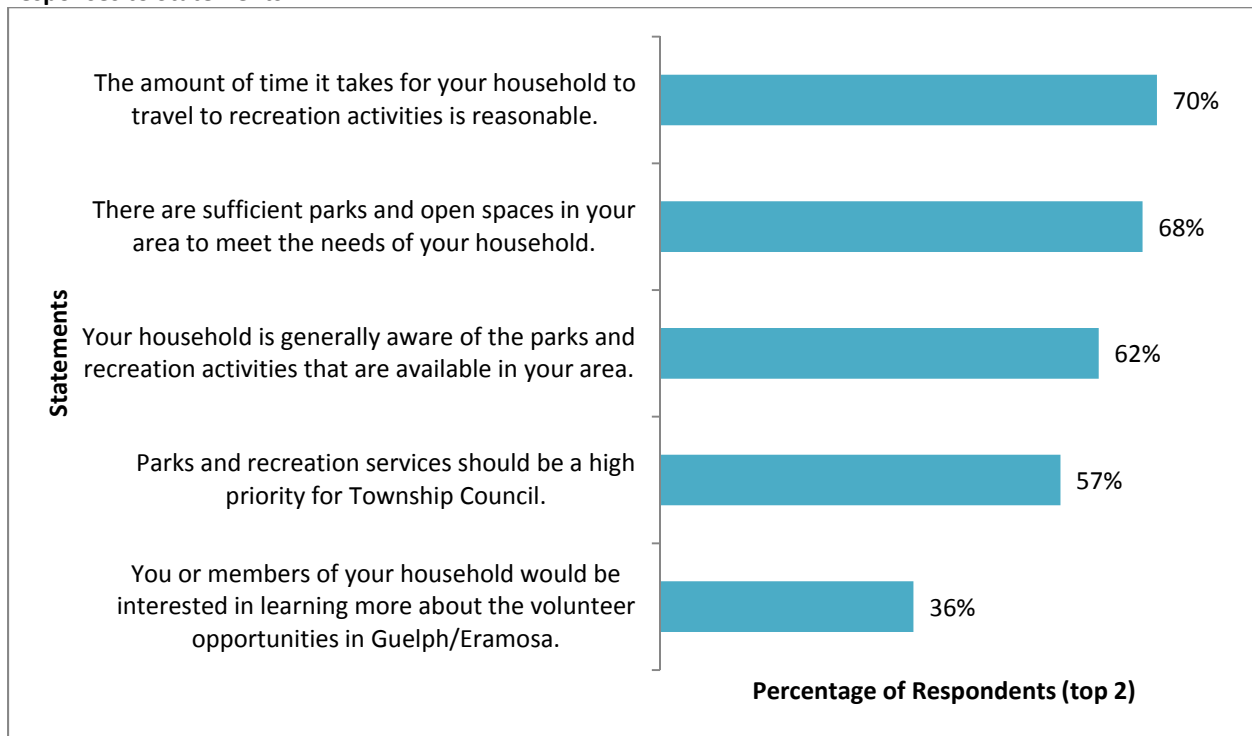


The facility types that received the most support for additional spending were: *natural parks and open space* (62%); *unpaved nature trails* (57%); *outdoor skating rinks* (50%); *arenas* (48%); *playgrounds* (47%); *seniors' centres or dedicated space* (47%); and *youth-oriented space* (45%). These figures represent the sum of respondents that gave a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5, with respondents that answered *don't know* omitted from the calculations. Residents that live in a rural area were more likely to support additional spending on off-leash dog parks, *natural areas and open spaces*, *outdoor skating rinks*, and *youth-oriented spaces* than households in built-up areas.

Another question dealt with specific statements relating to Council priorities, travel time to leisure facilities, and awareness about parks and recreational activities. Respondents were read five statements, to which they were asked to respond on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was *strongly disagree* and 5 was *strongly agree*.

The percentage of respondents who answered that they *agree* or *strongly agree* (represented by a response of 4 or 5) with each statement is listed in the figure below (those that answered *don't know* have been excluded from the calculation).

Responses to Statements



The responses (regarding sufficient parks and open space and Council priority) are very similar to the average in other communities based on our previous market research. Residents are generally satisfied with travel time and existing parks and open space, however promotion of what exists in the Township may be lacking. 36% of respondents indicated that their households are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa, suggesting that there may be a need to promote volunteerism through a variety of methods to increase interest.

Demographic Profile of Household Survey Respondents

The average household size in Guelph/Eramosa is 2.9 people according to the 2011 Census. The survey average was 3.1 people per household, suggesting that the survey achieves community representation in this regard.

The median age of respondents was 53 years, higher than the Census recorded median of 43.2; note, however, that those under the age of 16 were not eligible to respond to the survey.

The household composition by age group was heavily weighted in the 35-54 (32%) and 55+ (30%) age categories, and was similar to the percentages in the 2011 Census.

Respondents were asked whether they live in a built-up or rural area, followed by a probing question as to which community they live in or live closest to, respectively. Residents living in a built-up area represented 47% of the sample, and those living in a rural area accounted for 53%. The percentage of urban households in each built-up area is as follows:

- Rockwood – 75%;
- Eden Mills – 9%;
- Guelph (likely the Cross Creek subdivision or other housing on the periphery of the City of Guelph) – 7%;
- Everton – 3%;
- Ariss – 2%;
- Marden – 2%; and
- Other – 2%.

The percentage of rural households closest to each community is as follows:

- Rockwood – 40%;
- Guelph – 25%;
- Marden – 14%;
- Ariss – 8%;
- Everton – 6%;
- Eden Mills – 5%; and
- Other – 3%.

As an optional question, residents were asked about their household income. The breakdown of responses from those that chose to respond (64% of the sample) is as follows:

- 43% of household incomes were over \$100,000;
- 17% were between \$80,000 and \$100,000;
- 16% were between \$60,000 and \$80,000;
- 14% were between \$40,000 and \$60,000; and
- 9% were under \$40,000.

58% of respondents were female; 42% were male.

4.3 Community Workshops

Two community workshops were facilitated by the consultant on April 19 and April 25, 2012 in Marden and Rockwood, respectively. The purpose of the Community Workshops was to provide an opportunity for members of the community to share ideas, listen to the perspectives of others, and work together to identify pressing needs and think about creative solutions. Attendees were selected and invited by the Township based on their contribution to the local leisure sector; the sessions were also open to the public. The community workshops were advertised through the municipal newsletter (mailed to all property owners), the Township's website, posters in community facilities, on community mailboxes, in the Wellington Advertiser, and email blasts, as well as word of mouth. The Rockwood event was attended by over 100 people, with the vast majority consisting of parents and players from the Rockwood United Soccer Club, while about 8 people attended the session in Marden. Township Council, Staff and members of the Master Plan's Steering Committee were also in attendance at both events, as were the project consultants.

Participants were seated at tables with other stakeholders and a facilitator; each table was asked to respond to a series of questions. At both workshops, the first question asked what participants value most about the Township and the last question asked how barriers to meeting community needs can be addressed or overcome. Participants at the workshop in Marden were also asked how indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and services in Guelph/Eramosa can be improved; this question was slightly modified for the second workshop given the larger attendance and logistical challenges (participants were asked how organized and unorganized activities can be improved within the Township). Responses to all but the last question for each group were prioritized at each table, and presented back to the group at large. Results have been summarized below. Detailed responses can be found in Appendix B.

Question 1 – What do you value most about Guelph/Eramosa?

Participants value a broad range of facilities, opportunities, and characteristics of Guelph/Eramosa, including the following (most frequently mentioned items):

- local businesses
- the strong library system
- the peaceful and calm nature of the municipality
- the parks and trails
- the proximity of the Township to both the GTA and Kitchener-Waterloo
- the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre
- the level of volunteerism (particularly through service clubs)
- the sense of community pride and safety that are evident within Guelph/Eramosa
- community events
- green space

Question 2a) – How can we improve indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and services in Guelph/Eramosa? *(note: this question was only asked in Marden)*

Respondents suggested the following (most frequently mentioned items):

- a need for more program options for seniors, families, and youth, particularly before and after work and in the areas of active living and track and field
- more trails and pathways to link destinations within the Township, with specific mention made to crossing the creek to Walmart, on rural/county roads, and through internal trails within parks
- drop-in, spontaneous and social activities (including those oriented towards seniors)
- with respect to volunteers, it was suggested that they should be encouraged to use municipal facilities to provide programs and services and form groups (e.g., seniors' clubs)
- awareness was raised as an issue, with a suggestion to increase awareness of opportunities with respect to location and descriptions, possibly through better and consistent signage at facilities, improved marketing, and the use of new technologies

Question 2b) – How can we improve organized activities within Guelph/Eramosa? *(note: this question was asked only in Rockwood)*

Respondents suggested the following (most frequently mentioned items):

- four of the top five responses related to fields, including field lighting, turf fields, adding more fields (indoor/outdoor, soccer/lacrosse), and field maintenance (irrigation, leveling, goal nets, filling holes, painted lines, and watering/seeding grass)
- there was also a desire expressed for multi-use facilities that could include arenas, sports fields, and an indoor pool, offering indoor activities, programs, and activities, as well as a fitness centre that provides opportunities for youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities
- seniors' programs received mention, as did organized tours for walking, hiking, biking, cross-country on the trails
- there was also a desire for more parking at facilities and more bathrooms at fields that are clean and open at fields

Question 3 – How can we improve unorganized activities within Guelph/Eramosa? *(note: this question was asked only in Rockwood)*

Respondents suggested the following (most frequently mentioned items):

- construction of additional trails, particularly with improved maintenance efforts
- development of the following:
 - off-leash dog park
 - tobogganing hill
 - more clean and open bathroom facilities at fields
 - fitness stations along trails
 - upgraded playground equipment
 - community gardens
- pursue more promotion through flyers, posters, brochures, and pamphlets

Question 4 – How do we address or overcome barriers to meeting community needs?

With respect to overcoming barriers to meeting community needs, the most commonly mentioned responses were:

- improved communication; suggestions for methods of communication include:
 - improved marketing
 - newsletters
 - electronic media (although this is limited by a lack of high speed internet)
 - open houses
 - the creation of a coordinated communication approach
- support for volunteers, including a point person within the Township, a strategy to recruit and retain volunteers, and leadership
- improved customer service, such as through staffing at facilities and a person to talk to
- pursuing partnerships to help the Township lower costs of programs and facilities, including partnerships with surrounding municipalities, Wellington County, corporate sponsors, Grand River Conservation Authority, and community organizations

In addition to the points captured through the open discussion (documented above), workshop participants were also given the opportunity to complete a comment sheet in order to record their own personal responses to the discussion topics. A total of 46 comment sheets, which included the questions that were asked at the workshops, were completed between the two workshops. A summary of the comment sheet responses is provided below.

Regarding what is valued most, primary responses included:

- Peaceful and close-knit community;
- Location and proximity to the GTA; and
- Natural setting and access to conservation lands.

In order to improve organized and unorganized recreation activities, the following primary comments were provided:

- Desire for new facilities, including fields, trails, a multi-use recreation facility, recreational space for youth and for seniors, an indoor pool, an outdoor skating rink, and an outdoor ball hockey court;
- Need for more volunteers;
- Priority for residents in registration for activities; and
- Increased publicity for what is currently available.

In order to reduce barriers to meeting community needs, the following primary suggestions were made:

- Utilizing word of mouth, email, and newsletters to disseminate information;
- Provide public programming during prime time hours, rather than private rentals;
- Pursue partnerships;
- Keep apprised of demographic trends and respond accordingly; and
- Ensure that the community is involved and has the ability to provide feedback.

4.4 Older Adult Input Sessions

Older adults age 55 and over currently make up 30% of the Township's population, suggesting that this is a key segment of the population. With an additional 32% of the population between the ages of 35 and 54, older adults stand to represent a growing demographic. As such, two targeted older adult input sessions were held – October 16th, 2012 at the Rockmosa Community Centre in Rockwood, and October 18th, 2012 at Marden Community Centre. The sessions were attended by a total of 78 older adults, 59 in Rockwood, and 19 in Marden. Attendees were served dinner and then shown a presentation about the Master Plan, followed by providing an opportunity to brainstorm and prioritize their ideas about barriers to participation, program gaps, facility / space options, and ways to improve recreation service delivery for older adults. Highlights from the sessions are reported below (includes responses that received multiple mentions); please see Appendix A for a complete list of responses.

Question One: What barriers keep older adults from participating in parks and recreation activities?

- **Rockwood**
 - Lack of awareness regarding available activities;
 - Lack of local facilities providing programs and activities;
 - Lack of available and reliable transportation options;
 - Program costs;
 - Transportation costs;
 - Health issues and illness;
 - Lack of local programs of interest to older adults;
 - Safety concerns (e.g., lighting in parks, poor weather, etc.);
 - Difficulties in overcoming loneliness;
 - Need for better washroom facilities in parks
 - Lack of interest;
 - Insufficient parking;
 - Financial costs associated with accessing City of Guelph services;
 - Lack of organization;
 - Need for physical amenities such as benches on paths and in parks;
 - Lack of free gathering place for seniors;
 - Need for greater park maintenance;
 - Facility costs;
 - Inconvenient program times; and
 - Lack of awareness about transportation opportunities.
- **Marden**
 - Safety of roads for walking and biking (e.g., poor road and shoulder maintenance, as well as speed and trucks on sideroads);
 - Lack of lighting for recreation centres;
 - Township covers a large geographic area;
 - No sharing of services with other areas (e.g., City of Guelph);
 - Limited visibility of Township's communications messages;
 - Lack of trail signage;
 - Safety on trails;
 - Need for rest points and parking for trails;
 - Disabilities;
 - Driving safety (e.g., night time, winter driving, etc.);
 - Distance to programs and facilities;
 - Cost of renting space; and
 - Cliques of neighbours.

Although each session revealed a variety of issues, there were a number of over-arching themes, including the following barriers to participation:

- Lack of awareness and publicity about opportunities for older adults;
- Need for safe and affordable transportation options;
- Health concerns and disabilities keep many older adults from accessing recreation; and
- Safety concerns in parks and on trails (e.g., lighting, maintenance, rest areas, etc.).

Question Two: What programs and activities are missing in Guelph/Eramosa?

- **Rockwood**
 - Senior-focused exercise;
 - Cards/games;
 - Educational presentations (e.g., fraud, finances, general interest, arthritis, diabetes, foot care, etc.);
 - Walking / hiking;
 - More affordable canoe and boat rentals;
 - Local newsletter;
 - More affordable fitness programs;
 - Music in the park;
 - Travel group;
 - Darts;
 - Dinner clubs;
 - Join the Evergreen Centre in Guelph;
 - Carpet / lawn bowling;
 - Gardening;
 - Dance;
 - Line dancing;
 - Table tennis;
 - Aquafit;
 - Choir;
 - Social gatherings (e.g., pot luck dinners, dances, picnics, teas, etc.);
 - Badminton;
 - Computer lessons;
 - Movies;
 - Organizational volunteers to run programs;
 - Painting;
 - Swimming;
 - Yoga; and
 - Daytime programs.
- **Marden**
 - Wellness and fitness;
 - Yoga;
 - Cards (including euchre);
 - Bus trips;
 - Line dancing;
 - Walking;
 - Wine / beer tasting night;
 - Naturalist club;
 - Computer classes;
 - Cooking classes;
 - Music in the park and/or garden;
 - Group exercise;
 - Darts;
 - Movie nights;
 - Do-it-yourself instruction
 - Preference for set time activities (as opposed to drop-in);
 - Genealogy;
 - Dancing; and
 - Historical society.

With respect to program and activity gaps, the following suggestions were provided by attendees at both sessions:

- Wellness and fitness programs;
- Cards and games (including euchre);
- Line dancing;
- Educational classes (e.g., computers, fraud prevention, cooking, etc.);
- Social gatherings (e.g., pot luck dinners, dances, wine/beer tasting night, etc.);
- Darts;
- Walking group;
- Gardening / naturalist group; and
- Movie nights.

Question Three: What facility / space options are required to address the program and activity needs?

- **Rockwood**
 - Dedicated seniors' centre in Rockwood with potential to expand (could include kitchen, exercise facility, comfortable chairs, conference room, etc.);
 - Dedicated room in a community centre just for older adults;
 - Swimming pool;
 - Centrally located drop-in centre that is accessible, affordable, and 'communication central';
 - Floral gardens;
 - Access to old Town Hall and municipal facilities (e.g., Fire Hall);
 - Need a coordinator to facilitate administration of space;
 - Groomed level surface walking trails with multi-level difficulty;
 - Facility should reflect the amount of taxes paid;
 - Permanent multi-purpose space (no specific location defined);
 - Computer facilities for classes;
 - Bike trails;
 - Community vegetable gardens;
 - Partner with other communities that already offer space;
 - Benches in parks / trails;
 - Free entry to Conservation Area for organized groups;
 - Larger fitness space (e.g., Squires);
- **Marden**
 - Learn to use the facilities we already have;
 - Benches and garbage cans on trails;
 - Widen shoulders for safety;
 - Warm water pool with sauna;
 - Acoustics of meeting room at Marden Community Centre;
 - Bocce courts;
 - Outdoor rink;
 - More trails;
 - More garbage cans in park and more regular disposal;
 - Washrooms on trails;
 - Horseshoe pits;
 - Connection of trails that link infrastructure;
 - More picnic facilities with pavilions; and
 - Exercise area in field house is too small, too hot, and too crowded.

continued...

- **Rockwood** (*continued*)
 - Room partition at Rockmosa would allow for 2 activities to run at a time;
 - Arena (at Rockmosa?);
 - Running / walking track;
 - Common room for meals with kitchen;
 - Shuffleboard;
 - Use church basements and meeting rooms for community groups;
 - Therapeutic pool;
 - Many rooms;
 - Space shared with other uses;
 - Kitchen; and
 - Trail system to join parks together.

When asked about facility and space options required to address program and activity needs, the two groups had differing opinions on the needs of their respective communities. In Rockwood, the primary desire was a dedicated seniors' centre that could include a kitchen, meeting space, exercise room, etc. with the potential to expand, or a dedicated older adult room in a community centre. In Marden, the group felt that the Township already has a number of facilities that could be used more effectively to serve the older adult population. Similarities that emerged within the two groups included:

- Trails for bikes and walking, including those that link existing infrastructure;
- Improved amenities on trails and in parks (e.g., washrooms, benches, etc.);
- Larger fitness space; and
- Warm water pool.

Question Four: How can we improve recreation service delivery for older adults?

Attendees were also asked how recreation service delivery for older adults can be improved, with the following common responses between both sessions:

- Need for better communication from the Township regarding availability of municipal recreation spaces, program opportunities, community organizations, etc.;
- Utilize a variety of techniques for providing information (e.g., keep website up-to-date, radio, television, posters, flyers to households, etc.);
- Exploring / building upon existing partnerships (e.g., Denny's Bus Lines, East Wellington Community Services, Welcome Wagon, Health Unit, etc.);
- Use volunteers for program provision, coordination, transportation, etc. and create a skills bank for volunteers; and
- Explore the option of providing a full-page in a local paper that advertises programs and activities strictly for older adults.

4.5 Additional Input

In addition to the input provided at the community workshops, several pieces of correspondence were received from local residents during the preparation of the Master Plan. These include requests for the following:

- a request to Township Council regarding the installation of community gardens in Rockwood;
- a petition was signed by approximately 150 youth requesting a skateboard park in Rockwood;
- persuasive writing letters from students at a local elementary school requesting the development of a dog park, skateboard park, and arena;
- a presentation at the Rockwood Community Workshop by two teenaged soccer players noting the local benefits and successes of the soccer program and requesting additional fields for accommodating existing and future demand (fields with lights and possibly artificial turf);
- a request for the addition of a basketball court at Cross Creek Park and/or Marden Park;
- suggestions for greater biodiversity in parks throughout the Township, including plantings and floral gardens in Dave Masson Park and bird boxes in open space areas;
- a request for more modern playground structures, including at Marden Park; and
- a request for an outdoor artificial ice pad, possibly covered.

Lastly, on April 4, 2013, an open house was held at the Municipal Office (Council Chambers) to present and receive feedback on the draft Master Plan. This event was well advertised throughout the community and attended by approximately 25 residents. A question and answer period followed a presentation of the key directions within the Master Plan. Comment sheets were distributed at the meeting and the draft Plan was posted on the Township's website and made available at the municipal office and local libraries. A comment period of approximately two weeks was established and a small number of responses were received by the end of April. Input from the open house and subsequent correspondence has been considered in the finalization of this report.



SECTION FIVE: VISION AND GOALS

This section presents a vision statement and goals for the Township of Guelph/Eramosa's parks and recreation services. The users of public spaces, programs, and facilities are the same users – the public – and a common vision statement and goals for the Parks and Recreation Department is imperative. These statements guide the development and implementation of the Master Plan's recommendations, as well as future decision-making for the Township.

In order to improve the quality of life for all citizens – and parks and recreation services are a significant contributor to the overall health and wellness of both residents and the community as a whole – it is necessary to develop a vision for parks and recreation in Guelph/Eramosa. The vision, goals, and supporting analysis contained within this Master Plan has been prepared not only for the benefit of the Township, but also for its residents and many organizations, as a way of better understanding the roles and responsibilities that all stakeholders have in the delivery of high quality services.

5.1 Benefits of Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation provide residents and communities with numerous physical health, psychological, economic, and environmental benefits that are indicators of a high quality of life. Most notably, participation in leisure activities offers opportunities for healthy living, as well as a number of additional individual benefits that may accrue to residents on a personal level, such as:

- Increasing one's chances of success in life;
- Improving social skills through participating with others;
- Improving individual fitness levels;
- Developing and improving skill mastery;
- Creating life balance;
- Developing and improving physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional capacities;
- Increasing confidence and competence; and
- Improving creativity.

In addition to various personal benefits, parks and recreation services also contribute to several community benefits related to social interaction, economic spending, conservation of natural lands, and community vibrancy. Specific community benefits may include:

- Strengthening social inclusion and cohesion;
- Reducing anti-social behaviours;
- Increasing respect for diversity;
- Improving the overall health of children, youth, and families;
- Building community capacity within the Township;
- Including various age groups and building skills and community;
- Improving environmental health;
- Increasing participation;
- Improving opportunities for volunteerism and civic engagement;
- Providing places to engage in social interaction;
- Increasing community communication networks;
- Improving the state of the family and intergenerational opportunities; and
- Providing an increased sense of belonging and inclusion in neighbourhoods.

5.2 Vision Statement

A Vision Statement is meant to inspire and describe an ideal future state. Specific to this Master Plan, the Vision Statement identifies what the Township and its residents aspire to in terms of the local parks and recreation system. Based on public input and local understanding, the following Vision Statement is proposed for parks and recreation within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa.

To be an engaged community that works together to provide active and healthy living opportunities.

5.3 Goals

The proposed goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are intended to be statements that support the vision statement, while articulating the overall context for the development of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services for the residents of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa. The goals are complementary and they should be read and interpreted as a set, rather than as separate, isolated statements. These goals should be used to advise the recommendations of this Master Plan as well as future decisions relating to parks and recreation within the Township.

- 1. Facilitate Active Lifestyles** – Encourage and facilitate healthy and active lifestyles amongst residents of all ages, particularly youth and seniors.
- 2. Build Capacity** – Engage volunteers, community groups, and potential partners in the sustainable provision of parks and recreation programs and activities.
- 3. Communicate our Successes** – Promote the value of parks and recreation and increase awareness of local resources, events, activities, and opportunities.
- 4. Embrace our Uniqueness** – Capitalize upon our local strengths by recognizing how Guelph/Eramosa fits within the parks and recreation opportunities offered within the broader region.
- 5. Engage our Community** – Seek opportunities to improve the social and physical connections within Guelph/Eramosa’s various communities and beyond.
- 6. Make it Affordable** – Ensure long-term financial sustainability through the cost-effective and efficient management of resources and pursuit of external funding and partnerships.



SECTION SIX: SERVICE DELIVERY ASSESSMENT

The strength and success of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa’s parks and recreation system lies in its ability to work in partnership with the community to provide its residents and visitors with high quality facilities, programs, and events. In recognizing and utilizing the assets available within the community, the Township is able to concentrate on its current role as a facilitator of parks and recreation spaces while benefitting from expertise in parks and recreation programming that already exists amongst local residents and organizations. This requires collaboration between the Township, volunteers, non-profit providers, stakeholder agencies, and the private sector, with each entity delivering a key component of the parks and recreation system.

As discussed in Section 5, the proposed vision of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Department identifies the desire for Guelph/Eramosa to be “an engaged community that works together to provide active and healthy living opportunities.” Although this is a long-term vision, the Township is already successfully accomplishing many of the elements of this vision statement, which will serve its residents, visitors, partners, and staff well now and in the future.

This Section of the Master Plan assists the Township in identifying areas of high performance as well as areas that could improve through the introduction or adjustment of management tools, policies, operating techniques, and/or evaluation mechanisms. The process is not about passing or failing, but rather it is a matter of providing opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness with which the Township’s Parks and Recreation Department operates.

6.1 Roles and Responsibilities

One of the primary functions of the Parks and Recreation Department is the planning, development, operation, and maintenance of facilities, parks, and trails – this core role is not expected to change, although this Master Plan has an opportunity to influence priorities and practices in these areas.

In terms of providing equitable service delivery, the Department's role is to review and respond to the entire parks, recreation, and cultural needs in the community. In keeping with the proposed vision and goals, the following are the proposed service delivery responsibilities of the Township's Parks and Recreation Department:

- a) Understanding the demographics, community issues, and emerging trends;
- b) Determining gaps and needed improvements (with an emphasis on community and individual health and wellness improvements);
- c) Building and fostering partnerships with key providers and stakeholders in the delivery of services;
- d) Playing an ongoing supportive role to community groups, volunteers, and partners;
- e) Creating awareness of municipal services and engagement / participation opportunities;
- f) Providing facilities where gaps exist or the capacity is not present in the community;
- g) Supporting or facilitating social activities that promote community interaction, vibrancy, and cohesion;
- h) Working to include all residents and advocating for marginalized individuals and groups;
- i) Educating about and promoting the benefits of parks and recreation services (e.g., greening and beautification initiatives, etc.);
- j) Advancing opportunities for arts, culture, and heritage (as directed by broader corporate initiatives);
- k) Developing effective and meaningful policies and procedures that enhance accountability and transparency;
- l) Providing exceptional customer service; and
- m) Engaging the community in meaningful participation through planning, decision-making, and service delivery.

6.2 Community Development and Partnerships

Community development involves building the capacity of local residents and organizations in order that they may work to enhance their community, and in this case, the parks and recreation opportunities available for residents and visitors. It is through this collective attitude and cooperation that issues and gaps can be addressed by emphasizing local expertise and assets; in Guelph/Eramosa, this largely consists of a dedicated base of community organizations, service clubs, and volunteers, along with all of the resources (e.g., people power, fundraising capability, artistic skills, knowledge, etc.) that they possess. In the Township's more isolated and less populated areas (e.g., Marden and the surrounding rural community), capacity building and partnerships that maximize use of existing parks and facilities are critical.

The role of the Township in community development should be one of coordinator, with respect to both facilities and service delivery. In particular, it is recommended that the Township continue to serve as a provider of space for parks and recreation opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa by offering the community access to core indoor and outdoor facilities (through free use, rental, or other agreement). The geographic distribution of Guelph/Eramosa's population and the Township's strategic location in close proximity to a number of other communities that offer a multitude of parks and recreation opportunities (e.g., the Evergreen Seniors Centre in Guelph) also provide residents with variety and access to alternative providers. It should be noted that in some cases, Township residents may be required to pay non-resident fees in other communities (e.g., non-residents may register in Town of Milton programs by paying an additional 10% per program per person to a maximum of \$12 per program per person); this may present a reciprocal partnership opportunity for the Township and these other municipalities.

Partnerships are a key tool in the provision of parks and recreation opportunities in most municipalities, particularly in a community such as Guelph/Eramosa, where the Township is not a direct service provider of most leisure activities. As mentioned, the Township currently works with a number of partners to ensure its residents have access to services that are beyond its scope, including Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph *in motion*, Wellington County Library, East Wellington Community Services, Eden Mills Community Club, and countless volunteer groups (such as minor sports associations). These organizations offer a number of programs, facilities, and activities to residents of Guelph/Eramosa that enhance their quality of life. There are undoubtedly numerous other organizations within the Township that may be good candidates for partnership, but care must be taken to ensure that both the Township and the partner are benefitting from the relationship.

There are a number of criteria that must be considered prior to establishing a partnership with any entity (public, not-for-profit, private, etc.) wishing to introduce a new level of service with municipal assistance (e.g., a new facility or recreational program). At a minimum, the Township will have to consider:

- first and foremost, that the proposed partnership is consistent with the municipal mandate and philosophies;
- that there is a role for the Township to play in the provision of the program or service (e.g., facility provision, promotion, coordination, etc.);
- whether there is a quantifiable or justified need for the service in the community;

- that the service can be sustainably accommodated within the Township’s long-term capital and/or operating resources;
- whether the partner is sufficiently capable / qualified (e.g., financially, staffing, internal expertise, etc.) to be able to deliver the service over the long-term, and in compliance with legislated policies and municipal standards;
- the level of risk (e.g., financial, liability, etc.) and how this will be managed by the partner or the Township;
- whether the partner can provide the service on a sole source basis; and/or
- agreeing upon terms, conditions, standards, and responsibilities for all parties involved.

After partnerships are developed and agreements are formalized, it is important that that the Township regularly meet with its partners to discuss successes and challenges of the partnership by revisiting the original agreement and, where necessary, strengthening the agreements to ensure that a dynamic process exists to respond to changes and public preferences. For example, the Department could arrange monthly meetings with partners to discuss not only the effectiveness of the agreements but also as a means to continually understand local trends, needs, and usage patterns.

Recommendations

1.	Continue to serve as a provider of space for parks and recreation opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa by offering the community access to core indoor and outdoor facilities (through free use, rental, or other agreement).
2.	Pursue innovative partnerships and sponsorship opportunities that are consistent with the Department’s vision in order to reduce reliance on tax dollars in providing quality parks and recreation services in Guelph/Eramosa.
3.	Evaluate requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Township’s core mandate on a case-by-case basis after measuring them against this Plan’s principles and goals. Unsolicited proposals should be supported by a proponent-led market assessment and business plan that demonstrates why the Township should be involved in the delivery of a non-core service.
4.	Collect annual registration data from all organizations that use Township parks and facilities and monitor facility utilization to assist in tracking trends, changing demands, and allocation.
5.	The Township should seek to build relationships with adjacent municipalities to improve collaboration and ensure affordable access to facilities and programs for residents of Guelph/Eramosa.

6.3 Programming

The Township has offered only limited direct programming in the past (e.g., drop-in programs at Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre) and this role is not expected to change. Volunteer organizations (e.g., sports groups, service clubs, etc.) and other service providers (e.g., East Wellington Community Services, etc.) are best positioned to be the front line of program delivery in Guelph/Eramosa and should continue to be the focus, with the Township playing a supporting role as outlined above.

The growing population – in particular children, youth, and older adults/seniors – will have a significant impact on the need for parks and recreation in Guelph/Eramosa. Although programs for children are generally in good supply in Guelph/Eramosa, this is an area that requires constant focus due to its contributions to positive youth development. There is also a growing trend amongst the older adult demographic to participate in active recreational activities (instead of traditional seniors’ activities), thereby placing additional pressure on parks and recreation services. In response to these pressures, the Township should work with its community partners to continually evaluate services to these demographics in order to maximize participation amongst all youth and older adult age categories and ability levels. Special attention should be granted to the needs of the new active older adult, including the provision of more opportunities for active leisure and recreation. Consideration should be given to offering both low cost and value-added opportunities, as well as daytime programming (for seniors) and after-school programming (for youth).

Recommendations

6.	Work with community partners to regularly evaluate program opportunities (including low cost options), with an emphasis on children, youth, and older adults/seniors.
7.	Develop, maintain, and publicly promote an inventory of all community-based and municipal sport and active recreation opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa to ensure that there are equitable opportunities for all age groups and genders. This database should be accessible to local residents and serve to enhance awareness of local activities, programs, leagues, and events.
8.	Continue to promote physical activity and healthy communities through participation in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph <i>in motion</i> initiative and similar programs.
9.	Through Department leadership, practices, policies, and resources, support opportunities for informal, unstructured, and inclusive active recreation experiences.

6.4 Volunteers

Many of the local organizations that provide parks and recreation activities are operated and/or staffed by volunteers, as is the norm within the sector. Volunteers are essential to the community, particular in a municipality such as Guelph/Eramosa, wherein the Township does not play a role as a direct service provider of parks and recreation opportunities. Special events, programs, and community services are dependent upon volunteers, which means that the demand for individuals to fill these positions is high. Traditionally, older adults have provided many volunteer hours, although there has been a drive in recent years to involve youth in volunteering through mandatory hours being required for graduation from Ontario secondary schools. There is still some concern across the province that as the population continues to age, there will be a shortage of volunteers if proactive solutions are not discovered and put into practice. Community development is the preferred approach in attempting to secure a long-term volunteer presence within the municipality; engaged residents are more likely to remain involved!

Due to their important role within the community, it is imperative that the Township, in concert with its partners, ensure that priority is placed upon the recruitment, selection, training, supervision, and recognition of volunteers. Many community organizations may already have a volunteer management strategy in place, although these may not always be formalized or easily replicated within other organizations. For example, East Wellington Community Services currently coordinates a number of volunteers with a wide variety of abilities and skill sets, and the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington maintains a database of County-wide opportunities, including those in Guelph/Eramosa. It is recommended that the Township – in cooperation with community partners – explore options for creating and maintaining an up-to-date database of volunteers and volunteer opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa. At a minimum, the database should include names, contact information, key skills, interests, etc. of potential volunteers and names, contact information, organizational mandate, and available positions of organizations that are seeking volunteers. Township staff should consult with both East Wellington Community Services and the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington prior to embarking on this task to limit duplication of efforts.

Recognition of the achievements and efforts of volunteers is also of great importance as it can serve as incentive for involvement as well as aid in the retention of existing volunteers. Many municipalities and organizations host annual banquets, barbeques, and other types of events to show their appreciation for volunteers, with some even customizing recognition to specific sectors of the community (such as volunteers in minor sports, service clubs, etc.). For example, the Volunteer Centre of Guelph/Wellington hosts an annual event that recognizes one outstanding volunteer from each local community (including Guelph/Eramosa), as nominated by their peers. The number one barrier to volunteerism is a lack of time, which can lead to volunteer ‘burnout’ and frustration, though in tandem with other supports, recognition can help in reassuring them that their efforts are respected and worth the commitment while also bringing awareness to the community at large. As such, the development of a local volunteer recognition program is recommended; this program could include a recognition event, small gifts, and public listing of volunteer names and achievements (e.g., newspaper ad, posters at municipal facilities, email blasts, etc.).

Recommendations

10.	In cooperation with community partners, explore options for creating and maintaining an up-to-date database of volunteers and volunteer opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa. At a minimum, the database should include names, contact information, key skills, interests, etc. of potential volunteers and names, contact information, organizational mandate, and available positions of organizations that are seeking volunteers.
11.	Develop a Township-specific volunteer recognition program to celebrate contributions to recreation and other sectors. This program could include a recognition event, small gifts, and/or public listing of volunteer names and achievements.

6.5 Policies and Procedures

The Township has a number of policies affecting parks and recreation facilities and services, including (but not limited to) an Accessible Customer Service Policy, a Municipal Alcohol Policy, and a Group Affiliation Policy. These policies provide guidelines for ensuring all users are able to access municipal services, rentals of municipal facilities, and rights and responsibilities of organizations that wish to be affiliated with the Township, respectively. It is recommended that each of these policies (as well as any future policies developed by the Township) be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are up-to-date, accurate, and fair to the parties involved. In addition, the development of a Parks By-law governing uses and restrictions within parks and recreational areas should be a priority (see Appendix B for an example).

The Parks and Recreation Department should also consider creating a Policies and Procedures Reference Manual that is available at each Township facility to ensure that all staff receive the same message about the municipality's protocols. This Manual should include all applicable policies, as well as any procedures for dealing with members of the community, facility management, park maintenance, dispute resolution, and applicable legislation (e.g., *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, etc.).

There is an increasing need for municipalities to ensure that there is legislative compliance in all areas of operation. Legislative requirements can change from time to time and this critical operational component should be assigned to a staff member to complete a full listing and ensure that all staff are aware of and are complying with the legislation surrounding parks and recreation operations. This information should be included in the Policies and Procedures Reference Manual. A risk management program should be created to formally identify potential risks and protocols to be followed to mitigate risk.

Risk is also an important consideration when considering accessibility for persons with disabilities. Once the built environment regulations are in place, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* will require that each facility and park amenity be audited as to its ability to accommodate persons with disabilities, and that design standards be developed for new and renovated facilities. The Township's Accessible Customer Service Policy is already in place and in compliance with the mandated service standards for accessibility. Continued application of this and other emergent policies will need to be a priority for the Township.

Recommendations

12.	Conduct an annual review of all applicable municipal policies (as well as any future policies developed by the Township) to ensure that they are up-to-date, accurate, and fair to the parties involved.
13.	Create a Policies and Procedures Reference Manual that is available at each Township facility to ensure that all staff receive the same message about the municipality's protocols.
14.	Develop a Parks By-Law governing uses and restrictions within parks and recreational areas. (See template provided in Appendix B).
15.	Continue to regularly audit all parks and community facilities to ensure that they are safe, welcoming, encourage activity through signage, meet accessibility requirements, and encourage leading environmental practices.

6.6 Staffing

The Township's Parks and Recreation Department currently consists of the following positions:

- Manager of Parks and Recreation (full-time);
- Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant (full-time);
- Facility Coordinator for the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre (full-time);
- 2 Parks and Recreation Technicians (full-time);
- 1 Seasonal Labourer (full-time for 39 weeks per annum);
- 5 Summer Students (full-time for 17 weeks per annum);
- 5 Facility Attendants (part-time for average 43 weeks per annum); and
- 9 Bartenders (part-time casual).

The consultation program has identified a gap area in the staffing complement, specifically with respect to the management of volunteers and coordination of youth and seniors' activities. As previously discussed, volunteers are a key component of the service delivery system, particularly in a community such as Guelph/Eramosa, wherein the municipality itself is not normally a direct service provider. In addition, the growing population of older adults in Guelph/Eramosa will necessitate that Township staff be aware of the needs of this cohort. Youth are another market that often benefits from specialized attention and expertise, due to the ever changing trends and interests of this age group. As such, it is recommended that the Township create a new part-time position – Coordinator of Volunteers, Older Adults, and Youth – to oversee the active living and wellness needs of these three groups. This staff person would serve as a liaison between the Township and existing organizations that already provide services for these populations and groups, as well as administering any internal space and program/special event coordination (with direct programming delivery being the responsibility of third parties).

This position is not intended to replicate responsibilities currently being undertaken by existing staff, but rather to enhance the Parks and Recreation Department's ability to provide and/or coordinate services to the target groups (volunteers, youth, and older adults). Responsibilities may include (but not be limited to) the following:

- Develop, organize and monitor community recreation programs with emphasis on seniors and youth;
- Promote community development through indirect provision/facilitation and collaboration with existing and potential volunteer service providers;
- Oversee and direct the activities of volunteers (through recruitment, training, scheduling, monitoring, and/or recognition) or provide support to staff who supervise volunteers;
- Provide support to community groups regarding grant applications;
- Assist in the development of appropriate policies and procedures relative to community engagement;
- Prepare marketing materials for special events and community initiatives; and
- Solicit sponsorship, advertising, and donations for special events and programs as required.

A broader discussion on seniors and youth space requirements is contained in Section 7.

Recommendation

16.	Create a new part-time municipal position within the Parks and Recreation Department – Coordinator of Volunteers, Older Adults, and Youth – to oversee the active living and recreational needs of these three groups.
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6.7 Fiscal Responsibility

While the need for parks and recreation services is well justified, this infrastructure can be capital intensive from both construction and operational perspectives. These are facilities and spaces that generally serve residents for decades, and thus should be viewed as ongoing investments rather than one-time expenses. In years past, funding for local facilities has largely come from municipal and community contributions (e.g., taxes, debentures, capital reserves, development charges, fundraising, etc.) as well as grants from federal and provincial governments.

The Township's indoor and outdoor facilities are highly valued, but have capacity available for additional use. Although facility renewal and development may be required in certain instances, the focus of the Township (as discussed in Sections 7, 8, and 9 of this Master Plan) should largely be on increasing utilization and efficiencies within its existing inventory of parks and facilities. All facilities and amenities will require upgrading, maintenance, and in some cases, replacement, over time; these activities should be undertaken in such a way that the Township's financial and time commitment are maximized to the greatest benefit of the municipality and the community. In addition, while Township taxes contribute a great deal towards the operation and delivery of facilities and services, user fees are also beneficial to limiting the impact of parks and recreation opportunities on the tax rate. Grants, fundraising, and partnerships are also viable options that should be explored as opportunities arise.

Recommendations

17.	Regularly assess rental fees and charges to ensure that they represent a fair and equitable balance between true costs and public benefits, are competitive in the broader regional market, and allow the Township to sustain its delivery of high quality facilities and services.
18.	Annually allocate a minimum of 2.0% of the replacement value of each capital parks and recreation asset to individual reserve accounts for each of these assets as a basis to undertake future capital renovations, repairs, and expansions over the long term.
19.	Develop a ten-year capital maintenance and repair program for each major municipal facility asset to be funded from capital reserves, grants, user supports and other sources.

6.8 Awareness and Branding

Throughout consultation undertaken for this Master Plan, an overarching theme that emerged was that of a lack of awareness of what the Township has to offer, in terms of both facilities and services. Getting the word out to all residents in a community that covers such a large geographic area can be difficult, but the Township and its partners have made strides in attempting to do so through newspapers, posters, newsletters, websites, social media, etc. Although this strategy of casting a wide net has its merits, there is a need for more targeted awareness efforts, particularly for older adults. This age cohort will be increasingly literate in computer and internet use, but there is a large number of older adults that will continue to prefer traditional means of communication. The key for the Township will be ensuring that consistent and accurate messages are put out into the community in formats that are accessible to as many residents as possible.

As previously discussed, the Township’s role as a facilitator and supporter of parks and recreation opportunities (as opposed to direct service provider) requires that relationships with other entities (e.g., community organizations, private businesses, libraries, etc.) be fostered to provide a range of activities and events for Guelph/Eramosa residents. As such, there is a need for an open line of communication with these groups to ensure that issues, ideas, concerns, suggestions, needs, etc. are voiced and addressed. In order to facilitate these discussions, it is recommended that the Township host regular meetings with community organizations and the public to collectively discuss issues and opportunities related to service delivery, community needs, marketing and promotion, and overall communication.

It is also recommended that the Township work with its partners to develop a coordinated communications strategy through which all parties work together to promote activities, events, and services and to promote the benefits of participation and healthy lifestyles. If such a strategy was developed, it could improve awareness of local opportunities and contribute to greater participation and sustainability of community organizations. External resources may be needed to create the initial plan, while internal resources would be needed to implement and optimize ongoing communications efforts.

In developing the communications strategy, consideration should be given to (but not limited to) the following:

- Developing a community guide;
- Improving the Township’s website, including developing an online calendar identifying key dates (e.g., special events, etc.), community directory, etc.;
- The coordinated use of social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, etc.); and
- Digital distribution of newsletters, Trail Guide, etc. to facilitate greater awareness and coordination of current issues.

As mentioned above, a key element of the communications strategy should be the development of a community guide that identifies program opportunities, facility information, community contacts, and other municipal information. In many communities, hard copies of these guides are usually made available at municipal facilities, libraries and facilities operated by partner organizations, as well as often being delivered directly to households within the municipality either within a local newspaper or municipal tax bills, and online versions should also be created. The primary benefit of a resource such as a community guide is that the entire population is able to access the same information about the parks and recreation opportunities that exist. It is recommended that the Township develop a bi-annual community guide that identifies basic municipal information, parks and recreation offerings, trails and heritage resources, and community contact information. This may include items such as: waste and recycling pick-up dates; information about facility rentals; library programs and opening hours; community group contacts; community events; public reminders; etc. In addition, the Township may consider seeking advertising from local businesses in order to offset the costs of producing the community guide, ensuring that the companies are not in competition with the Township’s overall mandate.

To build upon the Township’s recently redesigned logo, it is recommended that the Township develop branding (logo, tag line, etc.) to provide consistent messaging to various groups, such as older adults, youth, and volunteers. One example could build off the proposed vision: “Working together to provide active and healthy living opportunities.”

Through consultation efforts with residents of Guelph/Eramosa, the issue of promotion of amenities, attractions, and sites of interest arose. Many visitors come to the Township for the sole purpose of using the Rockwood Conservation Area without actually entering into Rockwood proper. From an economic development perspective, attracting these visitors could provide local restaurants, businesses, attractions, etc. with increased revenue, and possibly inspire repeat visits to the area for more varied activities than just using the Conservation Area. Therefore, it is recommended that the Township work with the Grand River Conservation Authority to advertise some of these amenities (including the splash pad in Rockmosa Park) through signage within the Rockwood Conservation Area.

Recommendations

20.	Host regular meetings with community organizations and the public to collectively discuss issues and opportunities related to service delivery, community needs, marketing and promotion, and overall communication.
21.	Develop a communications strategy that includes key messages, target audiences, leisure opportunities offered by local groups and agencies, and all communications vehicles available to the community. This should also include internal communications to ensure that staff and Council are kept informed and have opportunities to provide meaningful input.
22.	Develop a bi-annual Community Guide (hard copy and online) that identifies basic municipal information, parks and recreation offerings, trails and heritage resources, and community contact information.
23.	Develop branding (logo, tag line, etc.) to provide consistent messaging to various groups, such as older adults, youth, and volunteers.
24.	Work with the Grand River Conservation Authority to advertise the Township's amenities (e.g., parks, restaurants, businesses, attractions, etc.) through signage within the Rockwood Conservation Area in order to draw visitors into the business areas of Guelph/Eramosa.



SECTION SEVEN: INDOOR FACILITY ASSESSMENT

The provision of recreation infrastructure, in terms of built structures and associated services, plays an important role in the daily life of a municipality's residents. The Township's recreation infrastructure promotes physical activity, healthy lifestyles, community interaction, and economic growth. This Section of the Master Plan provides analyses of the Township's supply of a variety of indoor facility types, including recommendations regarding future needs.

7.1 Multi-Purpose Space

The Township currently provides meeting and/or activity space at 4 facilities (Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre, Marden Community Centre, Rockmosa Community Centre, and Rockwood Fire Hall). In addition, the Rockwood Library meeting room is operated by the Wellington County Library, the Eden Mills Community Centre is operated by the Eden Mills Community Club, and the Rockwood Town Hall space is currently leased to Rockwood Nursery School.

The Eden Mills Community Centre is unique in that it is operated entirely by a group of dedicated volunteers under an agreement with the Township. The facility is accessible and environmentally efficient, with recent upgrades financed through community fundraising efforts. The Eden Mills Community Club charges families \$10 per year for membership, with these fees being used towards the provision of programs and events such as fitness, art classes, film showings, and a speaker series.

Multi-purpose space provides opportunities for a variety of uses including programming, meetings, community events, and private functions. The community benefits from having this space distributed throughout the Township as it provides local residents with accessible facilities for gatherings and celebrations. Historically, community halls were provided as single-use facilities, although co-location of meeting space with other amenities (both indoor and outdoor) is becoming the norm, such as within the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre. Multi-purpose facilities offer the opportunity for cross-programming and for savings in both the construction and operation of these spaces. As such, single-purpose, stand-alone community halls are not in high demand. Aside from the Marden Community Centre (which is located in the same building as the Marden Branch of the Wellington County Library) and the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre, each of the multi-purpose / meeting spaces in Guelph/Eramosa are stand-alone community hall facilities.

The household survey found that 29% of respondents support additional spending on community halls or banquet rooms, ranking them 13th of 19 facility types. Based upon input from the Township and the household survey, the existing facilities appear to be meeting the needs of residents, but consideration should be given to co-locating any future multi-purpose meeting space (should demand warrant) with existing recreation facilities to take advantage of operational efficiencies and cross-programming opportunities. No new multi-purpose meeting spaces are recommended for the planning period.

As mentioned, the Township's Rockwood Town Hall is currently leased to Rockwood Nursery School, although this lease is set to expire in the summer of 2013. The Town Hall is essentially a one-room, one-floor building located on Main Street South in Rockwood. While the facility has a kitchen and accessible washrooms, a shortage of parking and its small size limit its appeal as a municipal program space. There is no apparent demand for its use as a recreational venue at this time although it does have potential for use as a drop-in youth centre if there is sufficient community support (see Section 7.4); use of this facility is not recommended for seniors' activities (see Section 7.3). Should the current lease not be renewed, the Township may consider alternative municipal uses or seek to lease it for community or private uses, subject to demand and local land use regulations. Leases to private sector interests should be at market value.

Recommendations

25.	Consider alternative municipal uses for Rockwood Town Hall or seek to lease it for community or private uses, subject to demand and local land use regulations. Leases to private sector interests should be at market value.
26.	As opportunities arise, investigate the ability of municipal community centres and other program spaces to accommodate a broader range of community uses.

7.2 Indoor Turf and Track Facilities

The Township currently has one indoor turf field, surrounded by a 210-metre polyurethane indoor walking track within the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre in Marden Park. Regionally, there are indoor turf facilities within Guelph (Guelph Community Sports Dome and the Gryphon Fieldhouse at the University of Guelph), Halton Hills (Dufferin Rural Heritage Community Centre), Milton (Milton Soccer Centre), Kitchener (Budd Park Indoor Field), Cambridge (Com Dev Soccer Park), Hamilton (Soccer World, Player's Paradise, Wentworth Arenas), Brantford (Brantford City Soccer Club Indoor Complex), etc.; it should be noted that most of these facilities are private and/or community operated, rather than municipal facilities.

The Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre opened in September 2010 and is the Township's premier indoor recreation facility, providing access to field sports, indoor walking and running, etc. The indoor turf field is 210' x 120' and can be divided into two smaller fields of 100' x 120', providing opportunities for multiple users and/or a variety of options for a single user group although it is rented as one field. The usage of the facility is nearly revenue neutral overall, but there is very little use from June through August, which is typical of these types of facilities. A broad range of organizations currently make use of the facility, including those from surrounding communities (e.g., Puslinch, Fergus, Guelph). Regular renters also include Rockwood Soccer, Perpetual Motion Sports & Entertainment, Derby Adult Soccer League, Game On Sports & Entertainment, Guelph Track & Field Club, Ontario Football Alliance, etc. Many of these organizations provide recreation opportunities for adults, particularly on weekday evenings, although there are very few bookings during daytime hours Monday through Friday.

The Township is on the leading edge of the trend of indoor turf facility provision, and was able to secure the funding for the construction of this facility through Federal and Provincial sources (Building Canada Fund Communities Component) and municipal contributions. There are no commonly established service levels for the municipal provision of indoor turf, given its relatively recent rise in popularity, but indoor soccer fields are now generally available in most municipalities with over 50,000 residents. Some smaller communities, such as Guelph/Eramosa, are building indoor turf facilities to meet a variety of objectives, including improvement of physical activity levels, as a service to field sport partners, or to serve a regional market and potentially realize net revenues.

Findings from the public input sessions and workshops suggest that the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre is a valued facility, but there is not widespread awareness about its programs or availability of the walking track. Residents of Guelph/Eramosa are invited to use the walking track at no charge, although exclusive rentals are available for a fee. The Township does maintain a money collection box at the front door of the facility, employing an honour system to collect a \$2 fee per use by non-residents; non-residents can also purchase monthly or annual memberships. Continued promotional activities should assist in increasing awareness.

There may be an opportunity for the Township to capitalize on the recent success of the Canadian women's national team at the London Olympics and the upcoming 2015 Women's World Cup of Soccer to be hosted by Canada through the provision of indoor soccer tournaments and camps at the facility. This would allow the Township to generate additional revenues, while providing its youth with an option for summer activity, as well as March Break and winter holidays. No new indoor turf facilities or walking tracks are recommended for the master planning period.

7.3 Indoor Space for Seniors’ Activities

The Township does not currently provide any dedicated seniors’ spaces. Programming is typically provided by non-profit groups through municipal facilities.

Although the Township does not currently directly provide recreation programs or dedicated space for older adults, its facilities are utilized by other organizations in order to provide these services. For example, East Wellington Community Services provides access to services for seniors in rural areas, including out of the Rockwood branch of the Wellington County Library. Services provided by this organization include wellness checks, information, support, transit, day trips, day program for older adults with dementia, and recreational programs. Pilates and yoga classes have fees attached to them, but all other programming (knitting, dancing, euchre, and bridge) cost \$1 per visit.

It should also be noted that there is also a healthy supply of older adult facilities and programming opportunities in surrounding communities, including Guelph, Centre Wellington, Erin, and Milton. In many cases, residents of Guelph/Eramosa may be required to pay non-resident fees for programs and rentals.

Older Adult Facilities and Programs Offered by Surrounding Municipalities

Municipality	Older Adult Facilities	Municipal Program Examples
City of Guelph	Evergreen Seniors Community Centre (no non-resident fee as operated by Guelph Wellington Seniors Association)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga • Computer maintenance • Safety for seniors • Valentine’s Day brunch • Painting with pastels
Township of Centre Wellington	Victoria Park Seniors Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line dancing • Foot care clinics • Book clubs • Reflexology • Bus trips
Town of Erin	Centre 2000 Seniors Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs provided by East Wellington Community Services
Town of Milton	Milton Seniors’ Activity Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in cribbage • Food safety workshop • Song Spinners Chorus • Nordic pole walking • Twilight yoga
Town of Halton Hills	Halton Hills Seniors Recreation Centres (2 locations – one in Acton and one in Georgetown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qi Gong • Carpet bowling • Canasta • Hiking club • Movies

The Canadian population is aging as the Baby Boomers begin to reach retirement age. The 2011 Census reported that 30% of the population of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa was age 55 and older and, as this group continues to age, there will be a growing need for programming (and potentially space) to address their needs.

The household survey asked respondents to identify those facility types for which they would support additional spending by the Township. Seniors' centres or dedicated seniors' space received support from 47% of respondents, ranking it 5th of 19 options.

In 2010, East Wellington Community Services completed a needs assessment of a broad range of community and health services for seniors within the Town of Erin and the Township of Guelph/Eramosa. One of the key findings of this report was the need for a sense of community amongst older adults, which was defined as "active involvement and programming through seniors activities, integrated community activities, get-togethers, community kitchens, day trips of interest, gently exercise programs, dancing and many other types of continuous stimulation." Through this finding, the report suggested that a concerted effort across sectors would be required to achieve this sense of community and belonging amongst local seniors.

To solicit specific input for this Master Plan, two Older Adult Input Sessions were held in October 2012 – one at Rockmosa Community Centre and one at Marden Community Centre. The sessions were well attended, allowing the Consultants to gather input from approximately 80 older adults over the two evenings. Although each session revealed a variety of issues, there were a number of over-arching themes, including the following barriers to participation:

- Lack of awareness and publicity about opportunities for older adults;
- Need for safe and affordable transportation options;
- Health concerns and disabilities keep many older adults from accessing recreation; and
- Safety concerns in parks and on trails (e.g., lighting, maintenance, rest areas, etc.).

When asked about facility and space options required to address program and activity needs, the two groups had differing opinions on the needs of their respective communities. In Rockwood, the primary desire was a dedicated seniors' centre that could include a kitchen, meeting space, exercise room, etc. with the potential to expand, or a dedicated older adult room in a community centre. In Marden, the group felt that the Township already has a number of facilities that could be used more effectively to serve the older adult population – it was greater coordination and marketing that was required in this part of the Township.

In all, the targeted consultation undertaken with older adults within Guelph/Eramosa revealed an overwhelming interest in participating in parks and recreation activities, which is a positive reflection of this ever-growing population segment. There is sufficient interest in the provision of dedicated space to warrant further consideration; however, the suggestion of better utilizing existing facilities is a key message for the Township to pursue. The Township's geographic size and dispersal of its population amongst a number of smaller communities makes the provision of a geographically centralized facility a difficult and unsustainable undertaking. The construction and operation of new recreation space can be costly (particularly for a smaller community), suggesting that the reuse of an existing municipal space may be a more feasible option should capacity exist.

Given the growing needs of this age group, it is recommended that the Township pursue the creation of a hub for older adults' activities at an existing facility to help meet the social needs of this population. This space need not be large – in fact, it is recommended that it begin at a smaller scale in order to test local needs and interests. Building community capacity (e.g., volunteers, program instructors, lines of communication, etc.) is just as important as providing a physical hub within which older adults can meet and participate. Once this grassroots support is established and proven to be sustainable, the Township

may wish to consider facility expansion or development; however, this is likely to take several years. Should demand for older adult activity space continue to grow beyond what can be accommodated within the space recommended in this Master Plan, broad community space needs should be reassessed.

The Rockwood Library has been presented by the Township as an ideal location within which an existing underutilized meeting room could be converted into a hub for older adults within which social activities such as teas, card games, workshops, guest speakers, and meetings could take place. The location of this space within the library would provide access to books, computers, and ample parking, and may also afford the Township the opportunity to expand to include a kitchenette and outdoor leisure space / gardens. Furthermore, drop-in activities and special / one-off events such as workshops could be accommodated within the adjacent Rockmosa Community Centre. Additional discussions with the Wellington County Library may help to formalize this concept. It is important to note that this space is not intended to be used exclusively for older adult activities – it will still be available for community and library activities at key times – rather, it will become a comfortable ‘home base’ from which older adult activities can be coordinated and/or offered on certain days and times. Should this location turn out not to be viable, the Township may consider other municipal or third-party facilities (e.g., churches, schools, etc.); the latter would require agreements protecting the Township’s interests relating to access, costs, maintenance, etc.

With respect to programming, there is a good variety of existing programs available for older adults within close proximity to the Township. However, the lack of local activities, particularly in Rockwood, was a concern raised by residents. It was suggested that some of these gap areas may be best addressed best through partnerships with community groups and/or private businesses. The Township’s existing model does not involve the provision of direct programming to this age segment, and it is recommended that the Township continue to serve as a facilitator of space for programming rather than by providing direct recreation program opportunities for older adults. This Master Plan recommends the creation of a new municipal position – Coordinator of Volunteers, Older Adults, and Youth (see Recommendation 16 in Section 6).

Another key message heard from older adults within the community was their lack of awareness of programs and facilities offered within Guelph/Eramosa, whether by the Township or by other providers. There seems to be a high level of interest in being active in parks and recreation, but many older adults (particularly – but not limited to – those in the more rural western half of the Township) are simply not aware of the breadth of opportunities available in the area. The Township may consider creating a ‘brand’ for its older adult services. Branding may include a logo, tagline, and web presence, which would provide a centralized website for older adults that are comfortable with computers to access information regarding opportunities that are targeted to them. This branding could be linked to the Township’s affiliation policy and also used by partners and organizations. It also bears noting that this Master Plan recommends the development of a Community Guide within which parks and recreation opportunities (among other municipal services) are publicized. This guide will serve as a valuable tool in ensuring that older adults in Guelph/Eramosa have access to information about opportunities for getting involved in their community.

Recommendations

27.	Create a hub for older adult activities in the Rockwood area for social gatherings, volunteer-led programming, and drop-in activities (e.g., cards, workshops, lectures, etc.). The preferred option is to utilize the Rockwood Library meeting room, which may require modest improvements (e.g., installation of a kitchenette, outdoor reading garden, etc.) to accommodate the intended use, along with other community uses. Longer-term space needs for older adults may be reassessed following a reasonable trial period.
28.	Consider creating a brand for the Township’s older adult services, which may include a logo, tagline, web presence, etc.

7.4 Space for Youth Activities

Although the population is aging, youth between the ages of 10 and 19 currently comprise 15% of the Township’s population (1,830 residents). This age cohort will continue to require access to programs and facilities that are reflective of their needs. One of the most important components of recreation and leisure opportunities for youth is engagement, in that youth need to be made to feel that they are a respected part of the community, that their voices are heard, and that their feedback is reflected in the opportunities that exist. Simply put, empowered youth are engaged youth.

Although the Township does not currently provide direct programming or dedicated space for youth, it does facilitate their involvement through the provision of high quality indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure spaces, including Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre’s track and sports fields (indoor and outdoor), ball diamonds, soccer fields, parks, outdoor skating rinks (in the winter), and community centres / meeting rooms. In addition, the Wellington County Library maintains a page for teens on its website, as well as offering a teen summer reading challenge, a teen book blog, book clubs, and a Teen Advisory Group. The Township may wish to consider working more closely with the Library with respect to promotion and/or provision of program opportunities for youth. Each of these activities and groups offers youth the opportunity to be engaged in their community, as well as gaining valuable skills. The Eden Mills Community Centre also provides some targeted recreational youth opportunities.

The household survey revealed that 45% of respondents support spending on youth-oriented spaces, ranking it 7th of 19 options. The survey also asked respondents to identify their level of satisfaction with recreation and leisure opportunities for specific age groups; satisfaction with opportunities for teens between the ages of 13 and 18 was 41%, which was the lowest of all age categories. It should be noted that this finding is similar to other communities we have surveyed, and is likely due to the fact that youth are generally not the ones completing the survey. Adults and older adults may also have a perception of youth as non-participants that are in need of meaningful, constructive activities. As such, this finding should be considered in concert with the results of other forms of consultation, including the community workshops, which posed the question of ‘how can we improve indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and services in Guelph/Eramosa?’. The most common response was a need for more targeted program options for specific age groups, including youth, indicating that there may be a gap in program options for teens.

The Township does not currently employ any programming staff (and this approach continues to be supported), which suggests that working in partnership with existing providers (e.g., neighbouring municipalities, places of worship, schools, volunteer groups, etc.) to ensure access to their program opportunities for Guelph/Eramosa’s youth may be the most effective solution. There are a number of opportunities located within Guelph, Centre Wellington, Halton Hills, etc. that are accessible to Guelph/Eramosa’s youth, albeit transportation is required.

As discussed in Section 7.1, should the Township decide to consider the provision of drop-in space for youth, there may be an opportunity at the Rockwood Town Hall if this facility comes available following the current lease. The location and layout of this facility would provide a viable option for dedicated youth space, particularly as a ‘hang-out’ social site for teens. The Township could pursue partnerships for the acquisition of furnishings (including chairs, couches, tables, games tables like ping pong and pool, television, video game systems, etc.). Drop-in youth space provides a safe spot for this age group to hang out with their peers. As such, staffing is required at a minimum (and may be able to be handled with volunteers), as is equipment, which many municipalities are able to acquire through donations of funds and/or material goods. Guelph/Eramosa’s location in close proximity to the Greater Toronto Area means that there are a number of commuter / latchkey households with youth that may be seeking a place to go after school before parents and guardians return home from work. These household characteristics suggest that there may be demand, but these types of initiatives are best led by an outside agency with sustainable funding streams. The Township should keep an open mind to this and seek a lead agency if there is sufficient community support for this type of venture.

Recommendations

29.	Should there be sufficient community support for the provision of a drop-in space for youth, consideration may be given to using the Rockwood Town Hall in partnership with an outside agency with a sustainable source of funding.
30.	Work more closely with the Library with respect to promotion and/or provision of program opportunities for youth.

7.5 Fitness and Active Living Spaces

Trends suggest that Canadians are becoming more health conscious in light of studies revealing serious issues pertaining to obesity rates and declining levels of overall physical health. Demand for traditional types of aerobic and weight-training fitness activities continue to be high; however, demand for new, holistic, health-based, and specialized activities (e.g., Zumba, sport-specific training, athletic therapy, etc.) is fast gaining popularity, especially among older adults.

In general, fitness facilities have largely been provided by the private sector, with many municipalities electing not to enter the open market in order to avoid service duplications and the need to compete on costing and facility quality with a for-profit entity. Residents of Guelph/Eramosa are able to access a number of private fitness facilities in Rockwood and nearby communities, which provide fitness equipment, classes, training, etc. Fitness is a high cost industry to enter, and it is not recommended that the Township pursue the provision of this facility type at this time. There have been requests for access

to 'free' equipment at the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre (i.e., first come, first served with no membership), but it is suggested that the Township instead focus on facilitating active living opportunities at existing municipal facilities.

7.6 Ice Pads

The Township does not currently provide any indoor ice pads, although there are up to 6 natural outdoor skating rinks available in the winter months, weather and volunteers permitting.

In non-growth communities, seldom are new arenas built where previously there were none. There are a number of reasons for this, with the primary being that arenas are rental-driven facilities that require substantial usage from minor sport associations. There are no minor hockey or figure skating associations in Guelph/Eramosa, rather residents primarily register with organizations in Guelph, Centre Wellington, and Halton Hills. Due to provincial sport organization residency rules, any competitive skater or player would be required to play in one of these existing centres. On top of this, the trend is toward amalgamation of centres (thus increasing the competitiveness of smaller centres), rather than the formation of new centres / associations. As a result, if an arena was built in Guelph/Eramosa, it would largely serve recreational skating and house league hockey interests. There are no indications that this is a growing market locally. In fact, the regional supply is set to increase with 2 new ice rinks in Georgetown (a net increase of one pad) and potential future development in the south end of Guelph and/or at the University of Guelph.

In most communities, ice sports continue to be popular and pressures on arenas, particularly during prime times, have been observed across the province. Future outlooks suggest that ice demand at a provincial level could see modest declines as the population ages, although there may be fluctuations from sport to sport and within age cohorts. For example, in recent years there has been considerable growth in the number of females playing hockey, but figure skating has been declining provincially. Arena usage is traditionally driven by youth participation; Guelph/Eramosa's existing older adults (currently 55+) and those that will be older adults within the next 20 years (currently 35-54) comprise more than half of the Township's population.

According to the household survey undertaken for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 30% of respondent households participated in hockey or figure skating within the preceding 12 months, which is similar to the average amongst other communities surveyed by the Consultants. Although there are no arenas in Guelph/Eramosa, it would appear that this is not a significant barrier to participation in organized ice activities. With respect to facility types that respondents felt required additional spending by the Township, 48% mentioned arenas, ranking them fourth of 19 indoor and outdoor facility types. While there is a general desire by many residents to see investment in a municipal arena, the regional supply of rinks is serving the community well.

There is a regional supply of 24 municipal ice pads within communities that are immediately adjacent to Guelph/Eramosa – Centre Wellington, Erin, Guelph, Halton Hills, Milton, and Woolwich. The following figure illustrates the approximate distance to each of these arenas from a point in central Guelph/Eramosa.

Regional Supply of Municipal Arenas in Adjacent Communities with Approximate Driving Distances



Note: Excludes 2 ice pads at University of Guelph.

The Township’s population is heavily concentrated in Rockwood, with the secondary population centre being the Marden area; the following table shows the distance in kilometres from municipal arenas to both Rockwood and Marden.

Regional Supply of Municipal Arenas in Immediately Adjacent Communities

Community	Arena	# of Ice Pads	Distance (km) to Rockwood	Travel time (minutes) to Rockwood	Distance (km) to Marden	Travel time (minutes) to Marden
Guelph	Centennial Park Arena	1	15	19	11	13
	Exhibition Park Arena	1	15	21	5	7
	Sleeman Centre	1	13	16	6	11
	Victor Davis Recreation Centre	1	11	14	7	10
	West End Community Centre	2	17	23	9	11
Centre Wellington	Centre Wellington Sportsplex	2	25	27	16	14
	Elora Community Centre	1	35	37	16	17
Erin	Centre 2000 Community Centre and Arena	1	23	28	36	41
	Hillsburgh Community Centre and Arena	1	27	30	32	42
Halton Hills*	Acton Community Centre and Arena	2	13	14	34	36
	Mold-Masters Sportsplex	2*	26	28	48	50
Woolwich	Woolwich Memorial Centre	2	43	49	25	27
	Woolwich Township Arena	1	49	52	24	32
Milton	John Tonelli Sports Centre	1	32	37	51	46
	Milton Memorial Centre	1	32	38	53	46
	Milton Sports Centre	4	32	38	52	48
TOTAL		24	Average 26 km	Average 29 minutes	Average 27 km	Average 28 minutes

*Travel time is estimated based upon arena addresses and a central point in both Rockwood and Marden (source: Google maps). The Town of Halton Hills is currently constructing two additional ice pads at the Mold-Masters Sportsplex, which will bring the community's total to 6 municipally operated ice pads. *The Town of Halton Hills is also home to the Georgetown Memorial Arena, will be closed upon completion of the Mold-Masters addition; this ice pad has not been counted in the regional supply.*

Ice pads are considered to be 'drive-to' amenities that people expect to have to travel to reach. The household survey revealed that 67% of residents of Guelph/Eramosa are willing to travel up to 20 minutes to participate in recreational activities; there are 4 arenas (6 municipal ice pads) within 20 minutes of Rockwood and 7 arenas (9 municipal ice pads) within 20 minutes of Marden. Given the combination of available regional ice pads and the relatively high cost of construction and operation of municipal arenas (comparable examples suggest that construction of a single pad arena could cost approximately \$10 million and may lose between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year, excluding financing costs), the development of a municipal arena in Guelph/Eramosa is not recommended for this master

planning period. However, should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise, the Township may consider low-risk participation in a private sector arena development in order to serve the recreational skating needs of Township residents. To meet recreational skating and ball hockey demand, the Township may re-examine the need for an outdoor covered rink (refrigerated; similar to the one at the Puslinch Optimist Recreation Centre in Aberfoyle) at Rockmosa Park in the long-term.

Recommendations

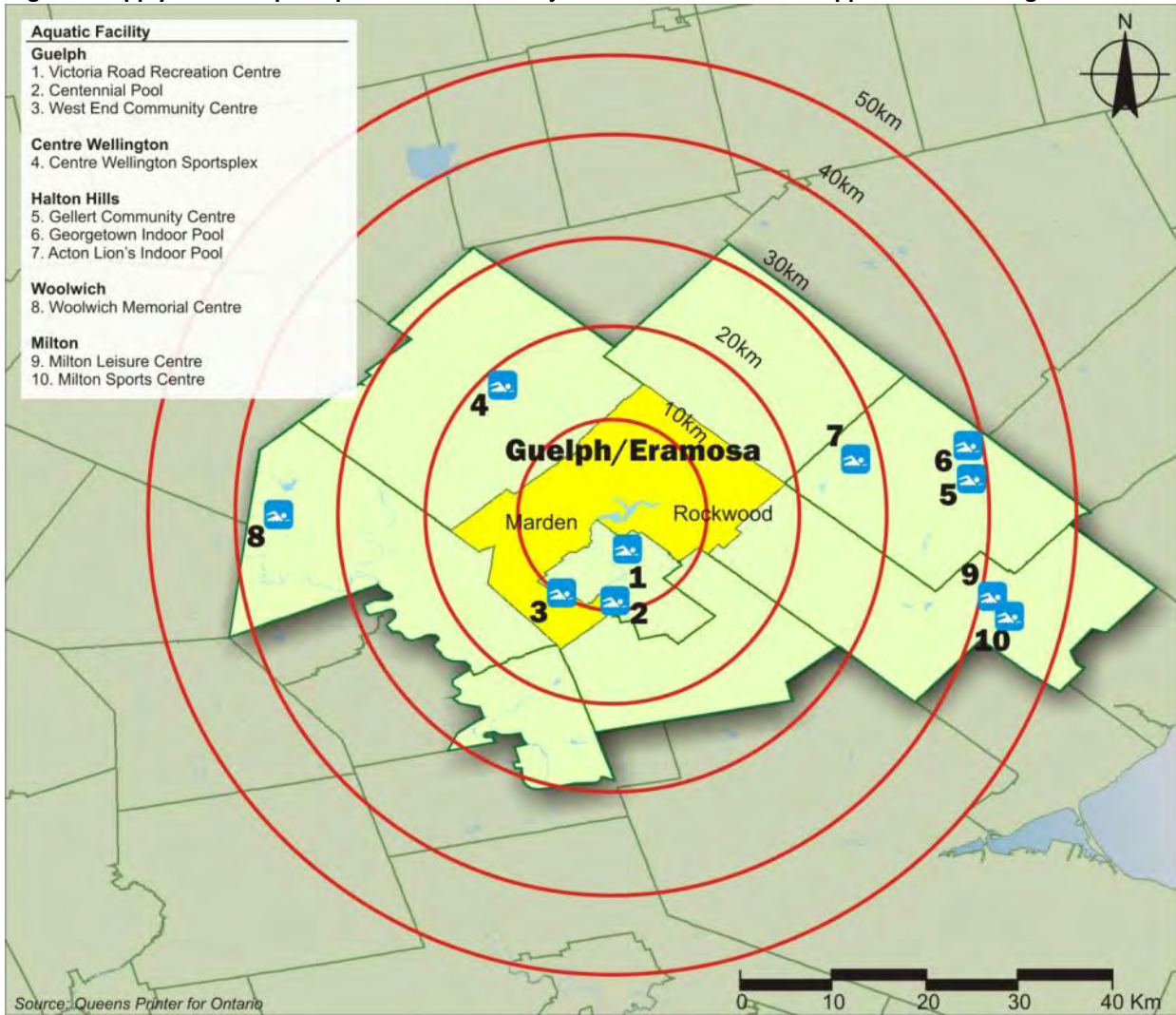
31.	The development of a municipal arena in Guelph/Eramosa is <u>not</u> recommended for this master planning period. However, should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise, the Township may consider low-risk participation in a private sector arena development in order to serve the recreational skating needs of Township residents.
32.	To meet recreational skating and ball hockey demand, the Township may evaluate the need for an outdoor covered rink (refrigerated; similar to the one at the Puslinch Optimist Recreation Centre) at Rockmosa Park in the long-term.

7.7 Indoor Aquatics

The Township does not currently provide any municipal indoor aquatic facilities. Residents have access to 8 facilities within approximately 30 minutes of driving time from Rockwood and/or Marden, including: Victoria Road Recreation Centre, Centennial Pool, and West End Community Centre in Guelph; Centre Wellington Sportsplex; Gellert Community Centre, Georgetown Indoor Pool, and Acton Lion’s Indoor Pool in Halton Hills; and Woolwich Memorial Centre. The figure on the following page illustrates the approximate distance to each of these aquatic facilities from a point in central Guelph/Eramosa.

The household survey found that 49% of households participated in swimming (indoor or outdoor) within the previous 12 months, making it the third most common activity reported. Respondents were asked what percentage of their parks and recreational needs are met within Guelph/Eramosa; 19% of the entire survey sample identified traveling out-of-town for swimming, which was the most common response. Of note, 90% of respondents to the household survey reported being willing to drive up to 30 minutes for the parks and recreation activities they participate in the most. There are 7 municipal aquatic facilities within 30 minutes driving of Rockwood and 5 within 30 minutes of Marden, which provides residents of both areas with numerous choices. The findings of the household survey suggest that residents of Guelph/Eramosa enjoy participating in swimming and are willing to travel to participate in this activity.

Regional Supply of Municipal Aquatic Facilities in Adjacent Communities with Approximate Driving Distances



Note: Excludes private pools and indoor pools at the University of Guelph.

In addition, the following table shows the distance in kilometres from each of these regional facilities to both Rockwood and Marden.

Regional Supply of Municipal Indoor Aquatic Facilities in Immediately Adjacent Communities

Community	Aquatic Facility	Description of Pool(s)	Distance (km) to Rockwood	Travel time (minutes) to Rockwood	Distance (km) to Marden	Travel time (minutes) to Marden
Guelph	Victoria Road Recreation Centre	• 6-lane 50-metre	11	14	7	10
	Centennial Pool (shared with school)	• 6-lane 25-yard	15	19	11	13
	West End Community Centre	• 4-lane 25-metre • leisure pool • therapeutic pool	17	23	9	11
Centre Wellington	Centre Wellington Sportsplex	• 6-lane 25-metre • leisure pool	25	27	16	14
Halton Hills	Gellert Community Centre	• 6-lane 25-metre • play pool	28	30	50	52
	Georgetown Indoor Pool	• 6-lane 25-metre	24	25	46	47
	Acton Lions Indoor Pool	• 6-lane 25-metre • diving board	12	15	34	37
Woolwich	Woolwich Memorial Centre	• 6-lane 25-metre • warm water teaching leisure pool	43	49	25	27
Milton	Milton Leisure Centre	• 6-lane 25-metre • play pool	33	35	52	44
	Milton Sports Centre	• 8-lane 25-metre • play pool	32	38	52	48
TOTAL		10 facilities	Average 24 km	Average 28 minutes	Average 30 km	Average 30 minutes

Travel time is estimated based upon arena addresses and a central point in both Rockwood and Marden (source: Google maps).

Swimming is a popular activity in all communities due to its appeal to persons of all ages, levels of ability, and cultural backgrounds. However, the provision of an indoor aquatic facility is an expensive undertaking, in terms of both construction and operation. In fact, municipal indoor aquatic centres are virtually assured of running an operational deficit from year to year, even in the largest markets (generally requiring annual subsidies between \$250,000 and \$400,000 depending on the type of pool and the market that it serves). Construction costs could be between \$6 million and \$10 million, but is highly variable depending on the site and pool design. The decision to construct indoor aquatic facilities in communities is generally made from the perspective that intrinsic value (e.g., community benefit that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to swim), will outweigh financial losses.

As mentioned, Township residents have access to a variety of lessons, programs, and recreational swimming opportunities at indoor aquatic facilities in surrounding municipalities, some by paying a non-resident fee (for example, the City of Guelph charges a non-resident fee of \$7.50 plus taxes per

participant per program). Drop-in swims are priced by age rather than residency in each of the communities adjacent to Guelph/Eramosa, rather than by residency. As such, there are plenty of opportunities for Guelph/Eramosa residents to partake in indoor swimming within a reasonable distance of their homes.

In terms of provision targets, a population of 25,000 to 30,000 residents is a common threshold at which many smaller municipalities begin to consider the development of an indoor pool. The population of Guelph/Eramosa is only expected to reach 15,290 residents by 2031, which is well below this 'industry standard'. Due to the Township's small population base, the proximity of other pools in the region, and the high costs of constructing and operating this type of facility, a municipal indoor aquatic facility in Guelph/Eramosa is not recommended at this time.

Please see Section 8.5 for a discussion on outdoor aquatic facilities.

Recommendation

33.	The development of a municipal indoor pool in Guelph/Eramosa is <u>not</u> recommended for this master planning period. However, should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise, the Township may consider low-risk participation in a private sector aquatic facility development in order to serve the recreational swimming needs of Township residents.
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SECTION EIGHT: OUTDOOR FACILITY ASSESSMENT

Outdoor recreation facilities provide members of the community with opportunities for participation in a wide variety of formal and informal recreation activities. This Section of the Master Plan examines the Township's outdoor facilities and includes recommendations regarding future needs.

8.1 Trails

There are approximately 81 kilometres of trails available within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, the majority of which are owned / leased by conservation authorities, upper-tier municipalities, and/or private organizations (including the Ignatius Jesuit Centre). There are 2.5 kilometres of municipal trails within Marden Park, and 2 walking tours of Eden Mills and Rockwood that are on municipal lands, for a total of 6.3 kilometres of municipal trails. A recent focus has been placed on linking Rockwood to Eden Mills through a series of on and off-road trails.

In the majority of communities, walking and/or hiking emerges as the most popular recreation activity undertaken by residents. The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is no exception, as 86% of respondents to the household survey reported participation in walking or hiking for leisure within the preceding 12 months, ranking it as the top activity. Walking as a leisure activity is common amongst older adults, as it is a low impact activity that helps keep this age group physically active. As the older adult population is

expected to grow in Guelph/Eramosa, there will likely be continued interest in walking and hiking activities and facilities.

Trails can be multi-seasonal facilities, particularly if they accommodate activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc. in the winter and hiking / cycling trails in the spring, summer and fall months. The Township should continue to make multi-use, multi-seasonal, low maintenance trail development a high priority.

The household survey revealed that Township residents are generally satisfied with the trails and pathways within the Township (82% satisfaction), but are also supportive of spending additional public funds on trails, with greater interest in unpaved nature trails (57%, ranking it 2nd of 19 facility types) than paved multi-use trails (38%, ranking them 8th of 19 facility types).

The presence of two conservation areas within the Township provides excellent opportunities for trail use, but come at a financial cost to users, as entry to the parks costs a fee (per visit, personal season passes, and vehicle season passes are available). Both Guelph Lake and Rockwood Conservation Areas have hiking trails that lead users on a variety of terrain, including both unpaved nature trails and paved roadways. Rockwood Conservation Area is particularly popular amongst residents due to its location within an urban area and ways to improve and streamline access for walk-up users (e.g., digital pass card system) should be explored with the Conservation Authority.

Other local trails already include linkages through other communities; for example the Kissing Bridge Trail starts in Guelph/Eramosa, and goes through Centre Wellington, Woolwich, Elmira, Mapleton, Wellesley, and ends in Millbank. This trail was constructed through a joint lease by the County of Wellington and Regional Municipality of Waterloo, with agreements being signed with five volunteer stewardship organizations to ensure the trail is maintained over time. This trail provides an excellent local example as to how communities can work together to provide access for their residents and visitors alike. It is recommended that the Township continue to work with neighbouring municipalities and conservation areas to provide efficient access to existing trails and potentially pursue expansion and/or connections to these trails to improve connectivity; this includes – but is not limited to – a system for regular walk-up users of the Rockwood Conservation Area.

The County of Wellington’s Official Plan promotes healthy, active communities through a variety of ways, including the provision of trails, facilitation of pedestrian and non-motorized movement, and the consideration of the impacts of these decisions on parks, forests, and conservation areas. As such, the groundwork has been laid for the Township to pursue the provision of trails and connections, both within the municipality and in concert with other communities within the County and beyond. Any trail development will need to respect the Official Plan’s guidelines regarding Greenlands, as these natural heritage features require protection. In addition, the Township is home to a great deal of agricultural land, which must also be respected in any development of trail systems. The County’s Official Plan is also supportive of policies that promote the provision of pedestrian trails, particularly those which re-use abandoned railway right of ways.

In addition, the County of Wellington has recently finalized its Active Transportation Plan, of which a major objective is to “recommend a network of active transportation routes throughout the County and connecting to neighbouring municipalities.” This Plan also promotes the incorporation of active transportation facilities in the planning and development process. This document, in concert with the

Official Plan, provides a solid foundation upon which the Township can pursue the addition of trails to its inventory, particularly in partnership with other municipalities to improve connectivity within the region. Section 9.3 of this Master Plan outlines priorities and guidelines for the acquisition of lands for parkland and open space, and should also be considered when determining how best to secure lands for trail development.

As previously discussed, trails are often used for walking, running, cross country skiing, and biking, but they are also used for horseback riding in some cases, particularly in rural communities. The household survey revealed that 16% of households had participated in horseback riding in the preceding 12 months, ranking it 10th of 20 activities. While there seems to be interest in participating in horseback riding, when respondents were asked whether they support additional municipal spending on 19 different facility types, equestrian trails ranked last, with only 15% support. Most of the horseback riding likely occurs on private lands.

The Provincial Forum on the Future of the Equestrian Industry in Ontario was held in the Fall of 2010, with goals of examining the economic impact of the industry and exploring opportunities for promoting its growth and sustainability. The primary gaps that were identified included prohibitive governmental regulations, lack of public awareness, lack of skill and knowledge building within the industry, and a lack of available statistics regarding the industry. Possible solutions included greater coordination amongst members of the industry and with government, the creation of information sharing tools, and promotion of the industry as an advocate within planning. Options for accommodating horses and other non-motorized uses should be considered by the Township through their future trail planning initiatives.

Recommendations

34.	A continued emphasis on trail development is supported by the community. High priority should be assigned to trail and active transportation promotion and development, particularly those projects identified in the County of Wellington Active Transportation Master Plan as well as connecting the Cross Creek neighbourhood to the City of Guelph.
35.	Continue to work with neighbouring municipalities and conservation areas to provide efficient access to existing trails and potentially pursue expansion and/or connections to these trails to improve connectivity; this includes – but is not limited to – a system for regular walk-up users of the Rockwood Conservation Area.
36.	Pursue the development of a perimeter walking trail around the expanded Rockmosa Park.
37.	Continue to identify and evaluate trail development, pedestrian crossings, and connectivity opportunities through the planning approvals process.
38.	When planning and developing trails, consider the incorporation of amenities at key locations, such as parking, benches, lighting, washrooms, wayfinding signage, and rest areas to facilitate elements of inclusivity and accessibility.
39.	Public trails should be promoted in the community through appropriate signage and marketing.

40.	Options for accommodating horses and other non-motorized uses should be considered by the Township through their future trail planning initiatives; equestrian-only trails are not recommended.
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8.2 Soccer Fields

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa provides 5 soccer fields, including one lit full-size field at Marden Park (shared with football), one unlit full-size field at each of Eden Mills Park and Rockmosa Park, and 2 unlit mini-size fields at Rockmosa Park. Local user groups also make use of one field at Rockwood Centennial Public School and one field at Emmanuel Church. The open space at Valentino Park is also used for organized soccer, but this should be discouraged due to the intensity of use in this neighbourhood park. The soccer / football field at Marden Park is the only field that meets the recommended dimensions for competitive play – all fields in the Rockwood / Eden Mills area are undersized for older youth and adults. In addition, the Township is currently in the process of constructing an unlit football / soccer field at Marden Park, although this project is reliant upon donations of clean fill from local contractors and will likely not be available until 2014 or later.

Due to its low equipment costs, international appeal, and high fitness requirements, soccer is a very popular sport. With the ‘soccer explosion’ that began in the mid-1990s, we are starting to witness a corresponding interest in adult soccer opportunities. As the youth of today grow into adulthood, increased demand for adult soccer teams can be expected. Provincially, the number of participants in Ontario’s adult soccer leagues has increased by 83% since the year 2000, but participation rates generally appear to be stabilizing.

The household survey revealed that 28% of respondent households participated in outdoor soccer within the preceding 12 months, ranking it 8th of 20 activities. With respect to support for additional public funding, outdoor soccer fields ranked 9th of 19 facility types with 36% of respondents selecting ‘spend’ or ‘definitely spend’ additional funds on this facility type. The community workshop held in Rockwood was well attended by members of the Rockwood and District Soccer Club, which helped to emphasize the club’s needs as well as community-wide expectations and suggestions. Issues raised by the club included the need for field lighting, adding more fields (including turf, indoor, outdoor, etc.), improved field maintenance (e.g., irrigation, leveling, goal nets, filling holes, painted lines, watering / seeding grass, etc.), and clean and open washrooms at fields.

In 2011, the Township proposed an expansion to Rockmosa Park; planning applications and agreements are underway to achieve this goal. Justification was based on a broad range of potential activities, including parking (220 spaces), multipurpose trail, winter sports facilities (toboggan hill, outdoor ice, enclosed multi-purpose court facility), informal space, skateboard park, sports fields, public gardens, pavilions, and a seniors facility. Based upon our analysis, chief among future needs are additional soccer fields and a skateboard park. Consolidation of sports fields for organized play at one location is the preferred model as it maximizes economies of scale, is convenient for residents, and allows for tournament play.

In communities where growth projections by age cohort are not available, a population-based standard or target is applied. This figure is based upon a number of factors, including the geographic makeup of

the community, demography, regional supply, current levels of usage, etc. In the case of Guelph/Eramosa, a target of one soccer field per 65 registered participants is recommended, meaning that with the current registration of approximately 550 youth players, the Township is in need of a total of 8.5 unlit equivalent soccer fields. The current municipal supply is 5.5 fields (4 unlit fields and 1 lit field; each lit field is equivalent to 1.5 unlit fields due to extended play opportunities), which equates to a deficit of 3.0 fields (unlit equivalents). Future population growth is likely to add to these needs.

The field that is being constructed in Marden Park will help the Township to meet longer-term needs (due to its as-yet-undetermined completion date); however, the Township should consider it to be in addition to the required 3.0 fields to meet current needs due to its use by other sports (ultimate Frisbee, football, etc.). The proposed expansion of Rockmosa Park presents an opportunity for the addition of the required fields to the Township’s inventory, with a total of 2 full-size fields and 4 mini / intermediate fields recommended to meet current demand at this location. Consideration should be given to constructing one of these fields as a lit artificial turf field, which is generally considered to provide the equivalent of 2 lit natural turf fields because of the durability and extended season opportunities. The Rockmosa Park expansion will require 1 or more of the existing fields to be removed to allow vehicular access to the rear portion of the site. There may also be a need for a shelter / storage / washroom building to serve the new fields, as well as future field development potential to meet long-term needs.

Recommendations

41.	Provide a total of 2 full-size soccer fields (including one lit artificial turf field) and 4 mini / intermediate soccer fields at Rockmosa Park (made possible through park expansion) to meet current demand. There may also be a need for a shelter / storage / washroom building to serve the new fields.
42.	The use of Valentino Park for soccer should be discouraged due to neighbourhood impacts. Usage should be moved to the additional mini fields proposed for Rockmosa Park.
43.	Encourage the clustering of like facilities (particularly sports fields) in order to improve operational/maintenance efficiencies and opportunities for programming and tournament play.

8.3 Ball Diamonds

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa provides 4 lit ball diamonds, one each at Eden Mills Park, Lloyd Dyer Park, Marden Park, and Rockmosa Park. Each lit ball diamond is considered to be equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds due to the extended play opportunities in the evenings; therefore, the effective supply of municipal diamonds is 6 unlit equivalents. In addition, there is one unlit ball diamond at Rockwood Centennial Public School that is available for use.

Provincially, baseball and softball have been experiencing declining participation rates, particularly at the youth level. In the experience of the Consultants, the sport tends to be more popular (per capita) in rural communities, although regional differences do exist. Compared to soccer and other field sports

(which are youth-dominated), baseball and softball are adult-dominated sports that are trying to boost declining youth participation figures. With youth participation in soccer significantly outpacing baseball registration in most communities, there are concerns that this will lead to a reduced pool of adult players in the long-term.

The household survey revealed that 16% of Guelph/Eramosa households had participated in baseball or softball in the previous 12 months, ranking these activities 11th out of 20 options. In addition, when asked where municipal resources should be allocated, only 22% of respondents supported additional public funding for baseball or softball diamonds, ranking them tied for 17th of 19 facility types. These findings suggest that although a moderate percentage of households participate in baseball or softball, expectations are being met, and additional investment is a low priority.

The Rockwood Eramosa Minor Ball Association is the only minor ball organization within the Township, with approximately 90 youth participants in Rockwood. In addition, ball has proven to be popular amongst the Township's adults (the Township's Rockmosa Park Justification Report identified 90 adult users in Rockwood), with play occurring on each of the municipality's diamonds, albeit often only one day per week. Adults and older youth are able to take advantage of later start times due to the lighting on the ball diamonds, which allow for up to two games to be played on each field daily. It should be noted that the Township recently removed a ball diamond from Marden Park, which did not have great impact on the overall availability of diamond time for existing users.

Upon examination of diamond schedules, most nights are only scheduled for one game, meaning there may be available time at each park for a second game at a later start time, recognizing that the Township schedules early games to start at 6pm to allow commuters time to travel. In cases where the 6pm slot is filled with a practice, there is ample time for an evening game on a lit diamond, which would allow the Township to make more efficient use of its diamonds, should demand rise.

The application of a population-based standard is preferred for forecasting diamond requirements due to limited participant data, the existence of very few user groups, and the geographic layout of a community. For the purposes of this Master Plan, a standard of 1 ball diamond per 3,000 residents is employed, suggesting that the Township is currently providing a surplus of 2 fields based solely on population. No new ball diamonds are recommended for the duration of the master planning period.

The ball diamond at Eden Mills Park is used infrequently, with only Old-Timers and Squirt ball practices regularly requiring diamond time, and Rockwood Eramosa Minor Ball renting one weekend in July. The maintenance of this field is an inefficient use of Township resources. Discussions emerged through consultation with the community regarding possible alternative uses for the site, including as open space. Given the relatively low use the diamond currently receives, it is recommended that the Township enter into further consultation with the Eden Mills community to decide on the future use of the existing ball diamond at Eden Mills Park; alternate uses could include community gardens, open space, an expanded toboggan hill, etc. Existing users of the Eden Mills diamond could be relocated to fields in Rockwood due to its relative proximity to the Eden Mills community.

Recommendations

44.	Due to the relatively low use the diamond currently receives, the Township should enter into further consultation with the Eden Mills community to decide on the future use of the existing ball diamond at Eden Mills Park.
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8.4 Playgrounds

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa currently has 11 playgrounds at a total of 10 parks (Valentino Park, James Lynch Park, Eden Mills Park, Cross Creek Park, Marden Park [2], Lloyd Dyer Park, Rockmosa Park, David Masson Park, Max Storey Park, and Hampson Crescent Park). In addition, there are play structures at Guelph Lake Conservation Area, Rockwood Conservation Area, and local schools.

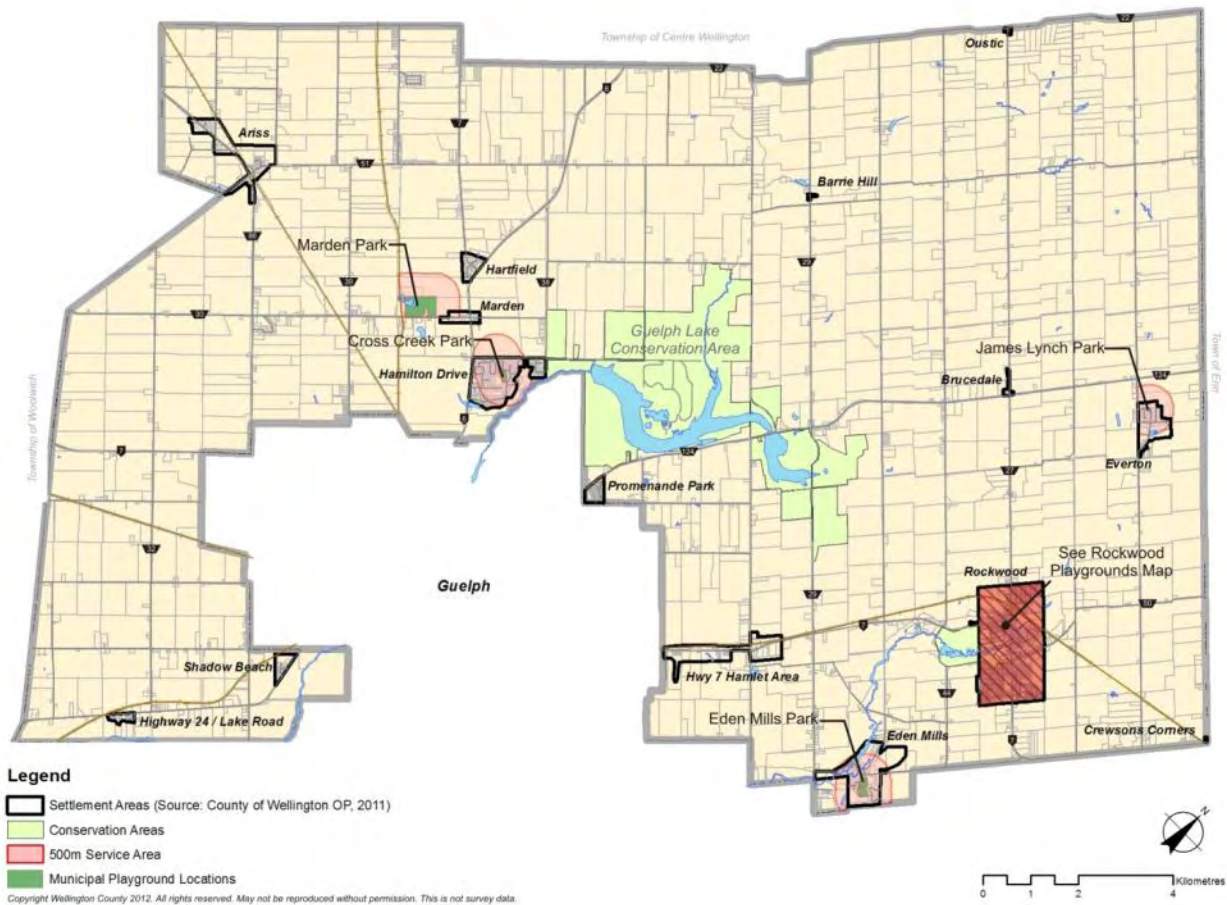
Playgrounds are an essential neighbourhood level amenity that provide opportunities for early childhood leisure within walking distance of many residences. Modern design templates for these facilities focus on providing safe structures that are consistent with Canadian Standards Association (CSA) guidelines. In many locations, traditional steel design structures have been replaced by creative play structures that include softer surfaces, creative and cognitive stimuli and/or barrier free components for children with special needs. The Township’s playgrounds are a combination of new and older structures, including swing sets, teeter totters, monkey bars, slides, and more modern combination play structures.

The household survey undertaken for this study revealed strong support (47% of households) for additional municipal spending on playgrounds, making them the 5th most common response. In addition, the survey asked respondents about their satisfaction with recreation opportunities for a variety of age groups, including children ages 0-12, who are the target users for this facility type. Respondents were generally satisfied (59%), with 11% being dissatisfied, and the remaining 30% falling into the neutral category. Satisfaction was highest with this age group, which is generally similar to findings in other communities. Continued provision of facilities such as playgrounds may help the municipality maintain and/or improve upon these satisfaction levels.

Playgrounds are considered ‘walk-to’ facilities and should be provided by the Township within approximately 500 metres (roughly a five to ten minute walk) of all major built-up residential areas; this standard should be applied in all future or expanded settlement areas. This service radius should be unobstructed by major barriers such as waterways, railway lines, highways, etc.

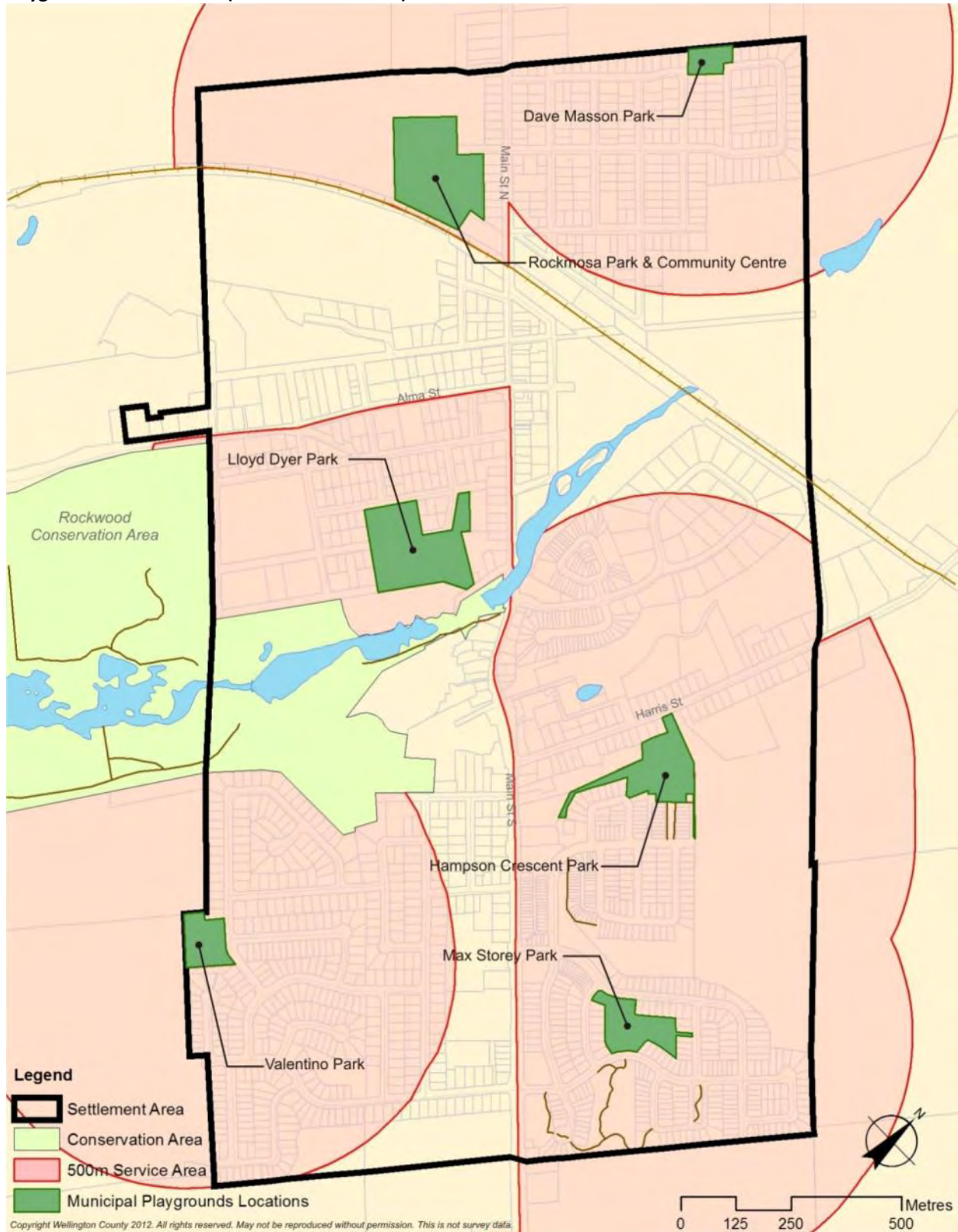
The following map illustrates the coverage provided by playgrounds outside of Rockwood; generally, the hamlets of Marden, Cross Creek, Everton, and Eden Mills are well served by existing playgrounds. The next largest settlement area is Ariss, which does not have any municipal or school playgrounds; however, it is a smaller community that is accustomed to this level of service and playground installation is not recommended.

Playgrounds in Guelph/Eramosa (500m service radius)



The following map illustrates that within Rockwood, there is a small gap area north of Lloyd Dyer Park due to the location of a major arterial road (Highway 7). There is a streetlight at the corner of Main and Alma Streets, which would allow for crossing and access for those residents that live north of Highway 7 / Alma Street; there is also a railway line that runs between Rockmosa Park and Lloyd Dyer Park that makes access difficult for residents that live between the two. The area west of Main Street and south of Highway 7 / Alma Street shows a gap as well; however, it is not recommended that the Township add any playgrounds to address these small gap areas. It is, however, recommended that the Noble Ridge subdivision, soon to be under construction, include a playground to accommodate incoming residents of this area.

Playgrounds in Rockwood (500m service radius)



The Township has a budget line item for playground repairs and maintenance, and has a qualified playground inspector on staff. Although there is not a set ongoing budget line item for playground replacement, the Township’s practice to date has been to conduct inspections, maintain and repair existing structures on a regular basis, remove any unsafe equipment, and include replacement in the following year’s budget. In order to ensure the ongoing safety of its playgrounds, it is recommended that the Township continue to conduct regular inspections of each structure to determine maintenance and repair needs to remain compliant with the guidelines established by the CSA and/or modern designs. In addition, it is recommended that the Township consider including guaranteed annual funding within its budget and a priority list for the replacement and/or upgrading of existing playground equipment, particularly its older structures, such as those in Marden Park (near the Royal Distributing Athletic Performance Centre), Lloyd Dyer Park, and Rockmosa Park (as part of the expansion).

Recommendations

45.	Playgrounds are considered ‘walk-to’ facilities and should be provided by the Township of Guelph/Eramosa within approximately 500 metres (roughly a five to ten minute walk) of all major built-up residential areas; this standard should be applied in all future or expanded settlement areas. This service radius should be unobstructed by major barriers such as waterways, railway lines, highways, etc.
46.	Construct a playground within the Noble Ridge subdivision; consider installing outdoor fitness equipment at this location to promote physical activity amongst residents of all ages.
47.	Continue to conduct regular inspections of each playground structure to determine maintenance and repair needs to remain compliant with the guidelines established by the CSA and/or modern designs.
48.	Provide annual funding within the Township’s capital budget and develop a priority list for the replacement and/or upgrading of non-compliant playground equipment (including but not limited to Marden Park).

8.5 Outdoor Aquatics

One splash pad is located at Rockmosa Community Centre, operating from 9am until 8pm between June and Labour Day weekend. The Township does not provide any outdoor pools.

Splash pads have emerged as the preferred facility type in the provision of outdoor aquatic amenities, as many communities are moving away from constructing outdoor pools and wading pools. Splash pads provide a fun and social environment through which children can keep cool during the summer months and are more cost-effective than outdoor pools (in terms of both construction and operation). Splash pads are smaller than outdoor pools, have no standing water, require minimal staff time for water quality testing, and do not require lifeguards. The household survey reported that 35% of households supported additional spending on splash pads, ranking them 10th of 19 facility types.

The provision of splash pads is prevalent in communities large and small. They can be built to any size and design, with many manufacturers providing a wide range of themes and options for water features. The Township's existing splash pad is well used and is serving the local community in Rockwood. The City of Guelph provides two splash pads that are within 5 and 6 kilometres of Marden, at Waverley Park and Norm Jary Park; these are public facilities that are accessible by residents of Guelph/Eramosa. Marden's proximity to these two City of Guelph splash pads and a lack of expressed public demand suggest that the Township of Guelph/Eramosa is not in need of an additional splash pad at this time. The Rockwood area is well served by the existing splash pad and the Township's other communities lack the population to sustain another such facility. No new splash pads are recommended over the course of the planning period.

8.6 Skateboard and BMX Parks

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa does not currently have a skateboard and/or BMX park.

Skateboarding has evolved from a fad into a mainstream activity amongst many children, youth and - to a lesser extent - young adults. Skateboard, trick cycling, and BMX parks are increasingly being viewed as positive venues that respond to the interests of skateboarders, trick cyclists, and inline skaters. BMX biking is emerging as a popular 'extreme' sport that utilizes a dirt track that features jumps and other obstacles to test the riders' bike handling skills. BMX and trick cycling have witnessed rapid growth since the 1980s, culminating in the X-Games as the premiere venue for trick cycling and the debut of BMX at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and continued inclusion on the Olympic program. The ability for these sports to be unstructured, unscheduled, and of a relatively low cost also adds to their appeal. In addition, the provision of these types of facilities can help discourage informal skating and biking that may take place in residential, commercial, or ecologically sensitive areas by offering a safe and purpose-built facility that is targeted directly towards the intended users.

Through the household survey, only 25% of respondents indicated that they would support additional spending on skateboard parks (ranking them 15th of 19 facility types), and only 10% reported that someone in their household had participated in skateboarding in the past year (ranking this 16th of 20 recreation activities). BMX biking and trick cycling were not included on the list of activities, but cycling / mountain biking was very popular, with 48% of respondent households reporting participation within the preceding 12 months. It is common for community surveys to place a low priority on skateboard parks due to the negative perceptions that are often associated with them (e.g., noise, vandalism, loitering, etc.), and the fact that those under the age of 16 are not eligible to complete the surveys (as was the case in Guelph/Eramosa) may also limit their perceived support. However, experience in other communities suggests that not only can skate parks be positive community elements, but also that demand is quite high, particularly amongst male youth. The Township received a petition that included the names of 150 youth in Rockwood expressing their desire to see a skateboard park provided within the Township; however, there was only modest discussion about this topic at the community workshops.

The Township's close proximity to a number of other municipalities may provide its youth with the ability to access existing skateboard parks in these communities. For example, the Town of Erin is planning a new skateboard park next to Centre 2000, Centre Wellington has one skateboard park in Elora and one in Fergus, and Halton Hills has one skateboard park in Acton and one in Georgetown. It

should be noted that youth are often limited in terms of transportation and must rely on parents, friends, and active transportation routes to move about the community, which may make it difficult for many youth to access parks in other communities. It is recommended that the Township work with local organizations to pursue the development of a 'skate park' at Rockmosa Park for Guelph/Eramosa youth. The facility should be designed with input from local youth skateboarders, and should consider accommodating trick cycling as well as skateboarding.

Recommendation

49.	Work with local organizations to pursue the development of a 'skate park' at Rockmosa Park for Guelph/Eramosa youth. The facility should be designed with input from local youth skateboarders and should consider accommodating trick cycling as well as skateboarding.
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8.7 Outdoor Courts (Tennis and Basketball)

The Township currently provides 3 full basketball courts (1 each at Valentino Park, Eden Mills Park, and Rockmosa Park), 1 multi-purpose court (can be used for basketball, ball hockey, winter skating, etc. at James Lynch Park), and 3 lit tennis courts (Rockmosa Park). The tennis courts were rebuilt in 2012.

Trends research suggests that interest in tennis has declined since its peak in the 1970s, but that there is potential for increasing participation from the 'Baby Boomer' generation (a market that is rapidly growing across Ontario and Guelph/Eramosa as well). Experience also suggests that interest in tennis varies greatly between municipalities and can be influenced by the existing level of service and ethnic composition.

Conversely, basketball is considered to be a growth sport, especially among youth. Outdoor basketball courts take up little room (but may require substantial buffer space), can be relatively inexpensive to construct and maintain, and locating them in local parks allows for easy access by foot or by bicycle, which allows opportunity for spontaneous, informal play. However, many residences with youth and schools have outdoor hoops that can meet much of the latent demand, which is not common with tennis courts. The household survey reported low interest in both basketball and tennis as only 13% and 10% of households reported participation in basketball and tennis, respectively. When asked about the need for additional public spending on facilities for these activities, 27% supported spending on outdoor basketball courts and 22% supported spending on tennis courts, ranking them 14th and 17th, respectively, of 19 facility types. Conversely, the community workshops revealed a desire for new facilities, including an outdoor skating rink and an outdoor ball hockey court that could potentially take place on a hard surface court.

Both tennis and basketball courts are often provided based upon population-based targets, with consideration given to geographic distribution. For tennis courts, a target of 1 court per 4,000 residents is recommended. The Township has a population of 12,380, which equates to a need for 3.1 courts. The Township is currently meeting needs in this area and no additional tennis courts are recommended.

With respect to basketball courts, the provision target is based upon the youth population between the ages of 10 and 19, as these are the most common users of this facility type. The target recommended for Guelph/Eramosa is 1 full basketball court for every 1,000 youth; the Township’s 2011 youth population is 1,830, suggesting a need for approximately 1.8 courts. The Township currently provides 4 courts – 2 in Rockwood, 1 in Eden Mills, and 1 in Everton – meaning that the population-based target is satisfied, although there is a small gap in the Marden and Cross Creek areas.

As a method of maximizing efficiencies associated with capital investment, maintenance and space requirements, many municipalities are beginning to construct multi-use courts that can accommodate basketball and/or tennis, ball hockey, and winter skating. The Township of Guelph/Eramosa has done so at James Lynch Park, by constructing a multi-use court that is used for outdoor skating in the winter months and basketball during the rest of the year. Multi-use courts are beneficial from the standpoint that they can accommodate a wide range of neighbourhood interests, spanning all four seasons. It is recommended that the Township pursue the addition of a multi-use court (for basketball / ball hockey) in the western portion of the Township – possibly at Cross Creek Park – to provide residents of this area with improved access. In addition, it is recommended that the Township include a basketball court in the Noble Ridge subdivision, which currently contains an undeveloped park block.

Recommendations

50.	Pursue the addition of a multi-use court (for basketball / ball hockey) at Cross Creek Park.
51.	Include a basketball court in the park proposed for the Noble Ridge subdivision.

8.8 Outdoor Ice Rinks

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa does not directly maintain outdoor ice rinks, but it provides access and support to community groups who do. The rinks are located at Valentino Park, Lloyd Dyer Park, David Masson Park and Max Storey Park in Rockwood, and one each at Eden Mills Park, and Cross Creek Park. Depending on the weather and volunteer commitment, skating rinks may or may not be maintained at each of these parks every winter.

Historically, Canadians have had an affinity for outdoor skating rinks and there is a substantial demand in many communities for these facilities. Unfortunately, with unpredictable weather patterns, natural outdoor rinks can have a limited operating season. Although artificial rinks are typically able to operate for a slightly longer season, their costs are substantially higher than those of natural rinks and they are seldom provided in smaller communities.

The Township has created an outdoor rink manual for use by community groups that wish to pursue the operation of a rink, provided there is a core group of at least five volunteers that are willing to support the rink’s construction, maintenance, and daily inspections. The Township supplies hoses, shovels, hockey nets, access to water, two benches, a storage shed, and a First Aid kit to each volunteer group, as well as conducting weekly safety inspections, removing snow when greater than 10cm, and improving / repairing lighting and water service. In return, the volunteer group is responsible for construction and maintenance, daily inspections, securing materials, and posting of conditions. These partnerships are

positive within the community and seem to be providing residents with access to outdoor ice in a variety of areas within the municipality.

As discussed previously, many municipalities are moving towards the provision of multi-purpose courts that can be used all year round, for tennis, basketball, and ball hockey in the spring, summer, and autumn, as well as for outdoor skating in the winter (as found at James Lynch Park). This Master Plan has recommended that the Township construct an outdoor multi-purpose court at Cross Creek Park, which could also be used as a natural outdoor skating rink in the winter.

8.9 Off-Leash Dog Parks

There are presently no designated off-leash dog parks in the Township, although there has been interest expressed in exploring this facility type for Guelph/Eramosa. In 2011, there were over 750 dogs licensed in Guelph/Eramosa. The household survey revealed that 50% of respondents had participated in dog walking within the preceding 12 months, and 30% support additional spending on off-leash dog parks, ranking them 13th of 19 facility types.

Off-leash dog parks provide pet owners with the opportunity to exercise and socialize their dogs in a controlled area. However, dog parks are not just facilities for pets; they are also beneficial as meeting and socialization places for residents as well. The development and operation of off-leash dog parks often involves partnerships with the community, which can help offset the cost of the construction and maintenance of the facility. Often, there is little need for dog parks in rural areas since there are generally sufficient private open spaces available for dogs; it is in the urbanized area where properties are smaller that demand is more evident.

It is recommended that the Township facilitate the construction of an off-leash dog park contingent upon finding a willing and suitable partner and identifying a suitable site. The safety of other park users, setbacks from residential and environmentally sensitive areas, and the provision of amenities (e.g., parking, benches, waste containers, etc.) are important considerations in the design of leash free parks. The site selection exercise should consider (at a minimum) factors such as:

- existing park locations, uses, and intensity;
- potential environmental impacts (environmentally sensitive features should be avoided);
- sufficient land base (ideally a minimum of 2 hectares);
- availability of on-site parking;
- ample buffers from adjacent land uses; and
- accessibility via pathways and/or trails and roads.

Selecting an appropriate site that is supported by residents is often the most significant challenge in establishing a leash free park, as is finding an organization to be responsible for the park's primary maintenance and operation. The Township may develop further criteria that address concerns of local dog owners and other members of the community as they emerge.

Recommendation

52.	Seek a suitable partner organization and site for the development of an off-leash dog park.
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8.10 Community Gardens

Community gardens are becoming increasingly popular due to environmental consciousness, interest in growing one's own food and in response to the current economic situation⁴. A community garden is a piece of land that is planted, tended and harvested by a group of community members. These gardens can be separated into individual plots or have communal areas where the bounty is shared by a number of members. Community gardens can be administered by a municipality, a local organization or an interested group of citizens and may include flowers, orchards, fruit, vegetables and/or herbs. A local example is the garden plots at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre.

These gardens are beneficial in building a sense of community as residents tend their crops together, often sharing the yield with each other and/or through donations to local food banks. There has been a great deal of interest in community gardens within the Township, with Council receiving delegations in support of their creation. These gardens are likely best placed within quiet neighbourhood parks that are not heavily used for sports and other active recreation in order to help protect the crops from incidental damage and overcrowded lands. Therefore, it is recommended that the Township of Guelph/Eramosa work with community groups to pursue the creation of a pilot community garden project at an accessible site that has municipal water service (possibly by the Fire Hall where vandalism would not be a concern). With respect to the design of this pilot garden, the Township should first conduct a public consultation event to identify the preferred location (this should be determined based upon the willingness of a specific group/community to undertake the pilot, type of park or other location – such as a church, and the availability of municipal water services). The size of the pilot garden should be proposed based upon the level of interest indicated by the intended users.

Recommendation

53.	Work with community groups to pursue the creation of a pilot community garden project. The design, size, and location should be determined based upon the willingness of a specific group/community to undertake the pilot and the availability of municipal water service.
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8.11 Tobogganing

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa allows and advertises tobogganing opportunities at both Cross Creek Park and Eden Mills Park, weather permitting. The inclusion of a toboggan hill at an expanded Rockmosa Park has been suggested. It has been proposed that this facility would serve as an attraction for families and youth of Guelph/Eramosa, as well as visitors to the community. The provision of this facility type would be a unique feature for the Township, but would require that the community be consulted regarding the design and cost of such a feature. Depending upon the scale that is envisioned, a business plan should be developed. At a minimum, issues to be considered within the business plan

⁴ Pedro, K. (2009). Community Gardens Making Enthusiastic Comeback. London Free Press, April 13, 2009.

should include: options for operation (free vs. fee); design (natural vs. fabricated); and ancillary amenities / services.

Recommendation

54.	Develop a business plan to define the capital cost, operating cost, and revenue / potential market for winter downhill toboggan / tube facility at an expanded Rockmosa Park.
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8.12 Other Facility Types

From time to time, the Township may receive requests regarding new facility types that are not traditionally offered as a municipal service, or represent emergent recreation activities. The Township should be prepared to address these requests on a case-by-case basis until such time as an accepted standard emerges. In general, development of these types of facilities should only be undertaken with the cooperation and involvement of interested groups.

While it is possible that the participants in specialized recreation activities may desire additional facilities in the future, this demand is often representative of a relatively small group of residents. The provision of Township-funded facilities, however, needs to be partially tied to the number of persons that benefit from the investment in any particular facility, as well as the cost-benefit and the guiding principles of this Master Plan.

The main role that the Township will play is to monitor such groups to determine if and when their participation numbers warrant further assistance. The Township should remain open to discussions with new and emerging sport and leisure groups and can respond to requests through improved facilities (pending the Township's capacity to participate in such projects), assisting existing groups in sharing resources, sharing information on opportunities in adjacent municipalities, or where and how to partner with other similar interests.

Should an organization wish to partner with the Township on the development of a program or facility (indoor or outdoor), the organization should provide the following (at a minimum) in order to allow the Township to evaluate the merits of the proposal:

- justification of needs;
- a comprehensive business plan;
- the club's financial capacity;
- a demonstration of the sustainability of the project;
- detailed evidence of community benefits; and
- full risk analysis.



SECTION NINE: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Township's current parkland and open space supply is examined in this section. The County of Wellington's Official Plan outlines its support for the provision of public spaces, parks and open space as places within which healthy and active communities can be fostered, including guidelines for planning and parkland acquisition. As such, this Section will build upon these guidelines and provision targets, with recommendations specific to Guelph/Eramosa as to the classification of parks, manners in which to go about acquiring land above and beyond that guaranteed through the *Planning Act*, and targets for the provision of future parks. Parks provide the land base that supports many recreation amenities and their continued provision and enhancement can enhance the quality of life for the community as a whole.

9.1 Parkland Classification

The Township relies upon the Wellington County Official Plan for general information regarding land use planning decisions in Guelph/Eramosa; however, the County's Official Plan does not contain a parkland classification and hierarchy system. Parkland hierarchies are important for the guidance of parkland acquisition and development, and can include recommendations on park size, uses, activities, functions and locations. The identification of these characteristics and functions help to ensure compatibility with neighbouring landowners, while providing the community at large, developers, and planners alike with an understanding of what a new park may include. For a variety of reasons, including intensity of use, space demands, noise/disruption, etc., some uses are more appropriate in certain types of parks.

Playgrounds (considered to be a basic unit of most park construction) are appropriate in mostly all park types, but lit sports fields should not be contained in Neighbourhood Parks due to their significant size and impacts (e.g., lighting, parking, hours of use, etc.).

Additionally, the Official Plan has not established a standard for minimum park sizes. Active parks smaller than 0.5 hectares (at a minimum) are usually too small to provide adequate or satisfactory levels of recreation activity. The parks in Guelph/Eramosa are generally well sized for their purpose and the community they serve. Ensuring that parks are appropriately sized rather than supporting smaller parks ensures that municipal resources are utilized effectively and efficiently. It is recommended that the Township avoid developing or accepting parkland of less than 0.5 hectares from parkland dedication unless it has been determined that there is a need to fill a gap in parkland and other options are inadequate or unavailable.

It is recommended that the Township consider the following parkland hierarchy to guide future parkland planning and development.

Proposed Parkland Classification System

Classification	Service Area	Permitted Facilities / Amenities	Size (ha)	Example
Neighbourhood Park	Local residential areas; park should be located within walking distance of the service area (generally 500m)	Active and passive opportunities, including play equipment and informal playing fields / courts for unorganized activities	0.5 to 3	Valentino Park
Community Park	Entire Township; may also satisfy functions set out under Neighbourhood Park classification	Range of recreational facilities and amenities including playing fields, pavilions, and other community-serving amenities	4 to 10	Rockmosa Park
Regional Park	Entire Township as well as users outside of the municipality	Trail network, grouping of multiple major facilities, natural / physical features	10+	Marden Park
Public Open Space Lands	Variable	May be undeveloped, but should generally be publicly accessible. May contain trails, informal picnic areas, storm water ponds, and similar low intensity amenities. Should not be accepted as parkland dedication as it does not meet active park needs (playgrounds, sports fields, courts, etc. are not permitted).	n/a	Sarah Ransom Woodlot

Recommendations

55.	Utilize the proposed parkland hierarchy contained within this Master Plan to provide direction on parkland classification, size, use, and location considerations.
56.	Avoid developing or accepting “active parkland” of less than 0.5 hectare in size from parkland dedication unless the Township has determined that there is a need to fill a gap in parkland and other options are inadequate.
57.	Accepting undevelopable Open Space lands (e.g., stormwater management ponds, woodlots, valley lands, floodplains, hazard lands, etc.) as part of the parkland dedication requirement is strongly discouraged. The Township may assume these lands through voluntary dedication or easement if appropriate.

9.2 Parkland Inventory

The Township is comprised of a number of settlement areas, with Rockwood being the primary residential area. The majority (7 of 11) municipal parks are located in Rockwood, with one park in each of Marden, Everton, Cross Creek, and Eden Mills. See Appendix C for parkland mapping.

The Township’s inventory of parkland includes eleven parks covering a land base of approximately 45.5 hectares. The table below lists the parks, their sizes, and amenities offered. In all, the supply of parkland translates into an average of 3.7 hectares of parkland per 1,000 residents (based on a 2012 population of 12,380).

The Township also owns a number of open space properties (e.g., Sarah Ransom Woodlot, Charleston Property, and 224 Ridge Road) that contain trails and/or natural features – these are excluded from the active parkland inventory. Open space provides valuable connections and habitat preservation functions that help the Township to meet its overall environmental management goals.

Township of Guelph/Eramosa Parkland Inventory

Municipal Park	Community	Estimated Size (ha)	Amenities
Cross Creek Park	Cross Creek	2.2	Outdoor skating, toboggan hill, play structure
David Masson Park	Rockwood	0.6	Outdoor skating, play structure, open space
Eden Mills Park	Eden Mills	5.1	Unlit full soccer field, lit ball diamond, outdoor skating, toboggan hill, full basketball court, play structure, washrooms
Hampson Crescent Park	Rockwood	2.2	Play structure, storm water management pond
James Lynch Park	Everton	0.3	Full basketball court, play structure

Municipal Park	Community	Estimated Size (ha)	Amenities
Lloyd Dyer Park	Rockwood	3.7	Lit ball diamond, outdoor skating, multi-purpose pad, play structure, washroom, Works garage
Marden Park	Marden	24.8	Lit full soccer field, lit ball diamond, 2 play structures, open space, trails, washroom, 3 pavilions, Park House (leased to Women's Institute)
Max Storey Park	Rockwood	1.6	Outdoor skating, play structure, open space, storm water management pond
Rockmosa Park	Rockwood	4.0	3 soccer fields (1 unlit full and 2 unlit mini), lit ball diamond, full basketball court, 3 lit tennis courts, play structure, splash pad, washrooms
Valentino Park	Rockwood	1.1	Full basketball court, play structure, outdoor skating
TOTAL		45.5	

Supplementing this inventory is a number of properties owned by public, non-profit, and private sector organizations that are used for parks and recreation activities. Most notable are local schools, Guelph Lake Conservation Area, Rockwood Conservation Area, and places of worship.

Recommendations

58.	Develop and maintain a data management system and accurate inventory for municipally owned and/or managed parks and open spaces.
59.	Maintain a commitment to accessibility, safety, security, and good environmental practices within the Township's parks and trails system. In recognition of the Township's aging population, greater attention should be paid to the development of amenities such as washrooms, shade, and benches/seating areas in parks and along trails.

9.3 Parkland Acquisition Policies and Guidelines

There are several provincial and municipal regulations, policies and guidelines governing the acquisition and location of parkland. The *Planning Act* (R.S.O., 1990) establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and possible alternatives for the dedication of land for park and recreation purposes (such as cash-in-lieu). Provisions for parkland dedication include 5% of land area or 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units for residential developments, redevelopments and subdivisions; 2% of land area for industrial developments, redevelopments and subdivisions; and/or 1 hectare per 300 dwelling units (but no less than 2% of land area for mixed-use developments).

The Wellington County Official Plan identifies the following lands as desirable for parkland dedication:

- “land adjacent to established parks, schools or storm water management areas;
- land within easy walking distance of the residential area served;
- land located near the highest density residential areas;
- land with adequate street frontage to provide for visibility and safety;
- land that is level, regularly shaped and not susceptible to major flooding, poor drainage, or other environmental or physical conditions which would interfere with their development or use for public recreation.”

The Official Plan also identifies the following conditions within which the Township may require cash-in-lieu of parkland:

- “where the amount of land to be dedicated is of insufficient size, in the opinion of council, to be useable for normal public recreational activities;
- where an area is adequately served by municipal or other open space lands;
- where a municipality wishes to combine the parkland dedications of a number of small developments to provide for a large park area;
- in rural developments where parkland may not be needed.”

These Official Plan policies provide guidance and flexibility to the Township regarding parkland dedication and remain appropriate for continued implementation.

Of note, Subsection 51(25)(b) of the *Planning Act*, affecting the conveyance of land for pedestrian and bicycle pathways, was amended within the past few years. The *Planning Act* now allows for the dedication of land for “pedestrian pathways, bicycle pathways and public transit rights of way” as a condition of plan of subdivision approval, at the municipality’s discretion. While this provision does not affect parkland supplies (it is over and above the prescribed parkland dedication), it is a useful tool for the acquisition of linear corridors and trails that support and link parks and natural features. It is recommended that the Township consider the conveyance of land for pathways within new subdivisions, and that they encourage the County of Wellington to include this policy within its Official Plan.

Recommendations

60.	Continue to implement the Official Plan requirements regarding parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu. Seek to maximize <i>Planning Act</i> provisions in acquiring parkland (or cash-in-lieu) and establishing a linked open space system.
61.	Consider permitting the conveyance of land for pathways within new subdivisions (as permitted by Section 51 of the <i>Planning Act</i>). The Township should encourage the County of Wellington to include this policy within its Official Plan.

9.4 Parkland Requirements

Parkland supplies can be measured using a variety of methods. Many municipalities use population-based targets to calculate and plan their supply of parkland.

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa's parkland provision currently stands at approximately 3.7 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on input from the community consultation program, it would appear that the local parks and open space system is highly valued by residents and efforts should be made to ensure that provision levels remain locally appropriate.

Most small urban/rural communities target parkland provision rates in the range of 3 to 5 hectares per 1,000 residents. However, through the parkland dedication enabled by the *Planning Act*, municipalities can generally expect to receive parkland below this level. Nevertheless, opportunities exist through the subdivision process to negotiate with landholders to achieve greater parkland supplies, which is often in the best interest of all parties.

Generally, a provision target of 3 hectares per 1,000 residents is capable of providing sufficient land for accommodating active recreational requirements (i.e., uses commonly associated with neighbourhood and community parks, such as playgrounds, courts, sports fields, etc.). The focus of future parks planning should be on neighbourhood and community parks within the Township. It is recommended that the Township strive to maintain a minimum service level of 3.0 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents in developing areas to ensure that sufficient supplies are available to the Township's growth areas. This target should not be applied to open space lands and natural areas.

Future growth projections suggest that the Township could grow by 2,910 new residents between 2011 and 2031. Much of this growth is expected to occur in the settlement area of Rockwood, which should offer opportunities for future parkland development due to the scale of proposed residential development. The recommended ratio of 3.0 hectares per 1,000 residents should be applied to plans of subdivision in order to determine a target for parkland requirements. In cases where the development is too small to result in a meaningful park parcel (i.e., 0.5 hectare or larger) or where the immediate area already has suitable and unimpeded access to sufficient parkland, then the Township may consider accepting cash-in-lieu. Equity is a key element in the provision of parkland and; therefore, parks should be accessible from every urban neighbourhood. It is one's access to recreational opportunities, parks and open space that helps to define the Township's quality of life. Minimum standard aside, the proposed expansion of Rockmosa Park (approximately 9.3 hectares) can be justified based on the local need for additional soccer fields and other recreational amenities.

Recommendation

62.	Strive to maintain a minimum service level of 3.0 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents in developing areas to ensure that sufficient supplies are available to the Township's growth areas.
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SECTION TEN: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This Section summarizes the recommendations put forth within this Master Plan, along with their suggested priorities and timing. This implementation strategy provides guidance for ensuring that the most critical success factors are dealt with in a timely fashion, while the less critical (yet important) recommendations are implemented over time.

10.1 Timing and Prioritization

The timing of recommendations is organized into the following categories:

- Short-term (1-3 years) – 2013 to 2015
- Medium-term (4-6 years) – 2016 to 2018
- Long-term (7-10+ years) – 2019 and beyond
- Continuous = priorities to be implemented/followed throughout the planning period

Each recommendation has also been assigned one of the following levels of priority: High; Medium; or Low. Despite the categorization, all recommendations are important and, if properly implemented, will benefit parks and recreation within Guelph/Eramosa.

Priority and timing have been determined based on an assessment of need, as identified throughout the Master Plan process (including consultation efforts, trend and demographic analysis, needs assessments, etc.) and is based upon ideal circumstances. Priority is often, but not always, synonymous

with timing – the higher the priority, the sooner the recommendation should be implemented. Budget pressures, changes in participation rates or demographics, availability of volunteer resources, and other factors may impact implementation of the proposed recommendations. Due to limited staff resources, it is not likely possible for all recommendations to be implemented immediately. The Township should reconcile the recommendations with its fiscal capacity and focus on the highest priority items.

It bears noting that the recommendations are based upon what is needed and not necessarily what is financially achievable by the Township at the present time. The full implementation of this Plan may require the pursuit of senior government grant money and the establishment of various partnerships and collaborations with community organizations, schools, agencies, and the private sector. Some of the infrastructure projects recommended in this Master Plan may also be eligible to receive partial funding through Development Charges, which are intended to cover 90% of growth-related capital based on historic service levels. Development Charges cannot be used to address current gaps and non-growth related projects, as well as cultural infrastructure or the acquisition of land for parks.

Determining priorities is an exercise that should be revisited each year prior to the Township’s capital and operating budget development exercise. Readjusting resource allocations is critical in a climate where base funding is not increasing substantially and resources need to be maximized in order to garner the greatest gain to the community. Factors that might change priorities year to year would include:

- safety issues that need to be addressed immediately;
- new legislation and other local requirements;
- changing service standards;
- public input;
- emerging trends;
- pent-up demands; and
- socio-demographic changes.

The Township has limited resources and cannot afford to do everything that the community desires; this is one of the primary reasons for undertaking a Master Plan in the first place. Although Guelph/Eramosa may be challenged in providing the appropriate financial resources to meet the recommendations of this Plan, the Township has an obligation to make every reasonable effort to implement these strategies through a variety of appropriate and acceptable means.

Note: In the following tables, the recommendations are numbered according to the order in which they are presented in the body of the Master Plan. They are not listed in priority order.

Recommendation

63.	Continue to seek public, not-for-profit, and/or private sector partners and alternative funding mechanisms (e.g., fundraising, sponsorships, grants, etc.) to supplement existing resources and to enable full implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan’s capital program.
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RECOMMENDATIONS – SERVICE DELIVERY

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Community Development and Partnerships				
1. Continue to serve as a provider of space for parks and recreation opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa by offering the community access to core indoor and outdoor facilities (through free use, rental, or other agreement).	High	●	●	●
2. Pursue innovative partnerships and sponsorship opportunities that are consistent with the Department’s vision in order to reduce reliance on tax dollars in providing quality parks and recreation services in Guelph/Eramosa.	High	●	●	●
3. Evaluate requests for facilities and services that are not part of the Township’s core mandate on a case-by-case basis after measuring them against this Plan’s principles and goals. Unsolicited proposals should be supported by a proponent-led market assessment and business plan that demonstrates why the Township should be involved in the delivery of a non-core service.	Low	●	●	●
4. Collect annual registration data from all organizations that use Township parks and facilities and monitor facility utilization to assist in tracking trends, changing demands, and allocation.	Medium	●	●	●
5. The Township should seek to build relationships with adjacent municipalities to improve collaboration and ensure affordable access to facilities and programs for residents of Guelph/Eramosa.	Medium	●	●	●
Programming				
6. Work with community partners to regularly evaluate program opportunities (including low cost options), with an emphasis on children, youth, and older adults/seniors.	High	●	●	●

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
7. Develop, maintain, and publicly promote an inventory of all community-based and municipal sport and active recreation opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa to ensure that there are equitable opportunities for all age groups and genders. This database should be accessible to local residents and serve to enhance awareness of local activities, programs, leagues, and events.	Medium	●	●	●
8. Continue to promote physical activity and healthy communities through participation in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph <i>in motion</i> initiative and similar programs.	High	●	●	●
9. Through Department leadership, practices, policies, and resources, support opportunities for informal, unstructured, and inclusive active recreation experiences.	High	●	●	●
Volunteers				
10. In cooperation with community partners, explore options for creating and maintaining an up-to-date database of volunteers and volunteer opportunities within Guelph/Eramosa. At a minimum, the database should include names, contact information, key skills, interests, etc. of potential volunteers and names, contact information, organizational mandate, and available positions of organizations that are seeking volunteers.	High	●		
11. Develop a Township-specific volunteer recognition program to celebrate contributions to recreation and other sectors. This program could include a recognition event, small gifts, and/or public listing of volunteer names and achievements.	Medium		●	
Policies and Procedures				
12. Conduct an annual review of all applicable municipal policies (as well as any future policies developed by the Township) to ensure that they are up-to-date, accurate, and fair to the parties involved.	Medium	●	●	●
13. Create a Policies and Procedures Reference Manual that is available at each Township facility to ensure that all staff receive the same message about the municipality's protocols.	Medium	●		

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
14. Develop a Parks By-Law governing uses and restrictions within parks and recreational areas. (See template provided in Appendix B).	Medium	●		
15. Continue to regularly audit all parks and community facilities to ensure that they are safe, welcoming, encourage activity through signage, meet accessibility requirements, and encourage leading environmental practices.	High	●	●	●
Staffing				
16. Create a new part-time municipal position within the Parks and Recreation Department – Coordinator of Volunteers, Older Adults, and Youth – to oversee the active living and recreational needs of these three groups.	High	●		
Fiscal Responsibility				
17. Regularly assess rental fees and charges to ensure that they represent a fair and equitable balance between true costs and public benefits, are competitive in the broader regional market, and allow the Township to sustain its delivery of high quality facilities and services.	Medium	●	●	●
18. Annually allocate a minimum of 2.0% of the replacement value of each capital parks and recreation asset to individual reserve accounts for each of these assets as a basis to undertake future capital renovations, repairs, and expansions over the long term.	Low	●	●	●
19. Develop a ten-year capital maintenance and repair program for each major municipal facility asset to be funded from capital reserves, grants, user supports and other sources.	Medium	●		
Awareness and Branding				
20. Host regular meetings with community organizations and the public to collectively discuss issues and opportunities related to service delivery, community needs, marketing and promotion, and overall communication.	High	●	●	●

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
21. Develop a communications strategy that includes key messages, target audiences, leisure opportunities offered by local groups and agencies, and all communications vehicles available to the community. This should also include internal communications to ensure that staff and Council are kept informed and have opportunities to provide meaningful input.	High	●		
22. Develop a bi-annual Community Guide (hard copy and online) that identifies basic municipal information, parks and recreation offerings, trails and heritage resources, and community contact information.	High	●		
23. Develop branding (logo, tag line, etc.) to provide consistent messaging to various groups, such as older adults, youth, and volunteers.	Low		●	
24. Work with the Grand River Conservation Authority to advertise the Township's amenities (e.g., parks, restaurants, businesses, attractions, etc.) through signage within the Rockwood Conservation Area in order to draw visitors into the business areas of Guelph/Eramosa.	High	●		

RECOMMENDATIONS – INDOOR FACILITIES

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Multi-Purpose Space				
25. Consider alternative municipal uses for Rockwood Town Hall or seek to lease it for community or private uses, subject to demand and local land use regulations. Leases to private sector interests should be at market value.	Medium	●		
26. As opportunities arise, investigate the ability of municipal community centres and other program spaces to accommodate a broader range of community uses.	High	●	●	●

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Indoor Space for Seniors' Activities				
27. Create a hub for older adult activities in the Rockwood area for social gatherings, volunteer-led programming, and drop-in activities (e.g., cards, workshops, lectures, etc.). The preferred option is to utilize the Rockwood Library meeting room, which may require modest improvements (e.g., installation of a kitchenette, outdoor reading garden, etc.) to accommodate the intended use, along with other community uses. Longer-term space needs for older adults may be reassessed following a reasonable trial period.	High	●		
28. Consider creating a brand for the Township's older adult services, which may include a logo, tagline, web presence, etc.	Low		●	
Space for Youth Activities				
29. Should there be sufficient community support for the provision of a drop-in space for youth, consideration may be given to using the Rockwood Town Hall in partnership with an outside agency with a sustainable source of funding.	Medium	●	●	
30. Work more closely with the Library with respect to promotion and/or provision of program opportunities for youth.	Medium	●	●	●
Ice Pads				
31. The development of a municipal arena in Guelph/Eramosa is <u>not</u> recommended for this master planning period. However, should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise, the Township may consider low-risk participation in a private sector arena development in order to serve the recreational skating needs of Township residents.	Low	●	●	●
32. To meet recreational skating and ball hockey demand, the Township may evaluate the need for an outdoor covered rink (refrigerated; similar to the one at the Puslinch Optimist Recreation Centre) at Rockmosa Park in the long-term.	Medium		●	

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Indoor Aquatic Facilities				
33. The development of a municipal indoor pool in Guelph/Eramosa is <u>not</u> recommended for this master planning period. However, should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise, the Township may consider low-risk participation in a private sector aquatic facility development in order to serve the recreational swimming needs of Township residents.	Low	●	●	●

RECOMMENDATIONS – OUTDOOR FACILITIES

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Trails				
34. A continued emphasis on trail development is supported by the community. High priority should be assigned to trail and active transportation promotion and development, particularly those projects identified in the County of Wellington Active Transportation Master Plan as well as connecting the Cross Creek neighbourhood to the City of Guelph.	High	●	●	●
35. Continue to work with neighbouring municipalities and conservation areas to provide efficient access to existing trails and potentially pursue expansion and/or connections to these trails to improve connectivity; this includes – but is not limited to – a system for regular walk-up users of the Rockwood Conservation Area.	Medium	●	●	●
36. Pursue the development of a perimeter walking trail around the expanded Rockmosa Park.	High	●	●	
37. Continue to identify and evaluate trail development, pedestrian crossings, and connectivity opportunities through the planning approvals process.	High	●	●	●

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
38. When planning and developing trails, consider the incorporation of amenities at key locations, such as parking, benches, lighting, washrooms, wayfinding signage, and rest areas to facilitate elements of inclusivity and accessibility.	High	●	●	●
39. Public trails should be promoted in the community through appropriate signage and marketing.	Medium	●	●	●
40. Options for accommodating horses and other non-motorized uses should be considered by the Township through their future trail planning initiatives; equestrian-only trails are not recommended.	Low	●	●	●
Soccer Fields				
41. Provide a total of 2 full-size soccer fields (including one lit artificial turf field) and 4 mini / intermediate soccer fields at Rockmosa Park (made possible through park expansion) to meet current demand. There may also be a need for a shelter / storage / washroom building to serve the new fields.	High	●	●	
42. The use of Valentino Park for soccer should be discouraged due to neighbourhood impacts. Usage should be moved to the additional mini fields proposed for Rockmosa Park.	Medium	●	●	●
43. Encourage the clustering of like facilities (particularly sports fields) in order to improve operational/maintenance efficiencies and opportunities for programming and tournament play.	Medium	●	●	●
Ball Diamonds				
44. Due to the relatively low use the diamond currently receives, the Township should enter into further consultation with the Eden Mills community to decide on the future use of the existing ball diamond at Eden Mills Park.	Medium	●		

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Playgrounds				
45. Playgrounds are considered 'walk-to' facilities and should be provided by the Township of Guelph/Eramosa within approximately 500 metres (roughly a five to ten minute walk) of all major built-up residential areas; this standard should be applied in all future or expanded settlement areas. This service radius should be unobstructed by major barriers such as waterways, railway lines, highways, etc.	High	●	●	●
46. Construct a playground within the Noble Ridge subdivision; consider installing outdoor fitness equipment at this location to promote physical activity amongst residents of all ages.	Medium	●		
47. Continue to conduct regular inspections of each playground structure to determine maintenance and repair needs to remain compliant with the guidelines established by the CSA and/or modern designs.	High	●	●	●
48. Provide annual funding within the Township's capital budget and develop a priority list for the replacement and/or upgrading of non-compliant playground equipment (including but not limited to Marden Park).	High	●	●	●
Skateboard and BMX Parks				
49. Work with local organizations to pursue the development of a 'skate park' at Rockmosa Park for Guelph/Eramosa youth. The facility should be designed with input from local youth skateboarders and should consider accommodating trick cycling as well as skateboarding.	Medium	●	●	
Outdoor Courts (Tennis and Basketball)				
50. Pursue the addition of a multi-use court (for basketball / ball hockey) at Cross Creek Park.	Low		●	
51. Include a basketball court in the park proposed for the Noble Ridge subdivision.	Low	●		

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Off-Leash Dog Parks				
52. Seek a suitable partner organization and site for the development of an off-leash dog park.	Medium		●	
Community Gardens				
53. Work with community groups to pursue the creation of a pilot community garden project. The design, size, and location should be determined based upon the willingness of a specific group/community to undertake the pilot and the availability of municipal water service.	Medium		●	
Tobogganing				
54. Develop a business plan to define the capital cost, operating cost, and revenue / potential market for winter downhill toboggan / tube facility at an expanded Rockmosa Park.	Low	●		

RECOMMENDATIONS – PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Parkland Classification				
55. Utilize the proposed parkland hierarchy contained within this Master Plan to provide direction on parkland classification, size, use, and location considerations.	Medium	●	●	●
56. Avoid developing or accepting “active parkland” of less than 0.5 hectare in size from parkland dedication unless the Township has determined that there is a need to fill a gap in parkland and other options are inadequate.	Medium	●	●	●
57. Accepting undevelopable Open Space lands (e.g., stormwater management ponds, woodlots, valley lands, floodplains, hazard lands, etc.) as part of the parkland dedication requirement is strongly discouraged. The Township may assume these lands through voluntary dedication or easement if appropriate.	High	●	●	●

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Parkland Inventory				
58. Develop and maintain a data management system and accurate inventory for municipally owned and/or managed parks and open spaces.	Low		●	
59. Maintain a commitment to accessibility, safety, security, and good environmental practices within the Township's parks and trails system. In recognition of the Township's aging population, greater attention should be paid to the development of amenities such as washrooms, shade, and benches/seating areas in parks and along trails.	High	●	●	●
Parkland Acquisition Policies and Guidelines				
60. Continue to implement the Official Plan requirements regarding parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu. Seek to maximize <i>Planning Act</i> provisions in acquiring parkland (or cash-in-lieu) and establishing a linked open space system.	High	●	●	●
61. Consider permitting the conveyance of land for pathways within new subdivisions (as permitted by Section 51 of the <i>Planning Act</i>). The Township should encourage the County of Wellington to include this policy within its Official Plan.	High	●	●	●
Parkland Requirements				
62. Strive to maintain a minimum service level of 3.0 hectares of active parkland per 1,000 residents in developing areas to ensure that sufficient supplies are available to the Township's growth areas.	High	●	●	●

RECOMMENDATIONS – IMPLEMENTATION

Recommendation	Priority	Timing		
		2013 - 2015	2016 - 2018	2017 +
Timing and Prioritization				
63. Continue to seek public, not-for-profit, and/or private sector partners and alternative funding mechanisms (e.g., fundraising, sponsorships, grants, etc.) to supplement existing resources and to enable full implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan’s capital program.	High	●	●	●
Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan				
64. Develop and implement a system for the regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	High	●	●	●
65. Undertake a full update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan in ten years (2022/2023).	High			●

10.2 Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa should regularly review and assess, and periodically revise the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan in order to ensure that they remain reflective of current realities and responsive to the changing needs of the community. This will require monitoring of activity patterns, conducting annual reviews of the achievements of the Plan, determining which actions have or have not been implemented, tracking satisfaction levels of residents, and undertaking a detailed ten-year update to the Plan.

To properly monitor the Plan, some additional tasks are required, including the monitoring of participation levels by the Township and more consistent dialogue with community organizations. Through these mechanisms – or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustment of resource allocations and priorities identified in this Plan may be required.

Reviewing the Plan requires a commitment from all staff involved in the delivery of parks and recreation services, Council, and the public. An appropriate time for this is prior to the annual budgeting process. The following steps may be used to conduct an annual review of the Master Plan:

- Review of the past year (recommendations implemented, capital projects undertaken, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, issues arising from the public and community groups, etc.);
- Issues impacting the coming year (anticipated financial and operational constraints, political pressures, etc.);
- Review of Plan for direction regarding its recommendations;
- Preparation of a staff report to indicate prioritization of short term projects and determination of which projects should be implemented in the coming year based upon criteria established by staff (e.g., financial limitations, community input, partnership/funding potential, etc.);
- Communication to staff and Council regarding the status of projects, criteria used to prioritize projects, and projects to be implemented in the coming year; and
- Budget requests/revisions as necessary.

Recommendations

64.	Develop and implement a system for the regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
65.	Undertake a full update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan in ten years (2022/2023).

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Township of Guelph/Eramosa - Parks and Recreation Master Plan - Household Survey Summary

1. In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household participated in any of the following activities? This includes formal and informal situations where you or a member of your household are an active participant, not just a spectator. These do not have to take place in Guelph/Eramosa.

	Yes		No		Don't Know		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aerobics, Fitness or Weight-training	176	47%	199	53%	3	1%	378	100%
Walking or Hiking for Leisure	326	86%	50	13%	2	1%	378	100%
Running or Jogging	128	34%	247	65%	3	1%	378	100%
Swimming	186	49%	191	51%	1	0%	378	100%
Cycling or Mountain Biking	180	48%	196	52%	2	1%	378	100%
Hockey or Figure Skating	112	30%	265	70%	1	0%	378	100%
Dog Walking	190	50%	187	49%	1	0%	378	100%
Basketball	51	13%	326	86%	1	0%	378	100%
Volleyball	52	14%	325	86%	1	0%	378	100%
Baseball or Softball	59	16%	318	84%	1	0%	378	100%
Outdoor Soccer	104	28%	273	72%	1	0%	378	100%
Indoor Soccer	51	13%	324	86%	3	1%	378	100%
Tennis	37	10%	340	90%	1	0%	378	100%
Lacrosse	7	2%	369	98%	2	1%	378	100%
Ultimate Frisbee	15	4%	359	95%	4	1%	378	100%
Football	34	9%	340	90%	4	1%	378	100%
Horseback Riding	60	16%	317	84%	1	0%	378	100%
Skateboarding	36	10%	338	89%	4	1%	378	100%
Visual or Performing Arts (e.g., dance, music, or creative arts)	153	40%	224	59%	1	0%	378	100%
Organized Seniors' Programs (e.g., luncheons, cards, etc.)	47	12%	329	87%	2	1%	378	100%

2. a) Are you and members of your household able to participate in parks and recreational activities as often as you would like?

	#	%
Yes	250	66%
No	125	33%
Don't Know	3	1%
Total	378	100%

2. b) IF NO, why not? (up to 2 mentions)

	#	% of subset	% of sample	2.b) Other
Lack of personal time / Too busy	70	55%	19%	Children are grown up
Lack of desired facilities or programs	29	23%	8%	Lazy
Program not offered at convenient time	7	5%	2%	Can't sign up for Guelph programs
Lack of money / Too expensive	1	1%	0%	Weather
Lack of information / Unaware of opportunities	3	2%	1%	
Lack of transportation / Facility too far away	11	9%	3%	
Health Problems / Disability / Age	22	17%	6%	
Language / Cultural Barrier	0	0%	0%	
Other	4	3%	1%	
Don't Know	0			

3. a) Generally, what proportion of your household's parks and recreation needs are met within Guelph/Eramosa?

	#	%
All	158	42%
Most	65	17%
About Half	60	16%
Some	68	18%
None	20	5%
Don't Know	7	2%
Total	378	100%

3. b) What parks and recreation activities do you or members of your household participate in outside of Guelph/Eramosa? (up to 2 mentions)

Activity	#	Activity	#	Activity	#	Activity	#
Swimming	73	basketball	4	curling	2	ladies group	1
Hockey	45	cards	4	dog walking	2	lawn bowling	1
Hiking	33	fishing	4	football	2	motorcross	1
Fitness	19	golf	4	martial arts	2	museums	1
biking	16	gymnastics	4	music	2	photography	1
Soccer	16	horseback riding	4	sailing	2	roller skating	1
walking	13	volleyball	4	softball	2	rowing	1
skating	12	aquaft	3	squash	2	running	1
baseball	10	ball hockey	3	arts	1	skateboarding	1
Tennis	7	ringette	3	atv riding	1	sports	1
Camping	6	theatre	3	ballet	1	square dancing	1
dance	6	weight training	3	beach volleyball	1	tobogganing	1
skiing	6	aerobics	2	boating	1	yoga	1
Canoeing	5	cheerleading	2	lacrosse	1		

3. c) Where do you or members of your household choose to participate in activities outside of Guelph/Eramosa? (up to 2 mentions)

	#	% of subset	3. c) Other Location	#	#	#
City of Guelph	126	46%	Mississauga	6	Bellwood	1
Acton / Georgetown (Halton Hills)	39	14%	Bruce County	5	Brookville	1
Fergus / Elora (Centre Wellington)	19	7%	Ontario	2	Bruce Peninsula	1
Erin	2	1%	Anywhere we are	2	Halton Region	1
Elmira (Woolwich)	1	0%	Bracebridge	2	Bruce Trail	1
Milton	14	5%	Brampton	2	Huntsville	1
Orangeville	1	0%	GTA	2	Huron Township	1
Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge	19	7%	Haliburton	2	Kingston	1
Other	53	19%	Hamilton	2	Linwood	1
Total	274	100%	Toronto	2	Middlesex	1
Don't Know	2		Mount Forest	2	Midland	1
			Provincial / national parks	2	Muskoka	1
			USA	2	Newmarket	1
					Niagara-on-the-Lake	1
					Niagara	1
					Burlington	1
					Outside of Milton	1
					Port Huron	1
					Sauble Beach	1
					St. Catharines	1
					West Grey	1
					Windsor	1

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3. d) Why does your household participate in these activities outside of Guelph/Eramosa? (up to 2 mentions)

	#	% of sample	3. d) Facility or program not available in the area			
Closer to work or school	9	2%	Swimming	17	BMX biking	1
Closer to home	12	3%	Pool	16	Horseback riding	1
Closer to other activities or shopping	1	0%	Arena	14	Elite sports	1
Facility / program is not available in the area (specify)	123	33%	Hockey	11	Music	1
Facility / program is not available in the area at the preferred time	16	4%	Fitness	7	Hiking	1
Variety /change of scenery	22	6%	Dance	3	Tobogganing	1
Connected to the other community/Used to live there	38	10%	Skating	3	Lacrosse	1
Quality of facility / program is superior	11	3%	Soccer	3	Roller skating	1
Less expensive	3	1%	Cards	2	Tennis	1
Tournaments / Special events / Travel teams / Cultural event	8	2%	Theatre	2	Skiing	1
Other	11	3%	Volleyball	2	Cheerleading	1
			Baseball	1	Curling	1
			Basketball	1	Ball hockey	1
Total	254					
Don't Know	1					

4. What is a reasonable amount of time for your household to travel to the parks and recreation activities that you do the most?

	#	%
5 minutes or less	37	10%
6 to 10 minutes	53	14%
11 to 15 minutes	80	21%
16 to 20 minutes	82	22%
21 to 25 minutes	5	1%
26 to 30 minutes	75	20%
More than 30 minutes	36	10%
Don't Know	10	3%
Total	378	100%

5. a) Are there any parks or recreation activities that you or members of your household would like to see offered in Guelph/Eramosa that are NOT currently available?

	#	%
Yes	149	39%
No	199	53%
Don't Know	30	8%
Total	378	100%

5. b) If YES, what programs would you like to see offered? (up to 2 mentions)

Program	#	Program	#	Program	#
swimming	20	aquafit	1	lawn bowling	1
hockey	14	ATVing	1	mens fitness	1
skating	12	cards	1	outdoor senior's programs	1
tennis	6	concerts	1	running	1
swimming lessons	4	fencing	1	softball	1
dance	3	free skating	1	softball adult	1
fitness classes	3	gymnastics	1	squash	1
indoor volleyball	3	hardball	1	team sports	1
arts/music	2	horseback Riding	1	weight training	1
basketball	2	indoor ice-activities	1	yoga	1
beach volleyball	2	indoor soccer	1	zumba	1
curling	2	indoor Tennis	1		
figure skating	2	kids sports	1		

6. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "low" and 5 is "high", please indicate your level of satisfaction with the recreational opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa for the following age groups.

	Not at all Satisfied (1)		Not Satisfied (2)		Somewhat Satisfied (3)		Satisfied (4)		Very Satisfied (5)		Don't Know		Total		AVG
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
a) Children (ages 0-12)	16	4%	8	2%	64	17%	75	20%	53	14%	162	43%	378	100%	3.65
b) Teens (ages 13-18)	21	6%	29	8%	55	15%	46	12%	27	7%	200	53%	378	100%	3.16
c) Adults (ages 19-54)	13	3%	34	9%	86	23%	110	29%	44	12%	91	24%	378	100%	3.48
d) Older Adults and Seniors (ages 55+)	19	5%	27	7%	60	16%	71	19%	36	10%	165	44%	378	100%	3.37

7. 7. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important", please indicate how important the following items are to your household.

	Not at all Important (1)		Not Important (2)		Somewhat Important (3)		Important (4)		Very Important (5)		Don't Know		Total		AVG
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Indoor recreation facilities such as halls and indoor turf and track facilities	74	20%	53	14%	84	22%	69	18%	90	24%	8	2%	378	100%	3.13
Outdoor recreation facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds	42	11%	27	7%	57	15%	99	26%	146	39%	7	2%	378	100%	3.75
Passive parks that preserve natural areas and open space	12	3%	7	2%	42	11%	98	26%	215	57%	4	1%	378	100%	4.33
Trails & pathways	13	3%	13	3%	40	11%	89	24%	221	58%	2	1%	378	100%	4.31

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8. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "low" and 5 is "high", please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following facilities in Guelph/Eramosa.

	Not at all Satisfied (1)		Not Satisfied (2)		Somewhat Satisfied (3)		Satisfied (4)		Very Satisfied (5)		Don't Know		Total		AVG
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Indoor recreation facilities such as halls and indoor turf and track facilities	39	10%	31	8%	78	21%	78	21%	64	17%	88	23%	378	100%	3.33
Outdoor recreation facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds	12	3%	27	7%	98	26%	120	32%	68	18%	53	14%	378	100%	3.63
Passive parks that preserve natural areas and open space	11	3%	14	4%	94	25%	140	37%	92	24%	27	7%	378	100%	3.82
Trails & pathways	13	3%	21	6%	87	23%	132	35%	98	26%	27	7%	378	100%	3.80

9. In order to build or improve parks and recreation facilities, tax dollars are often used. Keeping this in mind, to what degree should the Township spend ADDITIONAL public funds on the following types of facilities? Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "do not spend additional money on this facility type" and 5 means "definitely spend additional money on this facility type."

	Don't Spend (1)		←		→		Definitely Spend (5)		Don't Know		Total		AVG		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
Baseball or Softball Diamonds	89	24%	69	18%	98	26%	45	12%	27	7%	50	13%	378	100%	2.55
Outdoor Soccer Fields	70	19%	45	12%	99	26%	71	19%	50	13%	43	11%	378	100%	2.96
Children's Splash Pads	78	21%	54	14%	85	22%	66	17%	49	13%	46	12%	378	100%	2.86
Tennis Courts	99	26%	69	18%	94	25%	52	14%	22	6%	42	11%	378	100%	2.49
Playgrounds	46	12%	47	12%	91	24%	88	23%	75	20%	31	8%	378	100%	3.29
Skateboard Parks	108	29%	65	17%	76	20%	51	13%	34	9%	44	12%	378	100%	2.51
Outdoor Basketball Courts	81	21%	56	15%	108	29%	60	16%	32	8%	41	11%	378	100%	2.72
Off-Leash Dog Parks	109	29%	54	14%	78	21%	51	13%	50	13%	36	10%	378	100%	2.65
Natural Parks and Open Spaces	39	10%	25	7%	75	20%	102	27%	122	32%	15	4%	378	100%	3.67
Outdoor Skating Rinks	52	14%	43	11%	84	22%	92	24%	84	22%	23	6%	378	100%	3.32
Paved Multi-use Trails	81	21%	46	12%	93	25%	78	21%	58	15%	21	6%	377	100%	2.96
Unpaved Nature Trails	41	11%	33	9%	82	22%	102	27%	106	28%	14	4%	378	100%	3.55
Equestrian Trails	143	38%	77	20%	61	16%	29	8%	19	5%	49	13%	378	100%	2.10
Community Halls or Banquet Rooms	83	22%	73	19%	94	25%	57	15%	45	12%	26	7%	378	100%	2.74
Gymnasiums	92	24%	43	11%	96	25%	68	18%	49	13%	30	8%	378	100%	2.82
Indoor Turf Fields	120	32%	67	18%	77	20%	42	11%	36	10%	36	10%	378	100%	2.44
Arenas	77	20%	32	8%	72	19%	74	20%	96	25%	27	7%	378	100%	3.23
Seniors' Centres or Dedicated Space	51	13%	33	9%	99	26%	84	22%	76	20%	35	9%	378	100%	3.29
Youth-oriented Spaces (e.g., Youth Rooms)	50	13%	38	10%	98	26%	84	22%	71	19%	37	10%	378	100%	3.26

9. t) Other High Priorities (open-ended)	#
Swimming pool	4
Beach volleyball	1
Canoeing	1
Fitness centre	1
Would like more information before providing input	1

10. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree", please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Don't Know		Total		AVG
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
There are sufficient parks and open spaces in your area to meet the needs of your household.	12	3%	26	7%	79	21%	100	26%	150	40%	11	3%	378	100%	3.95
The amount of time it takes for your household to travel to recreation activities is reasonable.	24	6%	25	7%	62	16%	110	29%	151	40%	6	2%	378	100%	3.91
Your household is generally aware of the parks and recreation activities that are available in your area.	34	9%	46	12%	62	16%	103	27%	128	34%	5	1%	378	100%	3.66
Parks and recreation services should be a high priority for Township Council.	16	4%	26	7%	118	31%	98	26%	110	29%	10	3%	378	100%	3.71
You or members of your household would be interested in learning more about the volunteer opportunities in Guelph/Eramosa.	82	22%	63	17%	92	24%	74	20%	58	15%	9	2%	378	100%	2.90

DEMOGRAPHICS

11. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

	#	%
1	26	7%
2	142	38%
3	70	19%
4	79	21%
5	35	9%
6	17	5%
7 or more	6	2%
Total	375	100%
No Response	3	
Average Household Size	3.09	

12. Please indicate the total number of persons within your household that fall into the following age categories.

	#	% of sample	2011 Census
under 10 years	120	10%	11%
10-19 years	192	17%	15%
20-34 years	125	11%	13%
35 to 54 years	375	32%	32%
55 and over	349	30%	29%
Total	1,161	100%	
No Response	15		

Township of Guelph/Eramosa - Parks and Recreation Master Plan - Household Survey Summary

13. In what year were you born?

	#	%
1929 or earlier (82 yrs or older)	5	1%
1930 to 1939 (72 to 82 yrs)	32	9%
1940 to 1949 (62 to 72 yrs)	65	18%
1950 to 1959 (52 to 62 yrs)	83	23%
1960 to 1969 (42 to 52 yrs)	99	28%
1970 to 1989 (32 to 42 yrs)	59	16%
1980 or later (16 to 32 yrs)	16	4%
Total	359	100%
No Response	19	
Average Year	1958	
Average Age	53	

14. Would you say that you lived in a built-up community or rural area?

Built-up Community	#	%
Ariss	3	2%
Eden Mills	16	9%
Everton	6	3%
Marden	4	2%
Rockwood	130	75%
Guelph	12	7%
Other (specify)	3	2%
Total	174	100%

Rural Area	#	%
Closest to Ariss	15	8%
Closest to Eden Mills	10	5%
Closest to Everton	12	6%
Closest to Marden	28	14%
Closest to Rockwood	80	40%
Closest to Guelph	50	25%
Other (specify)	5	3%
Total	200	100%

Total	#	%
Closest to Ariss	18	5%
Closest to Eden Mills	26	7%
Closest to Everton	18	5%
Closest to Marden	32	9%
Closest to Rockwood	210	56%
Closest to Guelph	62	17%
Other (specify)	8	2%
Total	374	100%

14. Other (urban)

	#
Cross Creek	2
Charleston	1

14. Other (rural)

	#
Closest to Bruce Dale	1
Closest to Centre Wellington	1
Closest to Eramosa	1
Closest to Fergus	1
Closest to Puslinch	1

Summary	#	%
Built-up Community	174	47%
Rural Area	200	53%
Total	374	100%
No response / Don't know	4	

15. As an optional question, what is your household's total annual income before taxes? Is it...

	#	%
Under \$40,000	22	9%
Between \$40,000 and \$60,000	33	14%
Between \$60,000 and \$80,000	38	16%
Between \$80,000 and \$100,000	40	17%
Over \$100,000	99	43%
Total	232	100%
No Response / Don't Know	146	

16. Gender

	#	%
Male	158	42%
Female	220	58%
Total	378	100%

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Community Workshop (Marden) – April 19, 2012

Question 1 – What do you value most about Guelph/Eramosa?

- Strong library system (5)
- Calm (rural)/peaceful – great place to raise a family (5)
- Parks and Trails (4)
- Close to Toronto/KW area (shopping/entertainment/sports) (3)
- Royal Distributing Centre (3)
- Volunteerism/service clubs (2)
- Sense of community pride (2)
- Walk anywhere/everywhere (1)
- Lots of sports facilities (1)
- Horticulture (1)
- Facilities in general (1)
- Close knit
- Safe

Question 2 – How can we improve indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and services in Guelph Eramosa?

- More program options for seniors, families and youth (11)
 - Before and after work
 - Active living (yoga, aerobics)
 - Track and Field
- More trails and pathways to link destinations (9)
 - Across the creek to Wal-Mart
 - Rural/county roads
 - Internal trails in parks
- Outdoor recreation and sports (9)
 - Running/biking
 - Drop-in, spontaneous activities
- Encouraging volunteers to use our facilities to provide programs and services, form groups (e.g. seniors clubs) available times at facilities (7)
- Social activities (3)
 - Seniors oriented
- Increasing awareness of opportunities (where and what they are) (3)
- Accessibility in parks and facilities (3)
 - Fishing areas
- Better/consistent signage at facilities (1)

- More tennis courts are Marden (1)
- Off-lease dog parks (2)
- Ball hockey (2)
- Improving all aspects of communication (1)
 - Marketing and encouraging volunteers
- Use of new technologies (1)
- Activities geared towards those with special needs (inclusive) (1)
- Making facilities attractive for rentals as amenities (1)
 - Kitchens and liquor licenses
- Hosting tournaments (1)
 - High quality and adequate number of facilities
- Partnerships with others to use their space
 - Library
 - Retirement residences

Question 4 – How do we address or overcome barriers to meeting community needs?

- Communication
 - Improving marketing
 - Newsletters
 - Electronic/digital/email/social media (limited by lack of high-speed)
 - Need a coordinated approach
 - Word of mouth
 - Events/open houses
- Volunteerism
 - More supports
 - Organization/leadership
 - Township as a facilitator
 - Point person
 - Awareness of needs and services
 - Volunteer fairs
 - Strategy to recruit and retain
- Customer service
 - Manning facilities
 - Having a person to talk to
- Township role
 - Do we start programming? Business Case? Needs?
 - Do we help groups program instead?
 - Do we keep our focus on high quality space?
 - No occasions for this side of Township to get together
 - No annual functions to network, meet new people
 - Multi-focus events e.g. Green Legacy with Fire Services

- Concerts in the park
- Multi-generational parks

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Community Workshop (Rockwood) – April 25, 2012

Question 1 – What do you value most about Guelph/Eramosa?

- Local businesses (Whistle Stop, Bakery) (14)
- Conservation Area (13)
- Friendly (13)
- Small community (9)
- Parks & Open spaces (8)
- Safe (8)
- Service clubs/Volunteers (Lions, Lioness, Eden Mills) (8)
- Proximity (GTA, Guelph, close to everything, lots to offer) (8)
- Soccer (6)
- Community events (Farmers' Parade, Parade of Lights, Rockwood Dance, Pancake Breakfast) (6)
- Agriculture (Farms, famers, local produce) (6)
- Close knit (5)
- Splash pad (5)
- Sports facilities, fields, programs, organizations (5)
- Spacious (room to grow) (4)
- Clean (4)
- Green space (4)
- Library (4)
- Community facilities (local and regional, Marden, Rockwood Community Centre) (3)
- Schools (3)
- Sense of community (3)
- Heritage (2)
- Trails (walking, biking) (2)
- Wildlife (2)
- Activities for all ages
- Bedroom community
- Healthy lifestyle
- Pride of ownership
- Quality of life
- Trees
- Unique
- Walkable
- Children & Youth (enthusiastic about recreational opportunities)

Question 2 – How can we improve organized activities within Guelph/Eramosa?

- Field lighting (10)
- Turf fields (7)
- Multi-use facilities (arena, sports fields, indoor activities, groups, programs, activities) (7)
- More fields (indoor/outdoor, soccer/lacrosse) (6)
- Field maintenance (irrigation, level fields, goal nets, fill holes, painted lines, water/seed grass) (5)
- Fitness centre (involving youth, seniors, disabilities, extended hours) (5)
- Arena (5)
- Indoor pool (5)
- Outdoor hockey rink (covered, off-season used for ball hockey) (4)
- More seniors programs (4)
- Trails (organized tours for walking, hiking, biking, cross-country, improve network, especially around conservation area) (4)
- Community meeting/recreational rooms (3)
- More parking at facilities (3)
- More bathrooms at fields that are clean and open (2)
- Partnerships with school boards to use their facilities (2)
- Community garden (2)
- Anticipate population growth and be proactive instead of reactive to community needs
- Band shelter
- Basketball options
- Better disbursement of money to address needs of community
- Care/maintenance of benches at fields
- Concession facilities
- Costs for sports fields cheaper than arenas to maintain
- Earlier access to fields
- Eden Mills (bathrooms, shelter over benches for shade)
- Have resources in place to respond to climate (earlier use of outdoor space)
- Improvements at Eden Mills soccer
- Increase diversity for all community groups
- Indoor facilities for year round activities
- Marden Recreation Centre is far from majority of population
- More parks and recreation budget but keep effective for sports
- Non-resident fees
- Ongoing support for tennis and ice rinks
- Plant shade trees
- Public tennis courts
- Rockmosa concession/washrooms
- Skate/bike park
- Space for pre-schoolers

- Special needs population
- Sportsplex for classes at reasonable cost
- Summer camp facility
- Track
- Variety of choices but facilities are inadequate, baseball underused, soccer overused.
- Volleyball/squash/dance/fitness in Rockwood
- Would love to see a booklet to show the wealth of programs in the area and all programs – with the spaces we have we could have more fitness classes and would be nice to consolidate it, list community events, contact information
- Youth hiking/birding/outdoor nature (after school or weekends)

Question 3 – How can we improve unorganized activities within Guelph/Eramosa?

- Trails (improving pedestrian paths, linkages to parks/Bruce Trail/Guelph/, benches, rest areas, safety, hiking, bike trails/lanes, cross-country, not only connected along highway 7, lit trails, walking pass to conservation area or public access) (22)
- Skateboard/bmx park (7)
- Improved facilities (better maintenance of current facilities, drop-in centre, improved organized activities to accommodate unorganized activities) (5)
- Off leash dog park (4)
- Tobogganing Hill (3)
- Bathroom facilities (more of them, cleanliness, open, located at fields) (3)
- Fitness stations along trails (2)
- Community garden space with water, fence, maybe staff (2)
- Promote through flyers, posters, brochures, pamphlets (2)
- Upgraded or install playground equipment (both junior and senior levels) (2)
- Youth recreation centre (2)
- Basketball court
- Bigger grocery store
- Facilities with gardens and wildlife habitat using native plants
- Farmers' market
- Grass conditions
- Ice cream truck
- Ice rink/ball hockey
- Increase number of parks and improve distribution, uses, classification
- Look at improving range of park facilities
- General facility amenities (washrooms, benches, tables, garbage bins)
- Public pools
- Public tennis with lights
- Running track
- Solar panel

- Splash pads
- Sports equipment you can rent/borrow
- Support for ice rink upkeep
- Trash cans

Question 4 – How do we overcome barriers to meeting community needs?

- Partnership with other groups to lower costs (surrounding municipalities, county, corporate sponsors, conservation area and community organizations to provide facilities) (12)
- Raising Awareness (booklets, newsletters, utilize technologies, updated website, improve access to information, guides, newspapers, directory) (7)
- More meetings to maintain open communication between residents, Township, organizations (4)
- Volunteers (4)
- Money (3)
- Ensure township are aware of community needs and utilize funds effectively (2)
- Physical geography (train tracks, traffic on Highway 7) (2)
- Grants/lotteries/fundraising (2)
- Space/facility (2)
- Bedroom communities
- Careful planning – no loss of green space
- Develop sub-committee
- Location of facilities (eg Marden to Rockwood)
- Make sports surfaces universal (soccer/lacrosse)
- Make trails and label for hiking/biking to preserve like Bruce Trail system
- Organizational participation
- Organize activities to encourage more unorganized usage
- Public tennis
- Revisit fee structure for local facilities to make more accessible/affordable
- Seasonal barriers
- Support community organizations
- Tax breaks for donations
- Tax us on the services we use
- Town focal point for information/services
- Use community pressure

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan Older Adult Input Sessions – Rockwood – October 16th, 2012

Question One: What barriers keep older adults from participating in parks and recreation activities?

Comment	#
Lack of awareness re: available activities (who do we call for info?)	35
Lack of local facilities providing programs and activities	21
Transportation – reliability and availability	17
Program costs	16
Transportation costs	13
Health (illness)	11
Disability and transportation	10
Lack of local programs of interest to older adults	10
Facilities like Marden are too far away for people lacking transportation or ability to drive any longer	8
Lack of lighting in parks	7
Better washroom facilities in parks (e.g., Eden Mills)	6
Overcoming loneliness, network of friends and acquaintances (social aspect)	6
Poor weather (e.g., snow, ice)	6
Lack of interest	5
Parking spots	5
Financial costs associated with accessing City of Guelph services	
Need someone to organize	5
No benches in parks to sit on when walking the paths or using the parks	4
Physical accessibility (e.g., wheelchairs, stairs)	4
Subsidized wheel trans	4
Lack of a free gathering place for seniors	4
Lack of park maintenance	3
Facility costs	3
Timing of programs often not convenient	3
Lack of awareness about transportation opportunities	3
Large, rural area	2
Where did bleachers at Eden Mills go?	1
Bird poop	1
Facilitator costs	1
Snowbirds / seasonal residents	1
Woodlawn to Marden Road trail needs to be better maintained for biking	1

Question Two: What programs and activities are missing Guelph/Eramosa?

Comment	#
Senior-focused exercise	21
Cards / games	19
Speaker educational presentations (e.g., fraud, scams, finance, general interest)	16

Comment	#
Walking / hiking	15
Canoe and boat rentals (more affordable) and fishing facilities	10
Local newsletter	9
More affordable fitness programs	8
Music in the park	8
Travel group	8
Darts	7
Dinner clubs	7
Join Evergreen Centre	7
Carpet / lawn bowling	6
Gardening	6
Dance	5
Health education (e.g., arthritis, diet, diabetes, foot care, etc.)	5
Line dancing	5
Table tennis	5
Aquafit	5
Choir	4
Social gathering (e.g., pot luck dinners, dances, picnics, teas, etc.)	4
Badminton	3
Computer lessons	3
Movies	3
Organizational volunteers to run programs	3
Painting	3
Swimming	3
Yoga	3
Daytime programs	3
Barbecuing	2
Beginner Pilates	2
Cooking	2
Cycling	2
Multi-use facility with pool and rink	2
Shuffleboard	2
Tai chi	2
Wine club	2
Zumba Gold	2
Day trips (e.g., turning leaves, seasonal)	2
Aerobics	1
Art classes	1
Bocce	1
Cooking classes	1
Darts	1
Emotional support / friendly visitors	1
Golf	1
Pay as you go?	1
Theatre (e.g., Stratford, Guelph, Hillsburgh)	1

Comment	#
Volunteer opportunities	1
Billiards	1
Book club	1
Quilting, knitting, crocheting	1

Question Three: What facility / space options are required to address the program and activity needs?

Comment	#
Dedicated seniors' centre in Rockwood with potential to expand (could include kitchen, exercise facility, comfortable chairs, drop-in, conference room)	43
Dedicated room just for seniors	23
Swimming pool	18
Centrally located drop-in centre that is accessible, affordable, and 'communication central'	16
Floral gardens	15
Access to old Town Hall and all municipal facilities (e.g., Fire Hall)	14
Need a Coordinator to facilitate administration of space (e.g., university student as a summer job or co-op placement)	14
Groomed level surface walking trails with multi-level difficulty	13
Facility should reflect the amount of taxes paid	12
Permanent multi-purpose space (no location identified)	11
Computer facilities (for classes)	10
Bike trails	9
Community veggie gardens at Squires	8
Partner with other communities that already offer space	8
Benches in parks / trails	7
Free entry to Conservation Area for organized groups (e.g., hiking, walking, etc.)	7
Larger fitness space (e.g., Squires)	6
Room partition at Rockmosa would allow 2 activities at a time	6
Arena (at Rockmosa?)	6
Running/walking track	6
Common room for meals with kitchen	5
Shuffleboard	5
Use church basements and meeting rooms for community groups	5
Therapeutic pool	4
Many rooms – more than one	3
Space shared with other uses	3
Kitchen	3
Trail system to join parks together	3
Separate room for noisy activities	2
Separate room for quiet activities	2
Main Street beautification	2
Games area	2
Transportation	1
Accessible facility	1
Comfortable sitting area with fireplace	1

Comment	#
Gym for fitness	1
Geographic distribution of population makes a centralized seniors' centre difficult	1

Question Four: How can we improve recreation service delivery for older adults?

Comment
Grants (including Trillium and private companies like Mars and Kraft)
Online
Facility
Meals on Wheels (4)
Mobile library (2)
New women's group (1)
Dial-a-bus (4)
Subsidized taxi service (4)
Space for seniors
Public / private partnerships
Use volunteers for transportation
Township should hire a paid Volunteer Coordinator
Allocate and increase funding dedicated to older adults
Newsletter (monthly, available at post office, library, and Township's website)
Radio (including Erin station)
Television
Community Services (e.g., EWCS)
Use existing facilities (e.g., old Town Hall)
Phone line like 311 to connect people in need to services
Sugar daddy
Skills bank for volunteers
Include information in a Parks and Recreation guide or bulk mail with tax or water bill
Post information at library, church community boards, bank, post office
Use large print
Use EWCS as the anchor and have volunteers to organize and run activities and events
Utilize carpooling
Corporate sponsors to sponsor activities or facilities (can use retirees and/or those about to retire for connections to businesses for donations and sponsorship)
Creative fundraising
Guest speakers (registration fees donated)
Locally based seniors' column in paper
Township should hire a paid Coordinator for Seniors' Events and Programs
Volunteer recruitment – advertise at fairs and in high school bulletins
Habitat for Humanity format for constructing a building
Utilize a core volunteer group for disseminating information
Public advertising
Partnership with Denny's Bus Lines?
Full page for seniors' information in Wellington Advertiser, sponsored by local business or Township
Improved transportation opportunities

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan Older Adult Input Sessions – Marden – October 18th, 2012

Question One: What barriers keep older adults from participating in parks and recreation activities?

Comment	#
Safety of roads (e.g., poor road and shoulder maintenance for walking and biking, as well as speed and trucks on sideroads)	12
Lack of lighting for recreation centres (difficulty seeing where to turn)	9
Large geographic area	8
No sharing of services with other areas (e.g., City of Guelph)	7
Communications – visibility of message (e.g., signs, page in local papers, emails)	6
Lack of trail signage	6
Safety on trails (e.g., shared use issues, trail maintenance, surface improvements)	6
Need rest points on trails (e.g., seating)	6
Parking for trails	5
Disabilities	4
Driving safety (e.g., nighttime, can't drive, winter driving)	4
Distance to programs and facilities	3
Cost of renting space	3
Cliques of neighbours	3
Library in Guelph is too expensive	2
Too much goose poop in park	2
Scheduling – not everyone is available during the day	2
Lack of lighting for trails (or need for better visibility to access points)	2
Lack of signage for recreation centres	2
Cost of activities	2
Trails (Ariss) are too rocky	2
Health	1
Transportation	1
Lack of free time (e.g., farming, holidays, snowbirds, etc.)	1
Physical accessibility	1
Lack of high speed internet throughout Township	1

Question Two: What programs and activities are missing in Guelph/Eramosa?

Comment	#
Wellness and fitness (Health Unit, community experts)	21
Yoga	10
Cards (including euchre)	9
Bus trips	7
Line dancing	6
Walking (with and without dogs; themed)	5
Wine / beer tasting night	5
Naturalist club	5

Comment	#
Computer classes	4
Cooking classes	4
Music in the park and/or garden	4
Group exercise	3
Darts	3
Movie nights	3
Do-it-yourself instruction	3
Prefer set time activities	3
Genealogy	3
Dancing	3
Historical society	3
Early morning walking club	2
Theatre group	2
Old-timers sports (e.g., hockey, basketball, etc.)	2
Swimming without geese	1
Cycling group	1
Swimming	1
Zumba	1
Tai chi	1
Language club	1
Sewing classes	1
Tommy Hunter / other personalities	1
Book club	1
Harvest / plant exchange / sale	1
Lawn care information	1
Horticultural society	1
Intergenerational opportunities	1
Prefer drop-in activities	1

Question Three: What facility / space options are required to address the program and activity needs?

Comment	#
Learn to use the facilities we already have	35
Benches and garbage cans on trails	11
Widen shoulders for safety	8
Warm water pool with sauna	7
Acoustics of meeting room at Marden Community Centre	7
Bocce courts	5
Outdoor rink	5
More trails	5
More garbage cans in parks and more regular disposal	5
Washrooms on trails	4
Horseshoe pits	4
Connection of trails that link infrastructure	4
More picnic facilities with pavilions	3

Comment	#
Exercise area in field house is too small, too hot and too crowded	3
Picnic shelters	3
Lawn bowling	2
Need coffee area for men	1
Shuffleboard	1
Tennis	1
Pave trails	1
Tennis courts	1
Prefer shared spaces (not dedicated) as they are more cost effective and will have better utilization	1

Question Four: How can we improve recreation service delivery for older adults?

Comment
Reciprocal agreement with City of Guelph library
Use volunteers to provide programs and coordination (e.g., Health Unit, community experts)
Consistency of rules and information
Shuttle bus to bring people to facilities and/or programs
Encourage neighbours to carpool
Community driving service with volunteers
Teach people to use computers so email blasts can be used to disseminate information
Central community information centre (e.g., Community Calendar)
Welcome Wagon service
Contests to have people bring others out to activities
Dedicated Township page in the Wellington Advertiser
Flyers in mailbox
Improve marketing strategy
Township website needs to be more user friendly and up-to-date with times, days, and locations
Develop a way to talk to the trail operators
Consider working seniors vs. retired seniors
Better communication re: availability of municipal recreation spaces
Clear hall rental policies and ability to ask questions
Post at general store
Email database as option when paying taxes
Post at mailbox centres
Post at recycling facility
Ads in Wellington Advertiser
One comprehensive publication
Peer networking
Communication is key
Make better use of internet
Publicize the Township's website
Add links to other group sites (e.g., horticultural society)
Advertise woodcarvers
Flat screens on walls at Marden CC to advertise events

Comment
Extra insert in tax bills with listing of programs
Talent show

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan Older Adult Sessions – Comment Sheet Input

Barriers to participation	#
• Transportation (e.g., affordable, local)	11
• Lack of awareness	6
• Financial	6
• Large rural area	4
• Health	3
• Mobility	3
• Lack of space / facilities	3
• Disabilities	2
• Bathrooms	2
• Physical accessibility	2
• Lack of centralized communication method	1
• Lack of lighting	1
• Lack of clarity about Township boundaries	1
• Weather	1

Transportation	#
• Use volunteer drivers	2
• Dial-a-bus	1
• To activities	1

Program / activity gaps	#
• Fitness (including aerobics)	6
• Line dancing	4
• Social events (e.g., pot luck dinner, dances)	4
• Affordable canoe and kayak rentals	3
• Cycling club	2
• Tai chi	2
• Walking/hiking group	2
• Shuffleboard	2
• Yoga	2
• Water exercise	2
• Cards	2
• Health programs	1
• Social programs	1
• Interest groups	1
• Community gardening	1
• Bird watching	1
• Crafts	1
• Darts	1

Program / activity gaps	#
• Dancing	1
• Singing group	1
• Knitting	1
• Fishing	1
• Music in the park	1
• Dinner club	1
• Exercise program in Rockwood	1
• Educational programs	1
• Travel programs	1
• Billiards	1
• Table tennis	1
• Computer courses	1
• Holiday events	1
• Cooking	1
• Reciprocal services with the City of Guelph	1
• Omnibus activities with a coordinator in one spot – all ideas discussed	1
• Don't duplicate services offered by Continuing Education (e.g., Spanish, computers, etc.) and other groups	1

Facility / park needs	#
• Walking trails, including connections to other trails nearby	4
• Pool	4
• Seniors' centre	3
• Ice rink	3
• Indoor walking track	2
• Use old Town Hall	2
• Facility like Marden CC at east end of Township	1
• Consider shared space	1
• Look after what we already have	1
• Cut weeds to make parks more inviting	1
• Outdoor rink	1
• Benches in parks	1
• Floral gardens	1
• Lawn bowling courts	1
• Screen for movies	1
• Safety – to actively participate in outdoor recreation, branches over road shoulders need to be trimmed regularly, shoulders need to be maintained too	1

Non-municipal options for space	#
• Churches	4
• Police and fire stations	1
• Library	1

Dedicated space for older adults	#
• Own building	7
• Drop-in space	5
• Need a multi-use facility in Rockwood that has a seniors' section	2
• Comfortable	2
• Kitchen	2
• Seniors' activity facility in Rockwood, not Marden	2
• Game tables	1
• Craft room	1

Communication	#
• Raise awareness about program opportunities	4
• Newsletter	3
• Use Erin radio station	1
• Centralize communication hub	1
• Utilize networking	1
• Send information to each household	1
• Put up notices at the post office	1
• Electronic notice board	1
• Tanner paper	1
• Inserts with water bills	1
• Church bulletins	1
• Word of mouth between neighbours to attend functions, especially on west side of Township	1
• Keep website up to date, including contact numbers	1

Governance, staffing, and partnerships	#
• Community committee	1
• East Wellington Community Services	1
• Hire an Activities Coordinator	1

Affordability	#
• Free or subsidized access to Rockwood Conservation Area for local residents	5
• Make programs affordable	2
• Senior rates or season reduced rates for seniors	1

Funding	#
• Grants	1
• Corporate sponsorship	1

Volunteers	#
• Volunteer seniors as 'community building' champions	1
• Create volunteer skills bank	1
• Volunteer opportunities	1

Non-recreation concerns	#
• Need more rooms and beds in nursing homes	1
• Meals on Wheels	1
• Mobile library	1
• Improved look of downtown (e.g., flowers in warm weather and decorations at Christmas)	1
• Create a sense of community	1

Social activity ideas

January – snow man sleigh ride; skating on river

February – Valentine’s dance; square dance

March – Shamrock Irish Jig with potato sprout stew

April – Spring chicken flower show; Sadie Hawkins

May – Easter egg roll; Maypole dance

June – School graduation; Rose Bowl games; wedding photos

July – Swimming; Canada Day; dress-up parade; picnic; flag day

August – Mid-summer fling; hammock fling

September – School daze history photos

October – Costume part; masquerade; jive / swing dance

November – Veterans; remembrance; poetry and art contest

December – Christmas family events; pageant; campfire

Quotes

- Need for ‘champions’ to build network

Township of Guelph/Eramosa – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Open House (Municipal Office) – April 4, 2013

Public comments and questions received following presentation of the Draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan:

- Due to shape of Township, it is difficult to get from one side to the other using current trail system – improved connections are also desired on the west side of the Township (5 Township Road)
- Could the Township consider using church halls for programming or a seniors' centre?
- How is future parkland being acquired – will there be enough to serve new housing units?
- Better utilization of Marden Park should be encouraged
- What is the timing for expanding Rockmosa Park?
- East Wellington Community Services will be approving their Strategic Plan next week – they are glad to see that there are many parallels with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and they look forward to working with the Township on its implementation

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE PARKS BY-LAW



BY-LAW NO. _____

BEING A BY-LAW TO PROVIDE FOR THE USE, REGULATION,
PROTECTION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE PARKS OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF GUELPH/ERAMOSIA.

WHEREAS it is expedient to exercise the power conferred upon the Council by *The Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, to pass by-laws respecting matters within the sphere of jurisdiction of culture, parks, recreation and heritage;

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa enacts as follows:

DEFINITIONS

1. In this by-law:

- a) "Municipality" means the geographical boundaries of the Corporation of the Township of Guelph/Eramosa;
- b) "Manager" means the person holding the office of the Manager of Parks and Recreation for the municipality;
- c) "Motor Vehicle" includes an automobile, motorcycle, motor assisted vehicle, and any other vehicle propelled or driven otherwise than by muscular power; but does not include a street car, or other motor vehicles running only upon rails, or a motorized snow vehicle, traction engine, farm tractor, self-propelled implement of husbandry or road-building machine within the meaning of the Highway Traffic Act;
- d) "Park" includes any land or premises within the municipality used for park or recreational purposes, including but not limited to: green spaces; trails; water features; wooded areas; and land covered by water and all portions thereof owned by or made available by lease, agreement, or otherwise to the municipality, that is or hereafter may be established, dedicated, set apart or made available for use as a public open space or golf course, including any buildings, structures, facilities, erections and improvements located in or on such lands, as outlined in Schedule "A";
- e) "Park" or "Parked," when referring to a motor vehicle, vehicle, motorized snow vehicle, motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other vehicle or conveyance of any description, has the same meaning as in the *Highway Traffic Act*;

- f) "Park facility" includes any and all buildings, structures, facilities, erections and improvements located on park lands;
- g) "Person" includes a corporation, organization, association, partnership, and the like;
- h) "Posted Area" means an area where permissive, regulatory, warning or prohibitive signs are erected;
- i) For the purpose of this By-law, an animal shall be deemed to be "running at large":
 - i) When found in any place other than the premises of the owner of the animal and not under the control of any person or not under leash, and no leash shall exceed 2.0 metres (6 feet); and
 - ii) When on the premises of the owner of the animal and not tied up or in a properly enclosed area.
- o) "Service animal" includes a guide dog and other trained service animal identifiable as such and used principally to assist persons with a visual, hearing or other disability or impediment;
- p) "Waste" includes garbage, refuse, debris, litter, grass clippings, tree and garden cuttings, brush and leaves, containers, crockery, dishes, glassware, bottles, plastic containers, cans, paper, cardboard, clothing, any vegetative or animal matter or excretion, broken concrete, asphalt pavement, industrial or chemical lubricants, hydrocarbons, patio slabs, sidewalk slabs, and building materials;
- q) "Water feature" includes rivers, lakes, streams, creeks, storm water management ponds, reservoirs, estuaries, swales, man made or natural streams, man made ditches, and other geographical features containing water at some time during the year, but does not include private or municipal swimming pools or decorative man-made, self-contained garden ponds or fountains on private residential or commercial property.

ADMINISTRATION

- 2. The Manager shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of this By-law.
- 3. As part of his or her responsibility to administer this By-law, the Manager may:
 - a) Designate areas within a park;
 - b) Designate areas within a park to be excluded from public access;
 - c) Make regulations and impose conditions by which a designated area shall be used;
 - d) Make regulations and impose conditions for the orderly use of a park and any park facilities;
 - e) Issue permits for specific uses of a park or parts of a park;

- f) Impose conditions as a requirement of obtaining, continuing to hold or renewing a permit, in addition to the requirements under this By-law, and such conditions may vary depending on the type of permit; and
- g) Revoke a permit as a result of a breach of a condition of the permit or a provision of this By-law.

EXEMPTIONS

- 4. This By-law shall not apply to:
 - a) Employees or agents of emergency services (e.g., ambulance, police, fire) acting in the scope of their duties to provide emergency services or enforcement activities within a park;
 - b) The vehicles and other properties of emergency services (e.g., ambulance police, fire) used for the purpose of providing emergency services or engaging in enforcement activities within a park; and
 - c) The Corporation, its vehicles, and its employees or agents acting within the scope of their duties as employees or agents of the Corporation.
- 5. The Manager may exempt persons from all or part of the requirements and prohibitions of this By-law from time to time if such exemption is required for the beneficial administration of a park.

SCOPE

- 6. This By-law applies to any lands or premises within the municipality used for park purposes, together with the avenues, streets, boulevards, drives and approaches leading directly into or within 30 metres of a park boundary.

HOURS

- 7. All parks shall close at 12:00 am (midnight) and shall remain closed until 6:00 am daily, unless otherwise specified in this Part or Schedule B of this By-law;
- 8. Notwithstanding section 7, the Manager may close a park or a portion of a park for longer or shorter period of time should he deem necessary for the beneficial administration of the park or to carry out the functions as authorized by a permit for use of a park or part of a park;
- 9. The Manager shall not close a park or a portion of a park for a different period of time as provided in section 7 for more than 6 consecutive months without Council approval.

PARK ENTRY

10. No person shall:

- a) Enter or remain in a park after it has been closed, unless otherwise permitted; or
- b) Enter or remain in an area of a park where admission is prohibited or restricted without a permit; or
- c) Enter or access through a park for the purpose of conducting any work on private property without a permit; or
- d) Enter or access through a woodland between dusk and dawn.

CONDUCT:

11. No person shall in any park:

- a) Enter into an area in a park where it is signed to prohibit or restrict admission to the public, except in accordance with the sign;
- b) Create a nuisance or in any way interfere with the use and enjoyment of the park by other persons;
- c) Indulge in any riotous, boisterous, violent, threatening, or illegal conduct;
- d) Leave or deposit any waste of any kind whatsoever except in the receptacles provided by the municipality for such purposes;
- e) Cause injury to any person or damage to any property;
- f) Smoke or carry a lighted cigarette, cigar or pipe in any area where signs are posted prohibiting smoking;
- g) Kill, injure, hunt, trap, fish, destroy, damage or disturb any animal, fish or bird;
- h) Destroy, damage or disturb the nest or den or egg of any fish, bird or animal;
- i) Cut, destroy, remove, damage, deposit or plant any tree, flower, plant, plant material, shrub or flowerbed without written permission from the municipality;
- j) Use any park facility without having paid the required fees, if any;
- k) Light or build a fire except in fireplaces or fire pits provided for in designated areas after having first obtained a permit from the municipality to do so;

- l) Operate any amplifying system or loudspeaker without the written consent of the municipality;
- m) Use any radio, compact disc player, car radio, or any other sound reproducing system in a manner which disturbs or interferes with other persons in or near the park;
- n) Dwell, camp or reside in a park, unless authorized by permit from the municipality or the consent in writing of the Manager;
- o) Place, install or erect any temporary or permanent structure;
- p) Build, repair, paint or store any motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle or motorized recreational vehicle or any trailer, structure, fence or playground equipment unless employed by the municipality for that purpose;
- q) Ignite, discharge or set off any firecrackers, rockets or other fireworks except as a fireworks display as authorized by permit issued by the Fire Department;
- r) Climb any building, structure or equipment, unless it is equipment designed for climbing;
- s) Enter any portion of any washroom, bathhouse, or change room in any park set apart for the opposite sex.

ANIMALS:

12. While in a park, no person responsible for any animal shall:

- a) Permit any animal to run at large, except within an area designated as a leash-free area by By-law;
- b) Permit any animal to disturb wildlife or damage any park facility, property or plant material;
- c) Fail to pick up and remove forthwith excrement left by an animal and dispose of it in a sanitary manner in a receptacle for litter or in some other suitable container, excluding persons reliant upon a service animal where it is being used to aid a person with a visual, hearing or other disability;
- d) Permit any animal to enter into an area in a park where it is signed to prohibit or restrict admission to the animal except in accordance with the sign;
- e) As owner or person having control of any animal, permit such animal to run at large or permit such animal to swim in any water in or adjoining any park, bathing beach or swimming pool;
- f) Fail to immediately control or remove an animal that shows aggressiveness toward people or other animals or at the direction of a police officer, municipal law enforcement officer or municipal employee;
- g) Permit an animal to leave a designated area unless under the control of a person.

ENCROACHMENT:

13. Without written consent from the municipality, no person shall encroach upon or take possession of any park or part thereof by any means whatsoever, including but not limited to:
- a) The construction, installation or maintenance of any fence or structure;
 - b) The planting, installation or maintenance of any plant, plant material, shrub, tree or garden;
 - c) Leave, deposit, store or dump any waste or plant materials of any kind what so ever;
 - d) Store, maintain, repair or construct a vehicle of any description, trailer, building, structure, fence or playground equipment in any park;
 - e) Remove, destroy or construct any new pavement, sidewalk, crosswalk, trail, grass plot or roadway or any part thereof without written consent from the municipality.

GAMES, SPORTS AND ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES:

14. While in a park no person shall:
- a) Hold a picnic, organized gathering or event for more than twenty-five persons without first obtaining a reserved use permit from the municipality;
 - b) Interfere with a picnic, organized gathering or event authorized by permit;
 - c) Arrange or engage in any organized sport or activity, except in areas set aside and signed for such purposes and in accordance with the sign;
 - d) Interfere with an organized sport or other recreational activity occurring within a designated area;
 - e) Use a designated area where same is signed to prohibit or restrict such use except in accordance with the sign;
 - f) Use a sports area that has been temporarily or permanently closed;
 - g) Ski, toboggan, snowboard, skibob, or sled in any area signed to restrict same except in accordance with the sign;
 - h) Play tennis except in areas set aside and signed for such purposes and in accordance with the sign;
 - i) Practice archery or operate power model aircraft except in areas set aside and signed for such purposes and in accordance with the sign;

- j) Skateboard in a park in areas where prohibited;
- k) Play or practice golf or strike a golf ball except in those areas set aside and signed for such purposes and in accordance with the sign;
- l) Swim, bathe, wash, or fish in or from any park except in or from those areas designated for such purpose and during such seasons as may be designated by the Manager and otherwise permitted by law.

ALCOHOL

15. No person shall consume, serve or sell alcohol beverages unless authorized by a permit issued by the municipality and after having complied with all of the requirements of the Liquor License Board of Ontario.

VEHICLES & TRANSPORTATION:

16. No person shall in any park:

- a) Ride, park or drive any horse, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle, motorized recreational vehicle, golf cart, trailer, carriage, wagon, sleigh, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other vehicle:
 - i) Except upon the roadways and parking lots which have been signed as areas designated for such use and only in accordance with the sign;
 - ii) In excess of posted speed limits; or
 - iii) Upon a roadway or trail which has been signed as a bicycle or hiking trail.
- b) Ride any bicycle other than along designated trails.

17. This section does not apply to vehicles owned by the municipality, motor vehicles, motorized snow vehicles or motorized recreational vehicles or any other conveyance operated by municipal employees or operators of ambulances, police or fire department vehicles while engaged in the duties of their employment.

PARKING:

18. No person shall in any park:

- a) Park or leave unattended any vehicle, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle or motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other conveyance except in a designated parking area, as outlined in Schedule "C";

- b) Park or leave a vehicle, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle or motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other conveyance between the hours of 12:00 am (midnight) and 6:00 am except in a designated area allowing for such overnight parking, as outlined in Schedule “C”;
- c) Stop or park a vehicle, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle or motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other conveyance in a designated area for parking, except in a parking space and in accordance with posted conditions, as outlined in Schedule “C”;
- d) Stop or park a vehicle, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle, motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other conveyance in a disabled parking space except in accordance with the provisions of the *Highway Traffic Act*; or
- e) Park a vehicle, motor vehicle, motorized snow vehicle, motorized recreational vehicle, self-propelled implement of husbandry or any other conveyance in a designated fire route or in such a manner as to obstruct a fire hydrant.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES:

19. No person shall in any park:

- a) Distribute or display any pamphlet, notice, bill or advertisement or post, stencil or otherwise affix any such document or other paper to any tree, bush, shrub, fence, post, building or structure except in designated areas after having first obtained a permit from the municipality to do so; and
- b) Unless authorized in writing by the Manager and after having obtained all necessary licenses, sell or keep for sale any goods, wares, merchandise, confectionery, tobacco or refreshments of any kind.

PENALTY

20. Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of this By-Law, is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine in such amount provided for by the Provincial Offences Act, RSO. 1990.c33. as may be amended from time to time.

REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT:

21. The municipality may erect signs describing any of the provisions of this By-law.

22. Every person who contravenes any of the provisions of this By-law is guilty of an offence and upon conviction is liable to a penalty subject to the provisions of the *Provincial Offences Act* and every such penalty shall be recoverable pursuant to the said *Act*.

23. Where anything required to be done in accordance with this By-law is not done, a person or persons designated by the municipality may recover the costs of so doing by adding the cost to the tax roll and collecting them in the same manner and with the same priority as municipal taxes.

24. This by-law shall come into effect on the date of the final passing thereof.

PASSED this ____ day of ____, 20__.

MAYOR

TOWNSHIP CLERK

Schedule A

Insert list of municipally owned parks and recreation facilities.

Schedule B

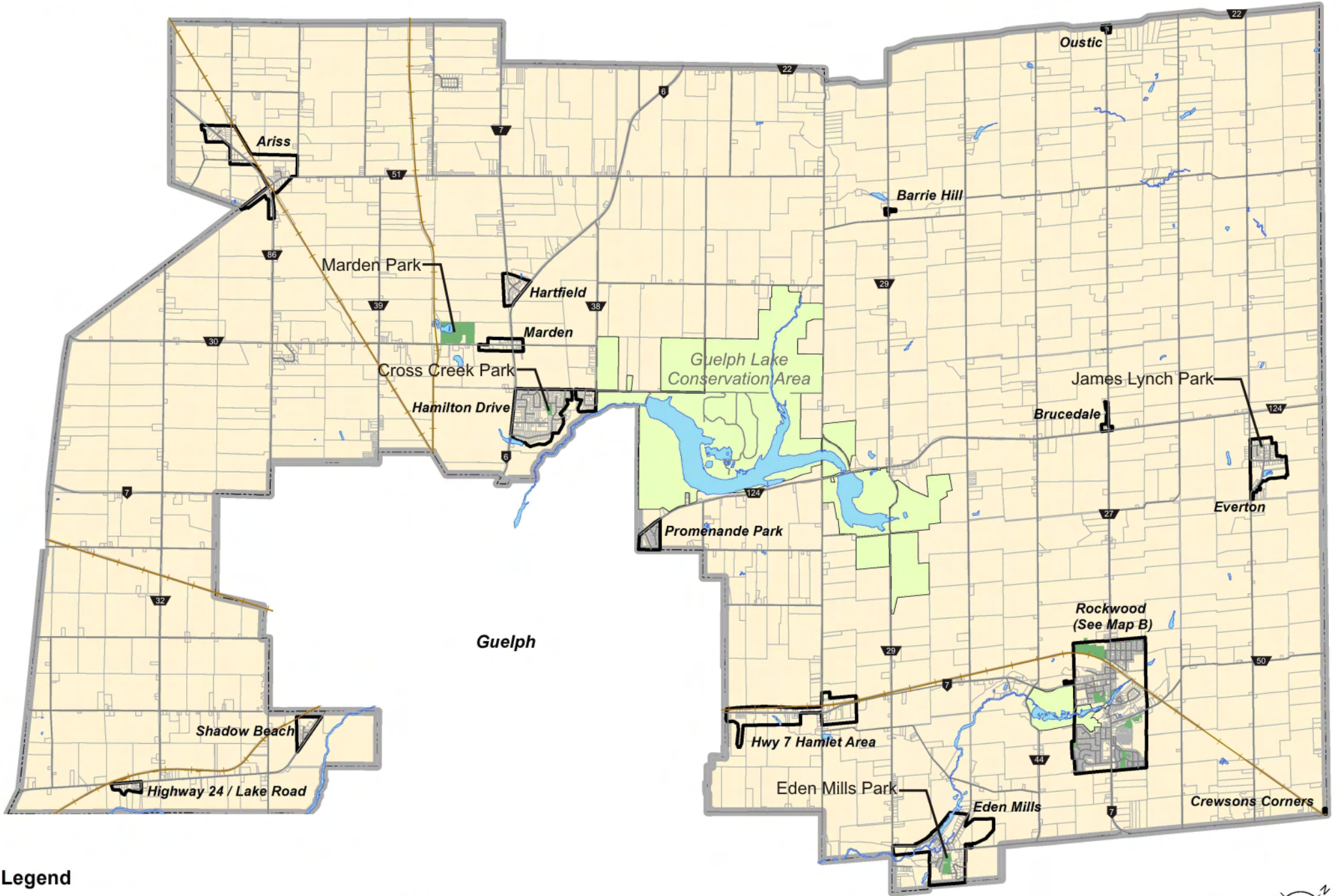
Insert list of parks with specific hours of operation, if applicable.

Schedule C

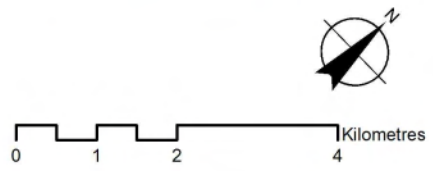
Insert parking schedule and details for parks and recreation facilities, if applicable.

APPENDIX C: PARKLAND MAPPING

Township of Guelph/Eramosa Parks and Recreation Master Plan Municipal Parkland - Key Map (Map A)



- Legend**
- Settlement Areas (Source: County of Wellington OP, 2011)
 - Municipal Parks
 - Conservation Areas



Municipal Parkland - Rockwood (Map B)

